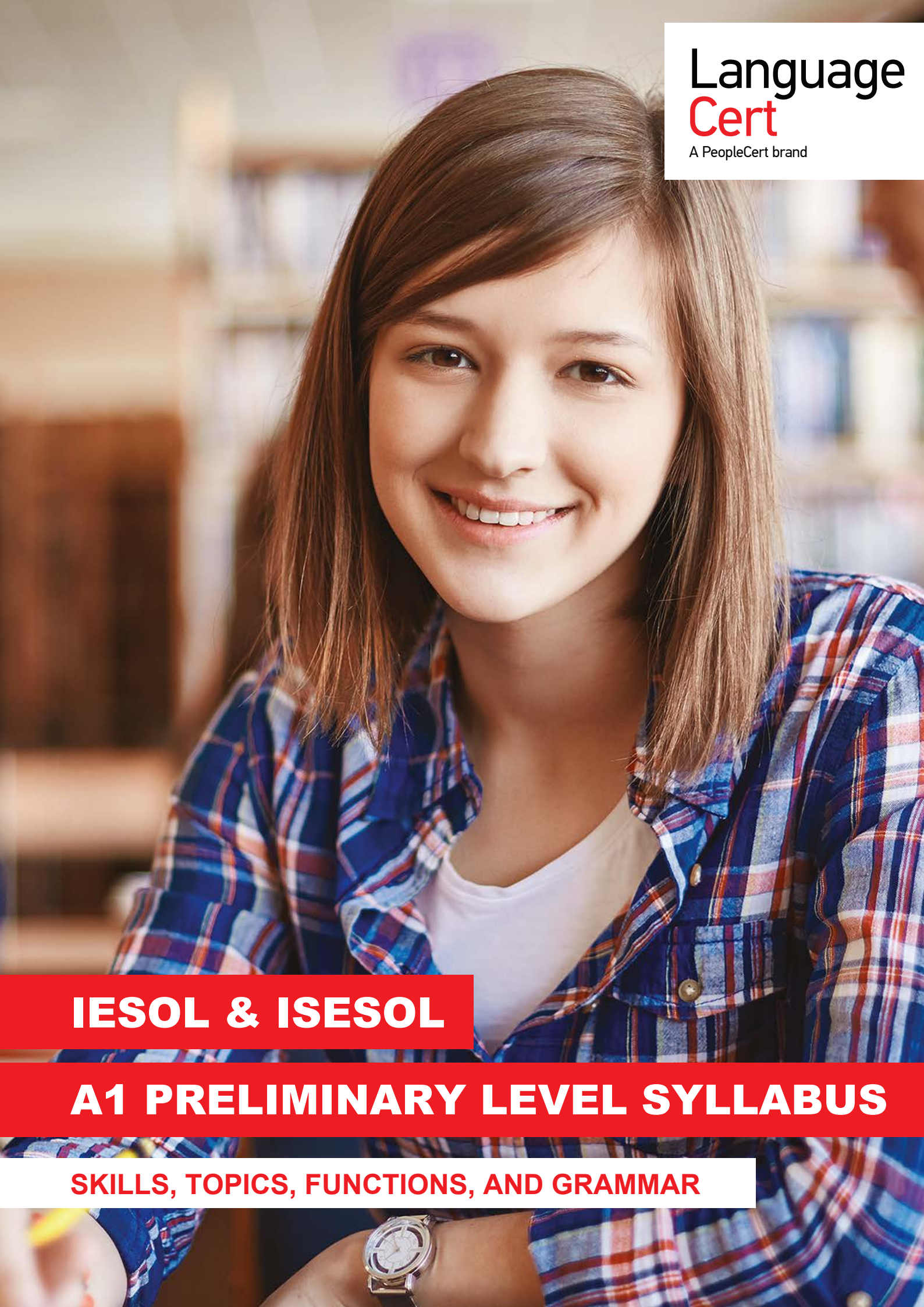

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A1 PRELIMINARY LEVEL SYLLABUS

SKILLS, TOPICS, FUNCTIONS, AND GRAMMAR

A1 - Preliminary level requirements
Skills, Topics, Functions and Grammar

A1 - Preliminary level requirements
Skills, Topics, Functions and Grammar

Skills

Listening

The candidate will be able to:

- follow carefully and slowly articulated speech which contains long pauses and repetition to allow the listener to process the information
- follow short conversations in everyday situations on topics concerning self, family and immediate surroundings, and understand gist, context and the relationship between speakers
- understand very simple questions, statements, accounts, narratives and single-step instructions spoken carefully and slowly
- follow short, simple directions and explanations
- identify the function of short utterances (see Grammar and Functions sections which follow)
- extract key information from conversations to complete a simple task.

