

Defense Language Institute English Language Center



Resident Testing Guidelines

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1 . REFERENCES

- (a) DLIELC Instruction 1025.9, Oral Proficiency Interview Program Guidelines, October 13, 2011 (hereby superseded).
- (b) AFJI 16-103, Managing the Defense English Language Program, August 31, 1994.
- (c) AFI 16-105, Joint Security Cooperation Education and Training Regulation, January 3, 2011.
- (d) DLIELC Instruction 1025.15, English Comprehension Level (ECL) Test Guidelines, 1 July 2017 (hereby superseded).

2. PURPOSE

Under the authority of references (b)-(d), these guidelines prescribe policies and procedures governing scheduling, administration, scoring and release of scores for the Defense Language Institute English Language Center (DLIELC) resident campus testing program.

3. APPLICABILITY

These guidelines apply to the resident DLIELC campus and its Testing operations.

4. POLICY/RESPONSIBILITIES:

4.1. 332 Training Squadron Testing Branch (332 TRS/TB). 332 TRS/TB will manage all testing materials and procedures for the English Comprehension Level (ECL), Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), and American Language Course Placement Test (ALCPT). This includes developing, validating, delivering, and creating pools and backups of Computer-Adaptive Test ECL (CAT ECL). 332 TRS/TB will retire tests, item pools and items, when appropriate and withdraw compromised tests and items.

4.2. Testing Manuals. 332 TRS/TB will produce local 332 TRS manuals to govern the scheduling, administration, scoring and reporting of DLIELC tests. For access to the procedures manual contact 332 TRS/TB at DLIELC.testing@us.af.mil. All squadron commanders will notify 332 TRS/TB of personnel changes that require and update of test access documentation.

4.3. General Responsibilities.

4.3.1. For nonresident use, 332 TRS/TB will annually produce 15 ECL tests. ALCPT forms will be produced as needed.

4.3.2. Maintain master files of all official, controlled DLIELC tests.

4.3.3. Maintaining test security is essential to DLIELC and will be given the highest priority by all personnel involved. 332 TRS/TB will establish policy, provide guidance, and maintain surveillance over the control and use of test materials and information.

4.3.4. Ensure all test materials received are handled/stored in red folders. When not in use materials will be stored in a locked cabinet.

4.3.5. Book Quiz, Performance Test, ECL, or ALCPT will not be reproduced except as authorized by 332 TRS/TB.

4.3.6. Students are not authorized to have controlled test items in their possession except during monitored test administrations.

4.3.7. For Computer Delivered Tests (CDT), 332 TRS/TB will manage the CDT database and ensure that backups are current and secured.

4.3.8. When DP is in possession of testing materials, they will ensure the safekeeping and security of said materials.

4.3.9. Changes in test scheduling due to student load factors and/or administrative requirements will be coordinated with 332 TRS/TB, and 332 TRS/IB. Scheduling or rescheduling requests must be submitted before 1200, the day prior to testing.

4.4. Security and Control of Test Materials.

4.4.1. Establish policy, provide guidance, and maintain surveillance over the control and use of test materials and information.

4.4.2. Authorize test access through the assignment of test control numbers, maintain a current database of resident and nonresident personnel with test access authorization, and prepare the test access authorization list.

4.4.3. Coordinate with all DLIELC personnel who supervise personnel requiring test access to ensure 332 TRS/TB is informed when new personnel requiring test access are hired and when they separate from DLIELC.

4.4.4. Rotate computer adaptive pools and book quiz forms to reduce the chances of students' repeat exposure to test items.

4.5. 332 TRS/IB Testing Responsibilities. 332 TRS/IB will ensure:

4.5.1. ECL items are not critiqued or reviewed by instructors without approval.

4.5.2. Test proctors do not listen to the audio portion of the ECL test or read the test items except as necessary to verify audio quality or student-reported problems.

