

CCE

CZECH LANGUAGE CERTIFICATE EXAM

EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

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Charles University, Institute for Language and Preparatory Studies
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The following Examination Regulations for the Czech Language Certificate Exam (hereinafter referred to as “Examination Regulations”) must be followed during the organization and administration of the Czech Language Certificate Exam (hereinafter referred to as “CCE”) and are binding on all candidates at all examination centres of the Institute for Language and Preparatory Studies of Charles University (hereinafter referred to as “ILPS CU”), including all staff members who are involved in CCE examination.

Internal and external staff of the Research and Test Centre of ILPS CU (hereinafter referred to as “RTC ILPS CU”) are authorised to issue examination materials, design tests and coordinate the CCE examination procedure. They are also responsible for the administration of the CCE examination, selection of administrators, examiners and markers. They are also responsible for providing the aforementioned subjects with sufficient training.

1 DESCRIPTION OF THE CCE EXAMINATION

The Czech Language Certificate Exam is provided at five levels of proficiency – A1, A2, B1, B2 and C1 according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (hereinafter referred to as “CEFR”). It is designed for foreigners who wish or need to test their communication competence in Czech language. The Czech Language Certificate Exam tests the achieved level of communicative competence in accordance with the criteria specified in the CEFR.

2 AVAILABLE EXAMINATION MATERIALS

In the period before the examination, candidates at each of the five levels have the following materials at their disposal:

Sample tests which includes a key with correct answers, a recording for the Listening Comprehension subtest, a sample answer sheet, information on the examination procedure, the timings of individual subtests, mark allocation for both receptive and productive skills, types of tasks etc. Other materials available before taking the exam include information on the nature of the examination, Instructions for Candidates, Examination Regulations and published sets of exercises. RTC ILPS CU does not provide potential candidates with advice or recommendations for study materials.

Instructions on how to proceed with the examination and mark the tests are available for administrators, examiners and markers only. General examination training and standardization training on marking individual productive skills are provided for administrators, examiners and markers on a regular basis.

3 EXAMINATION DATES

The dates of CCE exams in the Czech Republic are set one calendar year in advance but no later than November of the preceding year. Examination dates at foreign centres are announced on a regular basis.

The examination at foreign centres shall be organised only with the minimum number of candidates which is determined for each foreign centre individually. The candidates are informed about the (non-)organisation of examinations and the examination dates at foreign centres by email after the applications are closed.

Information about examination dates can be found on the ILPS CU website at <http://ujop.cuni.cz/cce>, or requested by telephone or email, or at the administrative office of RTC ILPS CU, or from adverts and other promotional materials.

4 EXAMINATION CENTRES

CCE exams take place in the Czech Republic and at foreign examination centres, which belong to ILPS CU or which have been awarded a licence by ILPS CU to administer the exam on the basis of fulfilling requirements of examination rooms, equipment/furnishings, exam administration and staffing necessary for ensuring proper exam process. Examination materials are personally delivered to the examination centre by the examination committee chair, who is a member of the RTC team and is responsible for the organisation and proper carrying-out of the exams at the given centre.

4.1 Equipment, Furnishing and Other Requirements for the Examination Room

The examination site must be easily accessible. Candidates must be informed about the exam location in advance. On the day of the exam, the room used for registration before the exam must be properly designated. A notice about the exam taking place and the need for silence must be visibly displayed in all common areas.

The examination rooms must provide suitable conditions, particularly silence, ventilation/air-condition and sufficient light for the examination to take place. There must not be any materials on the walls which might influence candidates' performance during the examination. The Listening Comprehension subtest must take place in an acoustically-advantageous room, or in a room equipped with headphones for all candidates.

Candidates' desks are spaced at least 1.5 metres from each other (measured from the centre of the desk). During the exam, all candidates must face the same direction and be able to see the clock. Before candidates' arrival, each desk must be labelled with a name card according to the seating plan. For the duration of the examination, candidates will sit according to the seating plan. At each exam, there is one examiner present for every 25 candidates.