Phonological features

- listen for phonological detail to distinguish between similar words.

Range

- understand key grammatical forms used in very common everyday familiar contexts
- recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning self, family and immediate concrete surroundings.

Understanding gist

- understand the main ideas of short explanations and conversations
- identify speakers, context and topic of short conversations.

Understanding detail

- extract key words, numbers and spellings from short statements and explanations.

Reading

The candidate will be able to:

- understand very short simple narratives and descriptions, single-step instructions, simple directions, and simple explanations a single phrase at a time with time to re-read for confirmation and/or clarification
- recognise the purposes of short texts where the purpose and intended audience is clear
- locate specific information in short texts
- understand viewpoints if made clearly and simply.

Range

- understand very familiar names, words and phrases in simple common texts found in everyday life

- understand isolated words, short simple phrases and understand grammatical structures that link clauses and help identify time reference
- understand the meanings conveyed by capital letters and full stops in very simple sentences.

Register
- understand simple social courtesies.

Text structure
- understand the organisational, lexical and grammatical features of short simple texts
- recognise different purposes of simple texts through layout conventions, common signs and symbols.

Writing

The candidate will be able to:
- write to communicate simple information to a sympathetic reader
- compose simple sentences to communicate ideas or basic
- information about a topic connected to personal information or knowledge
- write a short letter, card, postcard and message using simple phrases and sentences to communicate ideas and basic information about themselves, where they live and what they do
- write very simple descriptions, accounts and routines, single-step instructions and directions in familiar contexts
- express likes, dislikes and preferences in relation to familiar topics.
- use punctuation and capital letters correctly to show beginnings and ends of sentences, proper nouns, personal pronoun 'I'
- spell correctly personal key words and familiar words
- construct simple phrases and sentences using only basic grammatical structures
- use a basic range of vocabulary to deal with simple and familiar topics and tasks
- write simple sentences on familiar topics
- write a short sequence of simple sentences to form a basic message

The text types candidates at this level will be required to produce are as follows:
- informal letter
- informal email message
- informal greetings card
- informal postcard

The extent of each text to be produced by candidates is approximately 30 words.

Speaking

The candidate will be able to:
- interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech
- initiate and respond to simple statements about personal details, in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics
- communicate in a very limited range of social situations using a basic range of functional language
- exchange information to perform a task

- describe and explain familiar topics and simple routines
- give single-step instructions and directions in familiar contexts
- ask and answer simple questions
- produce simple phrases to express likes, dislikes and preferences in relation to familiar topics
- contribute points to a discussion, provided the other speakers are co-operative.
- pronounce with sufficient clarity a limited repertoire of words and phrases so they can be understood by a sympathetic listener.
- display a limited control of very basic grammatical structures.
- produce simple phrases and sentences to give basic information about and descriptions of familiar people and places, feelings and opinions.
- cope appropriately, with support from the other person, in a limited range of familiar social situations.
- manage the conventions of turn taking in very simple interactions
- use a very limited range of connectors to link utterances.

Topics

PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION

- name
- address
- date and place of birth
- age
- sex
- marital status
- nationality
- origin
- occupation
- family
- likes and dislikes
- physical appearance
- title
- first language

HOUSE AND HOME, ENVIRONMENT

- accommodation, rooms
- furniture, furnishing
- services
- amenities
- region
- flora and fauna

DAILY LIFE

- at home
- at work

FREE TIME, ENTERTAINMENT

- leisure
- hobbies and interests
- TV, radio computer etc
- cinema, theatre
- intellectual pursuits
- sports
- press
- internet
- music
- holidays

TRAVEL

- public transport
- private transport
- traffic
- holiday accommodation
- luggage
- travel documents
- signs and notices