4.5.3. An adequate number of proctors, a minimum of one per computer testing lab, is provided.

4.5.4. Students receive a pretest briefing on test procedures, penalties for cheating, and all relevant testing requirements before each test administration. The briefing will cover standardized pretest and posttest procedures for test administrators and students, as well as procedures to be observed

during the actual test administration. A written copy of the procedures will be available in each lab during each test administration.

4.6. Loss or Compromise of Tests.

4.6.1 Individuals on the resident campus who suspect that a test, or any of its controlled components (script, booklet, audio recordings, electronic products, key, or used answer sheet), has been lost or compromised must immediately report this information to a first-line supervisor.

4.6.2 The supervisor will immediately report the incident to both the 332 TRS/IB section chief and 332 TRS/TB.

4.6.3 332 TRS/TB will notify the 332 TRS/CC and withdraw the test from service.

4.6.4 332 TRS/CC will request that 637 TRG/CC initiate a commander's inquiry and appoint an investigating official.

4.6.5 No later than five business days after the initial report of test loss or compromise, the investigating official will send 332 TRS/CC a memorandum for record which describes the results of the investigation and includes recommendation(s) for corrective action.

4.6.6 After receiving the memorandum for record, 332 TRS/TB will determine whether the test form can be put back into service or must be replaced and will take any other required corrective action.

4.7. ECL Test Guidelines.

4.7.1. The ECL test is the primary instrument used to assess the English language proficiency of IMSs scheduled to attend and of international participants in certain US-sponsored exercises (AFMAN 16-101, *Security Cooperation (SC) and Security Assistance (SA) Management*). The ECL test can also be used for authorized DoD personnel.

4.7.2. The ECL test may also be used as a criterion in the requirement of US military personnel who are not native speakers of English or in the determination of their eligibility for commissioning, attending specific courses, or obtaining certain jobs.

4.7.3. ECL test scores are valid for 180 calendar days from the date of the ECL test administration to the report date of the initial training recorded on the Invitational Travel Order (ITO).

4.7.4. User agencies will not copy, scan, or duplicate any portions of the ECL or ALCPT tests, nor will they release any ECL test materials to any unauthorized personnel.

4.7.5. Any discussion of ECL or ALCPT test items with instructors, host-country residents, or other unauthorized personnel is strictly prohibited. ECL and ALCPT content can only be discussed by Test Control Officer (TCO) or designated alternate.

4.8. Resident ECL Scheduling and Requirements.

4.8.1. The Instruction branch will request all ECL tests based on student programming and FOT entry requirements.

4.8.2. The ECL is normally given weekly on the resident campus based on student programming requirements.

4.9. Resident OPI Scheduling and Requirements.

4.9.1. Resident candidates must attain the required qualifying ECL score before they can be scheduled for an OPI. Direct-entry Specialized English Training (SET) students who were not OPI tested in-country, due to being OPI exempt, will be tested during the first week of training after qualifying on their entry ECL.

4.9.2. All IMSs scheduled for aviation FOT, excluding loadmasters, take telephonic OPIs.

4.9.3. Instructional supervisors will schedule required OPIs. Request annotations will include the following: the type of OPI requested, indication of high priority if applicable, the date the request was entered into the database, and the requestor's first initial and last name.

4.9.4. OPI candidates will not take a book quiz, performance evaluation, or other graded test on the same day they are scheduled for an OPI.

4.9.5. A student who is enrolled in the Applied English Skills for Oral Proficiency Course will have an initial OPI no later than the fourth week of training. If the student's initial OPI rating is below the required rating, the individual may be tested again in the eighth week of the course and at 30-day intervals until the qualifying score is achieved. No student will have more than five OPIs during this course.

4.9.6. Advanced Language Proficiency Skills I students who met the entry OPI requirement, but not the graduation OPI requirement, will take the OPI NLT week seven. Basic American Language Instructor Course students will take the OPI NLT than week 18.

4.9.7. Resident students must wait a minimum of 30 days before re-taking an OPI.

4.9.8. Resident students who failed a Nonresident OPI before entry to DLIELC must pass their verification ECL and be in class for at least 30 days before they can be scheduled for a resident OPI.