4.2 Examination committee

An examination committee selected from trained administrators, examiners and markers is appointed for each examination date, according to the number of candidates registered for each proficiency level. The committee chair is an internal or external staff member of RTC ILPS CU. The examination committee is responsible for running the subtests during the examination and safeguarding the examination materials (question booklets, answer sheets and recordings) and protecting candidates' personal data. The committee chair is responsible for the whole examination process and its organisation and has the right to make on-the-spot decisions at the examinations.

5 ENROLMENT AND ADMISSION TO THE EXAMINATION

Applicants for the CCE exam **in the Czech Republic** must **enrol** online by filling in an enrolment form found at <http://ujop.cuni.cz/cce>. They must do so at least **3 weeks before the examination date**.

Applicants for the CCE exam **abroad** must **enrol** online by filling in an enrolment form found at <http://ujop.cuni.cz/cce>. Candidates must enrol by **the date set by the foreign examination centre**. This date is stated on the online enrolment form.

Confirmation of receipt of the enrolment form is automatically sent to candidate's email address which he/she stated on the enrolment form. The candidate must check that the personal details in the confirmation email are accurate, as well as spelling and the use of capital letters. These details will be stated on candidate's certificate. If any corrections need to be made, candidate must immediately contact the administration office of RTC ILPS CU. ILPS CU will not use candidate's personal details without his/her prior consent, for any purpose other than to administer the CCE exam and/or research, further development of the exam or quality monitoring.

Only candidates who have turned 16 by the date of the exam (at the latest) and for whom Czech is not their mother tongue, may enrol to sit the exam. On the day of the examination, the candidate's identity and age will be verified according to a valid and internationally recognised identity document. Should a candidate who has not reached this age at the time of the examination wish to take the test, he/she should make a written request to the director of RTC ILPS CU. This request must reach the director of RTC ILPS CU no later than 3 weeks before the date of the exam.

Groups of at least 15 candidates taking the same level of the examination can make a written request to the director RTC ILPS CU for a special examination date in the Czech Republic.

5.1 Examination Fee

The current fees for CCE examinations in the Czech Republic and payment instructions can be found at <http://ujop.cuni.cz/cce>. Candidates will also receive payment instructions in the automatically generated email with the confirmation of enrolment.

The fee for the exam **in the Czech Republic** must be paid **no later than 7 days after submitting the enrolment form**. If a candidate fails to make the payment in due course, his/her application will be automatically cancelled.

The current fees for the CCE examination abroad are determined by each foreign examination centre. The fee for taking the exam **abroad** must be paid **by the date determined by** the foreign examination centre. Candidates who wish to take the CCE examination abroad need to contact the foreign examination centre directly to request information about the examination fees. The fees at different foreign examination centres may vary.

Proof of payment of a fee for the CEE examination must be presented at registration on the day of the examination.

Any candidates currently enrolled on a daily Czech language course offered by ILPS CU are eligible for a discount of 500 CZK when taking the exam in the Czech Republic. Any candidates who have just completed a daily ILPS CU Czech language course are also eligible for a discount, which will apply to the closest examination date following the completion of the course.

All applicants for a discount must send (by post or email with attached scan) either a confirmation of attendance at a daily ILPS CU Czech language course or a confirmation of its completion, which will include the date of course completion, to the administration office of RTC ILPS CU at least 3 weeks prior to the examination date. If a candidate fails to present a document which entitles him/her to a discount and he/she has paid the discounted fee, he/she will not be permitted to take the exam.

A group discount of 5% is available for groups of 6 people or more who apply to take the examination on the same date in the Czech Republic; however, they do not need to sit the exam at the same proficiency level. The discount does not apply to special exam dates (see point 5). Discounts cannot be combined.