LANGUAGE

- foreign language ability
- understanding, expression
- spelling and alphabet

RELATIONS WITH OTHER PEOPLE

- relationships
- correspondence
- behaviour
- friends

HEALTH AND BODYCARE

- parts of the body
- personal comfort
- hygiene
- ailments, accidents
- medical services

SHOPPING

- shopping facilities
- foodstuffs
- clothes, fashion
- household articles
- prices

FOOD AND DRINK

- types of food and drink
- eating and drinking out

SERVICES

- post
- telephone
- banking
- police
- hospital, surgery
- garage
- petrol station
- emergency

PLACES

- asking the way and giving directions
- location

WEATHER

- obtain information from weather forecast
- climate and weather

MEASURES AND SHAPES

- digits and cardinal numbers up to 31
- telephone numbers, process
- height, length, weight, capacity, temperature
- dates, times, days
- shape

EDUCATION

- schooling
- subjects

Functions

PERSONAL ENVIRONMENT

- asking for and giving personal information
- describing where one lives (accommodation, area, etc)
- asking and answering questions for confirmation, information, identification
- describing familiar people, places and things
- correcting information
- explaining daily routines.

EXPRESSING THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS

- expressing agreement or disagreement
- stating knowledge or ignorance of something or someone
- stating and asking about ability or inability to do something
- seeking, granting or denying permission
- expressing wishes
- expressing a preference
- expressing likes and dislikes
- offering and accepting an apology.

MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

- responding to a request
- requesting something or requesting someone to do something
- inviting someone to do something
- accepting or declining an offer or invitation
- giving single-step instructions
- counting and using numbers.

SOCIAL CONTACT

- getting someone's attention
- greeting people and responding to greetings
- expressing thanks
- addressing somebody
- introducing oneself, family and close friends
- opening, closing a conversation
- indicating lack of understanding
- asking someone to clarify something
- asking for and giving the spelling and meaning of words
- asking for and telling people the time, day, date
- taking leave.

Grammar

Please note that:

- Candidates may be exposed to the grammar required for the level above, but will not be tested on it.
- Candidates are required to possess all structures described in the level(s) below them

	Preliminary	**Access** as Preliminary and **in addition**	**Achiever** as Access and **in addition**
Simple sentences	• word order in simple statements: subject-verbobject/adverb/adjective/ prepositional phrase • word order in instructions • word order in questions • *There is/are* + noun	• *There was/were*	• *There has/have been* • *There will be/there is going to be*
Compound sentences		• use of conjunctions *and/but/or* • word order subject-verb-(object) (+*and/ but/or*) + subject-verb-(object)	
Complex sentences		• clauses of: time with *when, before, after* reason *because*, result *so* • noun clause with *that*	• word order in complex sentences • complex sentences with on subordinat clause • defining relative clauses with *who, which, that* • clause as subject/object

Verb forms

	Preliminary	Access as Preliminary and **in addition**	Achiever as Access and **in addition**
Verb forms	**Present reference:** • simple present tense of *be/have/do* and common regular verbs • present continuous of common verbs • *Have got* **Other:** • Yes/no questions • Question words: *who/what/where/when/how much/how many/how old* • Auxiliary '*do*' for questions and negatives (positive questions only) • Short answers such as *yes he does, no I haven't* • imperatives and negative imperatives • contracted forms appropriate to this level • *let's* + infinitive for suggestion	**Present reference:** • simple present with no time focus • present continuous to express continuity **Past reference:** • past tense of regular and common irregular verbs with time markers **Future reference:** • *be going to*, present continuous and time markers **Other:** • limited range of common verbs _ *-ing* form, such as *like, go* • verb + to + infinitive such as *want, hope* • very common phrasal verbs such as *get up, switch on* • questions such as *what time, how often, why, which* • simple question tags using all the verb forms at this level • contracted forms appropriate to this level	**Present/Past reference:** • Present perfect with since/for/ever/never, *yet/already, just* **Past reference:** • *used to* for regular actions in the past • past continuous **Future reference:** • Future simple verb forms, NP + will **Other:** • Zero and 1st conditional • Range of verbs + *-ing* forms • *to* + infinitive to express purpose • common phrasal verbs and position of object pronouns, such as *I looked it up* • simple reported/embedded statements and questions • question tags using all verbs • appropriate at the level • contracted forms appropriate to this level