4.9.9. Students can take a maximum of seven OPIs during any single training period on the resident campus.

4.9.10. Waivers to OPI limitations must be approved by 332 TRS/TB.

4.9.11. OPI Ratings. A qualifying OPI rating is valid for six months (180 days).

4.10. Raters Conducting Resident and Nonresident Interviews.

4.10.1. All OPIs are conducted by a team of two OPI-certified raters. Ratings are assigned by applying the same Interagency Language Roundtable-based standards to resident, nonresident, face-to-face, video and telephonic interviews alike.

4.10.2. Raters conducting after-hour OPIs are entitled to compensation in the form of either overtime pay or compensatory time off of two hours per day.

4.10.3. All resident and nonresident OPIs will normally be digitally recorded.

4.11. Maintenance of Program Quality Assurance.

4.11.1. Verifications of OPIs will be conducted IAW guidelines established by the Chief of Testing in the, 332TRS Form 6, *OPI Verification Grid*.

4.11.2. All required rating verifications must be completed before ratings are officially recorded or scores released.

4.11.3. An official rating may only be changed if either a verifier and rater trainer or two rater trainers have independently reviewed and rated the recorded OPI and declare the initial rating inaccurate. In such cases, only the official score will be modified. The independent, pre-negotiated ratings assigned by the original team will remain unchanged.

4.12. Selection, Training and Certification of OPI Raters, Verifiers, and Rater Trainers.

4.12.1. Policies governing the selection, training, certification and quality control of OPI raters, verifiers, and rater trainers will be initiated and implemented by the Chief of Testing.

4.12.2. Workload permitting, all newly hired GS-1701 personnel will receive OPI Initial Training. Qualification for certification is based on the trainee's performance, including the ability to elicit a ratable speech sample using prescribed elicitation techniques, analyze spoken discourse, and negotiate and assign ratings. After OPI Initial Training, those qualified will be put on provisional status for one year.

4.12.3. OPI rater certification is valid for three years. Recertification will be determined by each rater's performance in a one-week OPI recertification workshop. Raters may be de-certified on the basis of performance issues at any time.

4.12.4. Inactive raters are not required to attend OPI training events, nor will they conduct OPIs, verifications, or trainings. Inactive raters who participate in OPI recertification training and meet the qualifications will be reinstated as active.

4.12.5. Individuals who are not certified during the initial training may request to be considered for Second Chance Training. If the request is approved, they will be eligible for Second Chance training two years from the completion date of their Initial Training. Individuals who have previously been OPI certified and been decertified are not eligible for Second Chance Training.

4.12.6. While the Testing chief establishes minimum yearly OPI obligations for raters, verifiers and rater trainers, mission requirements will ultimately dictate the actual number of interviews and verifications conducted during a duty week.

4.12.7. If an OPI rater, verifier, or rater trainer fails to meet annual requirements for continued certification, the supervisor will submit a written justification for this delinquency to the chief of Testing. Exceptions to policy will be evaluated by the 332 TRS/CC.

4.13. OPI Program Manager Responsibilities.

4.13.1. 332 TRS/TB has overall responsibility for the OPI program, will coordinate all OPI policy changes, and serve as the office of record for all official OPIs.

4.13.2. Establish policies and procedures related to the selection, training, current status, records, and quality assurance of OPI raters, verifiers, and rater trainers. 332 TRS/TB should maintain a database of OPI rater information, including certification status and date to which certification/recertification is valid.

4.13.3. Ensure OPI quality assurance through documentation/recording review, trend data analysis, and statistical analysis and initiate (or recommend, as appropriate) actions necessary to maintain and improve program quality.

4.13.4. Appoint an OPI Coordinator to conduct the day-to-day business.

4.13.5. Select raters for OPI temporary duty assignments as requested by 637 ISS/INF.

4.13.6. Authorize on a case-by-case basis any waivers for DLIELC OPI requirements regarding testing security, such as testing procedures and/or frequency.