5.2 Cancellation or Transfer of the Application to another Term

5.2.1 Until the online applications for the given term are closed:

- a) If the application is cancelled, the **non-repayable registration fee** amounting CZK 500 will be deducted from the paid amount and it will be used for payment of a cancellation fee.
- b) The transfer of an application to another term is possible only after paying a **manipulation fee** amounting CZK 500.

5.2.2 After the online applications for the given term are closed, it is not possible to cancel or transfer the application.

5.2.3 After the online applications are closed and in case the absence is documented by a medical confirmation:

- c) If the application is cancelled, the **non-repayable registration fee** amounting CZK 500 will be deducted from the paid amount and it will be used for payment of a cancellation fee.
- d) The transfer of an application to another term is possible only after paying a **manipulation fee** amounting CZK 500.

If the application is transferred, the candidate must register for a new examination date properly and send a formal request for the exam fee transfer to a particular term (in writing or by e-mail) to RTC ILPS CU's administration office. The application can be transferred only with the same calendar year. No special examination dates will be arranged in such cases.

In the event that a candidate cannot attend or has decided not to attend the examination abroad, he/she must follow the instructions of the given foreign examination centre.

6 EXAMINATION PROCEDURE

CCE exams are not open to the public. Only candidates, members of the examination committee, including the committee chair, trained administrators, examiners or markers, and potentially a supervisor authorised by RTC ILPS CU to monitor the examination process, may be present at the examination. All other persons are not permitted to the designated area where the examination takes place (e.g. examination building). The examination committee chair, who may also be an administrator, examiner or marker, is responsible for the proper running of the examination.

At all proficiency levels offered, the CCE exam consists of a written section, which tests the level of communicative competence attained in the following subtests: Reading Comprehension, Listening Comprehension and Writing (for B2 and C1 levels there is also a Grammar and Vocabulary Test and an oral section (Speaking). The speaking test is recorded. The time allowed for individual subtests is detailed on the ILPS CU website <http://ujop.cuni.cz/cce> as well as in the candidates' materials.

The written as well as speaking part of the examination takes place usually on the same day. In the event that the number of registered applicants does not enable that the speaking part ends for all the applicants latest at 7.00 p.m., it shall take place on the following day as regards all the applicants.

The applicants shall be notified of this fact per email after the applications for the given term are closed.

6.1 Candidate Registration on the Day of the Examination

Candidates are informed of the location of the exam centre (exact address) where their examination will take place as soon as they have submitted an application for an exact examination date. Candidates must arrive at the examination centre **at least 30 minutes before the start of the exam. Registration ends 5 minutes before the start of the first subtest.**

During registration before the examination, candidates' identity will be verified according to an internationally recognized and valid identity document (**passport**) or a document proving permanent residence in the Czech Republic (**permanent residence card**), they must present **proof of payment** which will be verified and they will be assigned a **code** and a **paper**

identification wristband. Candidate's identity may be checked by the Czech police during the registration.

Only those candidates who have registered and paid for the exam no later than 7 days before the exam date and who present proof of payment and a valid, internationally-recognized identity document at registration (passport) will be admitted to the exam. This document must include a photograph, the holder's full name and his/her date of birth. All personal details must be written also in Roman/Latin script. A national identity document will be accepted only in foreign examination centres, provided that the authenticity and accuracy of the information stated in this document will be verified by an authorised employee of the foreign examination centre.

6.2 Commencement of the Examination

After the registration, candidates must wait for the administrator's instructions. Then the administrator will usher candidates into the examination room. The candidates will be seated according to a **fixed seating plan**. The administrator will record the seating plan in the Examination Procedure Record and check before each subtest if all candidates are seated correctly and are using the codes assigned to them; the administrator will also verify candidates' identity before each subtest. Prior to the oral examination candidates must show their identity document that they presented at registration again.

