

Language
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Security Bulletin

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Introducing Know Your Customer technology

LanguageCert is partnering with Aware to introduce **Know Your Customer (KYC) technology** into our test candidate onboarding process. KYC helps deter and prevent people using fake and proxy identities during language test events.

An increasing number of governments and businesses who must assure the identity of their customers are now using KYC technology. This includes those involved in financial services, law enforcement, border management, defence and intelligence, and healthcare. KYC gives organisations the power to rapidly compare the customer in front of them with a vast range of official documentation and records, as well as previous customer identities.

The KYC software authenticates each customer against official identity documentation such as passports. Authentication can also extend to biometric facial matching, which compares a live image of the customer against that recorded in their official identity document. KYC can also include voice recognition and validation, where we will record the voice of the customer as part of their initial registration and compare it against subsequent recordings. This voice element can be extremely effective for our language exams which include a speaking component.

The system will operate within test centres and test venues, as well as for online, remote proctored testing¹. This will result in a comprehensive and robust onboarding process which uses KYC technology in collaboration with our trained and accredited invigilation professionals.

¹The implementation of LanguageCert's KYC service will start with our online proctored tests, with test centre implementation to follow.

Why is KYC necessary?

A minority of test candidates are intent on using fraudulent means to pass their language test and gain certification. This has always been the case, but the industry is noticing an increasing number of **proxy test takers**. These proxies are people paid to take a test on someone else's behalf. Given the market for proxy test takers, those intent on fraud are using increasingly sophisticated methods to evade detection.

To combat proxy candidates, test suppliers rely upon rigorous candidate identity checks using specially trained staff. However, current, and emerging technologies enable fraudsters to accurately replicate official identity documents such as passports and driver licences, replacing the candidate's image with that of the proxy, for example.

Given the range and variety of official identity documents within a single country and across all the countries of the world, it is hard for any single test invigilator to retain detailed knowledge of every possible form of identity document, and how to identify those that are fake.

KYC gets around this knowledge capacity issue by using the power of technology to rapidly make comparisons between the identity document presented by the candidate, and a global database of registered official documents.

The technology can also apply a range of further checks to test and assure candidate authenticity. This includes:

- **Biometric facial matching** between the live image of the presenting candidate, and the image used in their official identity document.
- **Liveness detection**, to confirm that the biometric data used by the candidate is from a live human and is not a fake or spoof attempt.
- **Voice capture**, to compare the candidate's voice as recorded during their initial test registration, and that heard when presenting for their test event².

The result is a range of services that extend our ability to scrutinise and prove the identity of each test taker.

Our partnership with Aware

Aware is a leading global provider of **biometric software products and services**. Their solutions empower users to own and control their identity, whilst ensuring security, minimising service friction, and maximising convenience. LanguageCert has partnered with Aware for the **provision of proven, assured KYC technology** for use throughout our test and certification services. Aware works with governments, financial institutions and more than 150 law enforcement agencies.

²Voice capture recognition will be available from 2024.

How can you benefit from LanguageCert's identity checks?

LanguageCert's KYC service offers **greater assurance** where certified language proficiency is vital for selecting and accepting students. The addition of KYC to our existing identity checks and onboarding processes, means you can depend upon **LanguageCert's language test results and certification being authentic.**

To benefit from this, we suggest you:

- Always use LanguageCert's online verification service to confirm candidates' results are genuine.
- Consider only accepting exam results that are less than 12 months' old. More recent results are simpler to investigate and assure, due to the availability of digital test recordings.
- Contact us by email at partnership@languagecert.org, if you have doubts about a candidate's legitimacy. Our Quality and Educational Partnerships team can help assure candidates if you can provide their Statement of Results, any identification documents they use, and any other supporting information.



Language Cert

LanguageCert is an Awarding Organisation dedicated to language skills assessment and certification, and recognised by the designated official authorities in England (Ofqual) and Wales (Qualifications Wales).

Its **recognition by Ofqual** underpins LanguageCert's rigorous high standards and processes deployed in the development, delivery and award of qualifications that aim to enhance the lives and careers of its candidates.

LanguageCert tests are accepted as proof of English language proficiency by more than **2,300 educational institutions, government departments, corporations and professional associations** in more than **90 countries**.