4.13.7. Perform quality assurance measures through documentation/recording review, trend data analysis, and statistical analysis and take (or recommend, as appropriate) actions necessary to maintain and improve program quality.

4.13.8. Plan and schedule Initial OPI and recertification training, as well as any necessary additional training, for OPI raters, verifiers or trainers. 332 TRS/TB will initiate appropriate training and recertification actions, to include the generation of certification or de-certification letters.

4.13.9. Provide all trainees written notification of OPI certification decisions and prepare letters of OPI certification for trainees who have met the qualification requirements.

4.13.10. Suspend or decertify a rater if, in the estimation of at least two rater trainers, the rater does not demonstrate the ability to elicit, rate, and negotiate reliably, or if the rater presents medical documentation attesting to a physical inability to continue to perform OPI rater duties reliably.

4.13.11. Select for OPI verifier training raters who have demonstrated the ability to assign OPI ratings, accurately and consistently. Rater trainers will recommend for certification trainees who have satisfactorily completed the verification training. Testing will provide written notification of selections both to trainees and to testing.

4.13.12. Select candidates for OPI rater trainer training from among experienced and reliable OPI verifiers who, in the estimation of the current OPI rater trainers, have exhibited a thorough familiarity with the OPI interview and rating system. Before final certification as rater trainers, candidates must demonstrate the following: an ability to teach both the theoretical and practical aspects of Initial OPI rater training, an ability to resolve rating questions satisfactorily, and an ability to provide constructive feedback to OPI raters and rater candidates.

4.14. OPI Coordinator Responsibilities.

4.14.1. Prioritize and schedule resident and nonresident interviews. Schedule OPI raters to conduct these OPIs during their assigned duty weeks.

4.14.2. Ensure the secure storage and disposition of official OPI records.

4.14.3. Ensure that all information on each OPI, including the alphanumeric code for nonresident interviews, is recorded in the OPI database.

4.14.4. Coordinate the scheduling of nonresident telephonic OPIs with appropriate representatives and maintain a calendar of scheduled OPIs.

4.14.5. Form OPI teams to conduct all OPIs, including soliciting volunteers for after-hours OPIs.

4.14.6. Promptly refer OPIs for verification as needed and ensure that they are accomplished as required in a timely manner.

4.14.7. Identify OPI rating increases or decreases of more than a plus point from last OPI in the candidate's current training line by looking at previous profiles if applicable in the OPI database and refer the current OPI for verification.

4.14.8. Provide the raters participating on a deployment with a printed or digital version of the OPI Log prior to their departure or provide raters participating in an OPI Virtual Testing Team with daily schedules and Zoom links.

4.14.9. Ensure all required information for each OPI, including those conducted away from the resident campus, is entered into the OPI database.

4.15. 332 TRS/IB Supervisors Responsibilities.

4.15.1. Request OPIs for students who have an OPI requirement ensuring that the requests are made for the type of OPI the student requires and contact the Country Program Manager if there is any uncertainty.

4.15.2. Forward classroom instructors' concerns to the OPI Coordinator as appropriate when there is good-faith doubt as to the accuracy of a currently assigned OPI rating.

4.15.3. Ensure OPI ratings are documented in the student's academic record and release the ratings to students, and applicable parties.

4.15.4. Provide assessment of academic qualifications and coordinate with Testing for concurrence and recommendations for an OPI waiver in lieu of a qualifying ECL score for US Army students on behalf of the Echo Company Commander before scheduling an OPI for these students.

4.15.5. Supervisors will check for schedule conflicts when they receive the OPI schedule email for each student and make plans to accommodate the candidate's OPI.

4.16. OPI Rater Responsibilities.

4.16.1. Meet all training and OPI interview requirements IAW this instruction and AFI 36-4003.

4.16.2. Maintain active status certification by conducting a minimum of 24 OPIs per year, completing one self-assessment and attending OPI trainings and Recertification Workshops as scheduled. For raters on temporary duty (TDY) for 90 days or more, the annual minimum requirement of 24 OPIs can be prorated at a rate of two OPIs per month.