Before each exam, candidates are obliged to:

- switch off their mobile phones and all other electronic devices which might disturb silence during the exam;
- place their identity document, which they presented at registration, at the side of their desk (see 6.1);
- keep **only** the following items on their desk: their identity document, label with their name, assigned code, a pencil with an eraser and a pencil sharpener; any other items, including a mobile phone which must be switched off, must be kept in candidates' bags which must be placed in the area that is visible and out of candidates' reach.

During the exam, candidates:

- may **only** keep the following items on their desk: their identity document, label with their name, assigned code, a pencil with an eraser, a pencil sharpener, glasses, question booklet, answer sheet and official, stamped note-writing sheets which candidates can use for the Writing subtest at the levels B1, B2 and C1;
- are only allowed to use writing implements that are given to them (a pencil with an eraser and a pencil sharpener);
- must write their notes for the Writing subtest on the stamped sheets only, which will be given to them by their administrator; candidates are not allowed to use their own paper for making notes;
- must place a stick with their assigned code on the answer sheet;
- must stop writing immediately upon the administrator's call;
- must hand in their answer sheet and question booklet, including the stamped sheets with notes in the Writing subtest, at the end of each subtest;
- must refrain from communicating with other candidates, seeking their help or any other prohibited sources of help.

Instructions are given in clear, simple Czech, accompanied by visual and pronounced gestures. The administrator poses a question to ensure that everyone has understood.

Candidates are warned that any behaviour that does not comply with the aforementioned items will be considered as a breach of Examination Regulations and in such cases, the examination of the candidate in question will be terminated with immediate effect (see 6.7).

6.3 Examination Process

Candidates may start working once the examiner gives the instruction to open the question booklet. From this moment, a set time limit starts, therefore the instructions preceding the exam (see 6.2) are not counted in this time limit. **During the exam, it is forbidden to use any electronic devices** (e.g. mobile phones, electronic translators, digital cameras, computers, hands free sets etc., with the exception of hearing aids in the Listening Comprehension and while the administrator is giving instructions). Any candidate wishing to use a hearing aid must provide a doctor's note stating that he/she cannot complete the exam without a hearing aid (see Article 13) in sufficient time before the examination, and the hearing aid device must be wireless. The following items are **also prohibited**: textbooks, dictionaries, unstamped, unofficial sheets etc. During the exam, candidates **may not speak**, they may only raise their arm as a sign to the administrator that they have a problem or a question.

At the beginning of each subtest, the administrator will check the identity of each candidate, that their assigned code is correct and the seating plan.

Subtests at A1 level are ordered in a sequence as follows: Reading Comprehension and Writing, Listening Comprehension, Speaking; at levels A2 and B1 as follows: Reading Comprehension, Listening Comprehension, Writing, Speaking; at levels B2 and C1 as follows: Reading Comprehension, Listening Comprehension, Grammar and Vocabulary Test, Writing, Speaking.

The order of candidates for the oral part of the examination is set by a random draw and cannot be altered.

During all parts of the examination, both written and spoken, a supervisor and/or the committee chair and/or a trained administrator, examiner or marker may be present.

6.4 Conclusion of the Examination

At the end of each subtest the administrator informs the candidates that the specified time limit for that part of the exam is up and requests that they stop writing and put down their writing implements. The administrator must ensure that the candidates hand in all materials.

A candidate may **leave the examination room** in silence before the time limit expires only in case when he/she **has finished** writing a particular subtest (except for the Listening Comprehension subtest). The candidate **may not re-enter** the room until the exam session has ended; he/she may enter the room again during a **break**.

7 DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE EXAMINATION

All candidates are warned that they shall be disqualified from taking the examination immediately if they let anyone else sit the exam or any part of it (including the registration) on their behalf, if they use any prohibited materials such as dictionaries, grammar books, textbooks, prepared drafts of written prose etc., if they use any technological devices such as mobile phones, electronic translators, computers etc., if they copy from another candidate, if they speak to another candidate during the exam, if they refuse to submit their examination materials after the end of the time limit, or if they fail to arrive at the following subtest on time. Candidates are also warned that they shall be disqualified from taking the examination if they fail to arrive at the oral examination on time.