Modals, nouns, pronouns, possessives, prepositions

	Preliminary	**Access** as Preliminary and **in addition**	**Achiever** as Access and **in addition**
Modals	Present reference: • *can, can't* (ability/inability, permission) and would *like* (request)	**Modals and forms with similar meaning:** • *must* (obligation) • *mustn't* (prohibition) • *have to, had got to* (need) • *can, could* (requests) • *couldn't* (impossibility) • *may* (permission) • single modal adverbs: *possibly, probably, perhaps*	**Modals and forms with similar meaning:** • *should* (obligation, advice) • *might, may, will, probably* (possibility and probability in the future) • *would/should* (advice) • *need to* (obligation) • *needn't* (lack of obligation) • *will definitely* (certainly in the future) • *may I* (asking for permission) • *I'd rather* (stating preference)
Nouns	• regular and common irregular plural forms • very common uncountable nouns • cardinal numbers 1-31	• countable and uncountable nouns • simple nouns phrases • cardinal numbers up to 100+ multiples of 100	• noun phrases with pre- and postmodification such as *fair-haired people with sensitive skin* • all cardinal numbers
Pronouns	• personal - subject	• object, reflexive	
Possessives	• possessive adjectives such as *my, your, his, her, its, our, their* • use of '*s, s*'	• possessive pronouns such as *mine, yours, whose*	• As Access
Prepositions and prepositional phrases	• common prepositions such as *at, in, on, under, next to, between, near, to, from* • prepositional phrases of place, time and movement, such as *at home, on the left, on Monday, at six o'clock*	• prepositions of place, time and movement, such as *before, after, towards, up, down, along, across, in front of, behind, opposite* • prepositional phrases of place and time, such as *after dinner, before tea*	• wide range of prepositions, such as *beyond, above, beneath, below* • prepositional phrases such as *in her twenties, of average height, in the top right hand corner*

Articles, determiners, adjectives, adverbs, intensifiers

	Preliminary	**Access** as Preliminary and **in addition**	**Achiever** as Access and **in addition**
Articles	• Definite, indefinite	• definite article • zero article with uncountable nouns • definite article with superlatives	• definite article with post-modification, such as the *present you gave me* • use of indefinite article in definitions, such as *an architect is a person who designs buildings*
Determiners	• *any, some, a lot of*	• *all, none, not (any), enough, (a) few, (a)little, many, more, most, much, no*	• a range of determiners, eg *all the, most, both*
Adjectives	• common adjectives in front of a noun • demonstrative adjectives *this, that, these, those* • ordinal numbers 1-31	• order of adjectives • comparative, superlative, regular and • common irregular forms • use of *than* • ordinal numbers up to 100 + multiples of 100	• adjectives ending *–ed* + - *ing* such as *tired* and *tiring* • comparative structures, such as *as……as*, is the same as, *not so…..as…, looks like/is like* • all ordinal numbers
Adverbs	• simple adverbs of place, manner and • time, such as *here, slowly, now*	• simple adverbs and adverbial phrases: sequencing, time and place, frequency, manner • position of adverbs and word order of adverbial phrases	• more complex adverbial phrases of time, place, frequency, manner, such as as soon as possible
Intensifiers	• *very, really*	• *quite, so, a bit*	• a range of intensifiers such as *too, enough*

Punctuation and spelling

	Preliminary	**Access** as Preliminary and **in addition**	**Achiever** as Access and **in addition**
Punctuation	• use of capital letters and full stops	• use of question marks, exclamation marks, use of comma in lists	• use of punctuation in formal and informal texts, such as dashes, brackets, bullet points, speech marks
Spelling	• the correct spelling of personal keywords and familiar words	• the correct spelling of most personal details and familiar common words	• the correct spelling of common words and key words relating to own work, leisure and study interests

Discourse

	Preliminary	**Access** as Preliminary and **in addition**	**Achiever** as Access and **in addition**
Discourse	• sentence connectives: *then, next*	• adverbs to indicate sequence *(first, finally)* • use of substitution (*I think so, I hope so*) • markers to structure spoken discourse (*Right, well, OK*)	• markers to indicate addition (*also*), sequence (*in the first place*), contrast (*on the other hand*) • markers to structure spoken discourse, (*anyway, by the way*) • use of ellipsis in informal situations (*got to go*) • use of vague language (*I think, you know*)