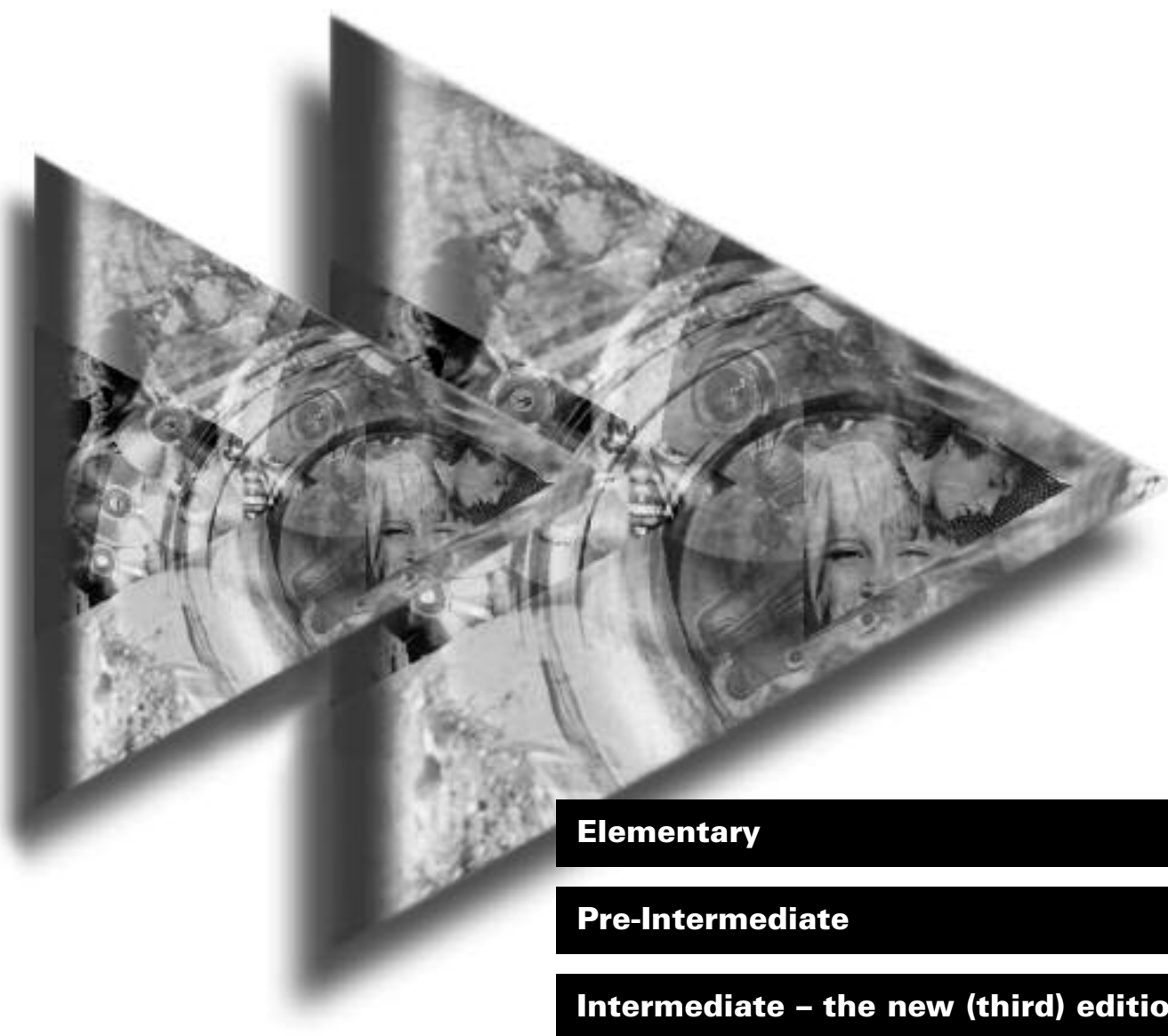


# **New** **Headway**



**and the Common European  
Framework of Reference**



**Elementary**

**Pre-Intermediate**

**Intermediate – the new (third) edition**

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# Introduction

## What is this booklet for?

This aim of this booklet is to give a clear and simple introduction to the Common European Framework of Reference, and to show how it works with New Headway. This document is not a summary of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEF), which is an extremely comprehensive and detailed document of over 250 pages. This introduction highlights points of particular interest, and if detailed information is required, teachers are advised to consult the original document. The main body of the document maps each Student's Book unit of *New Headway Elementary*, *Pre-Intermediate* and *Intermediate – the new (third) edition* to the competences detailed in the CEF.

## Why do we need a Common European Framework?

The Council of Europe, an organization that includes nearly 50 European countries, began to develop the Common European Framework in 1991. One of the main purposes of the Council of Europe is to promote a shared European identity, while recognizing the importance of different cultures. The promotion of language teaching and learning play a central role in this mission. People within Europe, and indeed throughout the world, need to be able to understand each other. The Council of Europe therefore wishes to encourage people to learn languages and develop their ability to communicate with people from other countries and cultures.

## What is the CEF? What are its aims?

The CEF is a carefully developed descriptive framework. It has educational and social aims – these are very often closely linked, and include the following:

- to encourage the development of language skills, so that people can work together more effectively.
- to encourage the development of inter-cultural awareness and 'plurilingualism'.
- to examine and define *what we can do* with a language.
- to help us compare the language levels of individuals in an accurate and impartial way, across different countries, educational systems, ages, and cultures.
- to encourage learner autonomy and lifelong learning.
- to promote a coherent approach to language teaching – not by imposing a system of its own, but by encouraging the sharing of ideas.