Candidates who will be under the influence of alcohol or any other intoxicating agent, or who will cause distraction and annoyance to other candidates or examiners and disrupt the smooth procedure of the examination by a noisy behaviour or any kind of inappropriate conduct, they shall be disqualified from taking the examination.

If a breach of the Regulations is suspected after completion of the test (see above), such as striking similarity of answers or produced texts between multiple candidates, the director of the Research and Test Centre ILPS CU may suspend the issue of results and commence investigation, during which each candidate concerned will be invited to give explanation. If the suspicion of breaching the Regulations is confirmed, the candidate will be disqualified from the examination. If such candidate has already obtained a certificate, this certificate shall be made void and the candidate shall be requested to return it immediately. If the suspicion is neither confirmed nor rebutted, the director of the Research and Test Centre of ILPS CU may, before the results of the examination are issued, order the candidate to repeat the part of the examination at the selected foreign centre free of charge and as soon as possible.

8 COPYRIGHT

ILPS CU is the copyright owner of all examination materials. None of these examination materials, nor any part of them may be removed from the examination site, except by an authorised person, neither may they be reproduced without ILPS CU's written consent. Actions leading to copyright infringement may be grounds for disqualification from the examination/non-issuance of the certificate. Completed examination materials will not be returned to the candidates or the examination centres.

Completed examination materials and candidates' written and spoken work may be used for research purposes, quality monitoring and further development of the CCE exam and for training examiners and markers. Candidates will be guaranteed anonymity when examination materials are used for such purposes.

9 MARKING

For a ‘pass’ mark, it is necessary to achieve **an overall score of at least 60%, as well as in each individual subtest.**

At levels A1, A2 and B1, candidates may score a maximum of 25 points in each subtest, making a maximum total score of 100 points. At B2 level, each subtest is marked out of 20 points, equalling a maximum total score of 100 points. At C1 level, each subtest is marked out of 30 points and the candidate can score a total of 150 points.

The Reading Comprehension and Listening Comprehension subtests, including the Grammar and Vocabulary Test for levels B2 and C1, are marked according to a mark scheme and thus do not require additional standardisation. In contrast, all writing tasks must always be marked by two trained markers independently of each other, according to the previously established marking criteria for Writing, which are defined in great detail. The Speaking exam is marked according to set criteria by a trained marker and a trained examiner independently of each other, who must eventually reach an agreement on their marks. Should the examiners fail to reach an agreement on marking of the written or spoken parts of the exam, the candidate’s written production will be marked by a third, experienced (senior) examiner.

10 FAILING THE EXAMINATION

Any candidate who does not fulfil the conditions for a ‘pass’ grade as defined in Article 9, will fail the exam. Any candidate whose exam was terminated prematurely for reasons defined in Article 6.7, especially due to candidate’s use of prohibited materials or communicating with other candidates during the exam, candidate’s failure to hand in examination materials following the end of the time limit, or if a candidate steals or distributes exam materials, they will immediately fail the exam. In such cases none of the subtests submitted will be marked.

10.1 Resitting the Examination

Any candidate who does not pass the examination, can apply to sit the exam again at the next available date. He/she must repeat the exam in full, i.e. all parts of the exam. In this instance, the candidate must apply for the exam as normal and pay the examination fee again.

10.2 Appeals against the Examination Procedure

In the event that a candidate wishes to appeal against the conduct of the examination, he/she must do so immediately, on the same day that the examination takes place, by speaking to the examination committee chair. The appeal will be recorded in the Examination Procedure Record, and the committee chair will decide whether the appeal is justified. If the appeal is upheld, the committee chair will decide how best to redress the situation, e.g. by allowing the relevant section of the exam to be repeated.