4.16.3. OPI raters are assigned in agreement with Instructional Branch according to OPI need and rater availability.

4.16.4. Use prescribed guidelines to independently rate candidates IAW international language roundtable descriptors, compare independent ratings and negotiate an official rating. Once a rating is assigned, document interview profile according to 332 TRS/TB procedures.

4.16.5. Report to the OPI Coordinator's office ten minutes before the start of all interviews assigned to the OPI rater by the OPI coordinator during the OPI rater's assigned duty week.

4.16.6. Digitally record all OPIs conducted. Raters will confirm the identity of the candidate. Verify the identity of each candidate against the email provided by the OPI Coordinator and meeting title. Notify the OPI Coordinator immediately if there is any discrepancy.

4.16.7. Report any of the following to the OPI Coordinator immediately: sound quality or telephone/video issues, suspected or determined that a candidate had used outside resources (e.g., notes, books, electronic resources, cell phone, etc.). Calls from proctors not received within 5 minutes and after-hours interviews not received within 20 minutes must also be documented with the OPI Coordinator. A rater trainer can be requested to resolve unusual situations or disputes with ratings.

4.17. OPI Verifier Responsibilities.

4.17.1. OPI Verifiers remain current by annually conducting a minimum of 12 OPIs and 24 verifications, completing 1 Self-Assessment, and attending OPI Roundtables and OPI Recertification Workshops as scheduled. For verifiers who are TDY for 90 days or more, the required number of OPIs and verifications can be prorated at a rate of one OPI and two verifications per month of temporary duty. They will review recorded interviews as required and inform the OPI Coordinator of verification results.

4.18. OPI Rater Trainer Responsibilities.

4.18.1. OPI Rater Trainers remain current by annually conducting a minimum of 12 OPIs, 24 verifications, and 1 training session (either Initial or Recertification). For rater trainers who are TDY for 90 days or more, the required number of OPIs and verifications can be prorated at a rate of one OPI and two verifications per month of temporary duty.

4.18.2. Meet all training and other obligations their positions require IAW current 332 TRS policies.

4.18.3. Review recorded interviews as required and inform the OPI Coordinator of verification results.

4.18.4. OPI rater trainers will advise 332 TRS/TB of their decision to suspend a rater's certification in the event of a rater being counseled three times within one year for recurring elicitation, rating, and/or negotiation issues. The suspended rater will be notified in writing of this action and given the option of either attending refresher training or being decertified.

4.19. Ensuring OPI Integrity.

4.19.1 Raters will independently assign OPI ratings prior to negotiating an official score.

4.19.2 In the event the OPI raters cannot agree on the rating, the recording will be reviewed and rated by a rater trainer. The rater trainer will be the final arbiter of the score.

4.19.3 In the event an interview is deemed un-ratable by the rater trainer, the rater trainer will report this finding to the OPI Coordinator as well as 332 TRS/TB.

4.19.4 If interview captured sufficient linguistic evidence for the candidate to be qualified to participate in FOT, the OPI Coordinator will release the score and the rater trainer will counsel the raters.

4.19.5 If the interview did not capture sufficient linguistic evidence for the candidate to be qualified to participate in FOT, the OPI Coordinator will contact the appropriate POC and reschedule the candidate with a different rater team, and the rater trainer will counsel the raters.

4.20. Release of Resident OPI Scores.

4.20.1. Whenever possible, the OPI Coordinator will email the student's supervisor and 637 ISS the official score within two US business days of the interview. The supervisor and 637 ISS personnel will document the score and inform the required parties.

5. REVIEW AND SIGNATORIES

- a. This directive shall be reviewed annually or upon changes to governing directives.
- b. The OPR for this directive is the DLIELC Testing Branch Chief. Please direct questions/inquiries to dli.testing@us.af.mil, Commercial: 210-671-4889 or DSN: (312) 473-7567.

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