## What are the CEF levels?

There are six global levels in the CEF – what these levels are is shown in the table on page 5. Behind these levels are a very large number of competences which make up a person's language ability – these are defined by 'descriptors'.

The CEF says that teachers shouldn't feel that they have to use these levels in their teaching situations. They are intended to be common reference points. It is also important to remember that these levels are *purely descriptive*, and that they don't necessarily correspond to a year of study, or to 100 hours of study, for example. Everyone has different aims and learns at different speeds, in different environments, and in different ways. The CEF is careful to point out that the levels are not 'linear' – that is, the time needed to move from **A1** to **A2** may not be the same as that needed to move from **B1** to **B2**, or **C1** to **C2**, and progress from level to level may slow down as a person moves up the levels. The CEF recommends 'extreme caution' in trying to calculate or predict how long it will take to move from one CEF level to the next.

## How do the CEF levels correspond to New Headway?

*New Headway Elementary* briefly revises **A1**, and then takes the student through **A2**. **A2** corresponds to the Cambridge KET examination. If students have successfully completed *New Headway Elementary*, they would be prepared to sit the KET exam.

*New Headway Pre-Intermediate* briefly revises **A2** before covering approximately half of the competences required for **B2**. *New Headway Intermediate* (the new, third, edition) covers the remaining elements of **B2** and introduces some of the competences of **B2**. Student who have successfully completed *New Headway Intermediate – the new (third) edition* are typically ready to sit the Cambridge PET examination.

Please refer to the table on page 6 to see how the full range of New Headway levels corresponds to the CEF and also to the Cambridge ESOL suite of examinations.

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## Is New Headway compatible with the CEF?

Yes, definitely. The CEF focuses on using language in real, communicative contexts, and so does New Headway. The CEF encourages the development of the ability to ‘do things’ in a foreign language, not just to ‘know about’ that language, and this is an aim we all share – though students also need to ‘know about’ a language in order to function successfully in that language. As the CEF says, ‘... a language learner has to acquire both form and meaning’. For example, an **A1** descriptor might be ‘can understand simple directions’. In order to do this, students need to know lexical items (*left, right, straight on, first, second, third*), grammatical elements such as imperatives (*take the ..., turn ...*), fixed phrases (*you can’t miss it*), and probably be able to ask for repetition. New Headway teaches the language and skills that students will need in order to develop their range of communicative competences.

Here are some examples of how New Headway fits with the aims of the CEF:

- The **Grammar, Vocabulary, and Everyday English** syllabus gives students the linguistic competences they need to be able to communicate successfully.
- Regular **receptive and productive work** on the four skills – every Student’s Book unit has listening, reading, and writing practice – emphasizes what student’s *do* with English.
- The **Everyday English** feature in each unit focuses on language which is likely to be encountered by students in real-life situations, highlighting language use for practical, concrete purposes.
- The **Workbook, Teacher’s Resource Book, CD-Rom, teacher’s website** and **student’s website** all offer extra practice and learning resources.
- The **Teacher’s Book** gives you all the support you need, including extra photocopiable material, a word list, and ideas to help you respond to your students’ needs.

The CEF emphasizes that teachers and materials writers will continue to need to make their own decisions about the precise linguistic content of their courses – and that is what we have done in New Headway. We hope that the decisions we have made in writing the course help you and your students as much as they can.

You can find information about the Council of Europe and its aims by visiting its website:

[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

On this site there are hyperlinked pdfs of the CEF document in various European languages.

## Common European Framework of Reference Level Overview

<b>proficient</b>	<b>C2</b>	Mastery	This level is not supposed to equal native speaker mastery – though a student at this level would be a very successful learner who can use a language with real precision and fluency.
	<b>C1</b>	Effective Operational Proficiency	At this level students command a wide range of language.
<b>independent</b>	<b>B2</b>	Vantage	This level is where language use begins to become more ‘abstract’, for example giving and justifying opinions, summarizing a short story or plot, or giving detailed instructions.
	<b>B1</b>	Threshold	At this level students can maintain a conversation and express ideas. They can also begin to deal with problems and situations where they meet unpredictable language.
<b>basic</b>	<b>A2</b>	Waystage	This level has lots of descriptors for social functions, for example, greeting people, asking about work and free time, and making invitations.
	<b>A1</b>	Breakthrough	This is the lowest level of ‘generative language use’ – students can interact in a simple way and ask and answer simple questions.
<p>The CEF recognizes a level of ability below <b>A1</b>, which includes descriptors such as ‘can say <i>yes, no, please, thank you</i>’, ‘can use some basic greetings’, ‘can fill in uncomplicated forms’.</p>			<p>For a breakdown of the six global levels above, see chapter 3 of the CEF document.</p> <p>For detailed scales for each area of competence, see chapter 4 of the CEF document.</p>
<p>The CEF also recognizes that there can be levels between these six global levels, such as <b>A2+</b>, <b>B1+</b> and <b>B2+</b>.</p>			

## New Headway and the Common European Framework

The Common European Framework			New Headway English Course					
	CEF LEVELS	EXAM TARGETS	Beginner	Elementary	Pre-Intermediate	Intermediate	Upper-Intermediate	Advanced
PROFICIENT USER	working within <b>C2</b>	working towards <b>CPE</b>						
	working within <b>C1</b>	working towards <b>CAE</b>						
INDEPENDENT USER	working within <b>B2</b>	working towards <b>FCE</b>						
	working within <b>B1</b>	working towards <b>PET</b>						
BASIC USER	working within <b>A2</b>	working towards <b>KET</b>						
	working within <b>A1</b>							
	CEF LEVELS	EXAM TARGETS	Beginner	Elementary	Pre-Intermediate	Intermediate	Upper-Intermediate	Advanced