10.3 Appeals against Examination Results

Appeals against examination results may be raised with the director of ILPS CU in writing, addressed to the administration office of RTC ILPS CU within 2 months from the date of the exam in the Czech Republic or within 3 months from the date of the exam in a foreign examination centre – the postmark shall serve as a proof. The appeal must contain the candidate's code, date and place of the examination and reasoning why the candidate appeals. The application for appeal must be sent together with a proof of payment of CZK 500. Unreasoned or insufficiently reasoned appeals may be dismissed. A mere notice of unachieved number of points or disagreement with the number of points shall not be deemed sufficient reasoning. Appeals shall be handled within 30 days from the date of their receipt. Such decision about the result shall be final and not subject to challenge.

11 CERTIFICATES

Candidates can view their results online at <http://ujop.cuni.cz/cce/vysledky> from 30 days after the exam date using their code. Candidates who pass the exam are granted a certificate. This certificate is issued by ILPS CU bilingually, in Czech and English, using a prescribed print form. Certificates for candidates who sat and passed the exam in the Czech Republic are sent to the address stated on the application form within 7 weeks of sitting the exam. Certificates for candidates who sit and pass the exam abroad are sent to the corresponding examination centre, which will oversee their distribution to candidates.

If a candidate does not receive his/her certificate within 7 weeks of sitting the exam, he/she is advised to contact the administration office of RTC ILPS CU. If RTC ILPS CU is not alerted to this fact within 9 weeks of the exam date, this will count as issuing an official duplicate of the certificate and accordingly, a fee of 150 CZK will be charged. This procedure also applies in the event that a candidate loses his/her certificate and requests an official duplicate of the certificate.

12 ARCHIVING OF MATERIALS

All answer sheets and recordings of the Oral exams and supporting materials for issuing duplicates of certificates are archived for a period of ten years. Candidates have the right to view their materials in the presence of an authorised person, if they choose to appeal against the examination results (see 10.3); in such case the candidate must view the materials in person, he/she may not be represented by or accompanied with a third party. Candidates will be presented with the answer sheets and the evaluation template. Candidates are not allowed to take notes from the materials or photocopy the materials. The option of viewing the assignment with tasks is not provided. Candidates are not entitled to individual consultation.

13 EMERGENCY AND SPECIAL MEASURES

In a state of emergency (e.g. fire, alarm, power cut etc.) the administrator/examiner must do the following:

- evacuate the testing room in accordance with instructions from the relevant authorities, e.g. police;
- remove and safely store all test materials and answer sheets, if the situation permits;
- consult the head of the examination committee on any further actions to be taken;
- inform candidates whether the exam will continue, or whether it will be postponed to a later date.

If a candidate cannot complete the examination due to a sudden indisposition (e.g. nausea), he/she will complete only those parts of the exam that he/she was unable to complete due to health problems, at the next available examination date. Any situations that arise therefrom will be resolved on the spot by the examination committee chair.

Candidates with special needs, e.g. with physical, visual or visual impairments, may contact the director of RTC ILPS CU in writing to apply for special arrangements to be made. They must do so **no later than 2 months before the examination date**. Such request must include an official Czech translation of a physician's report, which is not older than three months. The director of RTC ILPS CU will decide whether it is possible to grant the request.

Special dispensation is primarily granted for:

- modification to the way the exam is presented (administration) or some of its sections according to the type of the limitations associated with the impairment;
- modification of the time limit for working on a specific task, and breaks between individual parts of the exam;
- accessibility of the room in which the exam will take place.

These special measures must not decrease the content validity of the examination materials, nor candidates' performance. It must also be ensured that the assessment of performance of such candidates will maintain its objectivity.

14 FINAL PROVISIONS

The director of RTC ILPS CU is responsible for the organization and coordination of the CCE examination. The committee chair is fully responsible for running the CCE examination at the given examination centre.

These regulations come into effect on 10 May 2018 and replace and render void Examination Regulations of 17 May 2017.