

# **Guide to Pearson Test of English General**

Level 5 (Proficient)

July 2018

## Ofqual Accreditation

Pearson Test of English General (PTE General) tests are accredited as 'ESOL International' qualifications by the regulators of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Ofqual, the Welsh Assembly Government and CEA respectively).

ESOL International qualifications are designed for candidates who are not native speakers of English and who wish to achieve a high quality, internationally recognized qualification in English that is available and recognized world-wide and, at the highest level (NQF level 3 / CEF C2), candidates who are preparing for entry to higher education or professional employment in the UK or elsewhere.

ESOL International qualifications are designed to reference the descriptions of language proficiency in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF). The levels in the CEF have been mapped to the levels in the National Qualifications Framework for England Wales and Northern Ireland (see, *Pathways to Proficiency: the alignment of language proficiency scales for assessing competence in English Language*, DFES / QCA, 2003).

In the process of accreditation the six levels of PTE General have been allocated to levels of the National Qualifications Framework. PTE General tests are accredited under the following titles in the UK:

	Accredited title	Accreditation number
PTE General A1	Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 1)	500/1903/X
PTE General 1	Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 2)	500/1962/4
PTE General 2	Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 3)	500/1961/2
PTE General 3	Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International	500/1926/0
PTE General 4	Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International	500/1964/8
PTE General 5	Edexcel Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International	500/1963/6

# Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Introduction to the guide</b>	<b>1</b>
Who is it for?	
What is in the guide?	
<b>1. Introduction to Pearson Test of English General</b>	<b>2</b>
Overview	
Key features	
<b>2. Preparation</b>	<b>5</b>
What resources can I use to prepare test takers for PTE General?	
Other resources	
<b>3. Scoring</b>	<b>7</b>
Overview of scoring	
Common European Framework of Reference for Languages	
<b>4. Test format</b>	<b>10</b>
Overview	
<b>5. Description of item types</b>	<b>12</b>
Written test	
Spoken test	
<b>Contact us</b>	

# Introduction to the guide

## Who is it for?

The *Guide to Pearson Test of English General* is designed for anyone preparing students for the test or who wants to learn more about it.

## What is in the guide?

This guide contains five key parts:

An introduction to Pearson Test of English General including what it is, how it has been developed, who takes it and the skills tested. Key features of the test are outlined, including realistic themes, authentic sources and integrated skills. Information about test delivery and test results is also given.

The second part gives an outline of preparation resources that will be made available.

The third part provides general information about scoring within the test and the relationship between PTE General and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (CEF) (Council of Europe, 2001).

In the fourth part an overview is provided of the formats of the spoken and written tests.

The final part of the guide gives an explanation of each section within the written and spoken tests at Level 5. This includes a description of the item types, skills assessed, tasks, objectives, timings and stimulus information. In addition, details about scoring and the marking criteria are presented.

# 1. Introduction to Pearson Test of English General

## Overview

### What is Pearson Test of English General?

PTE General is an assessment solution at six different levels (A1, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) designed to assess and accredit general English language proficiency. These tests are provided in partnership with Edexcel Limited, the largest UK awarding body for academic and vocational qualifications. Edexcel Limited is the official awarding body for PTE General.

The tests are recognized globally and are accepted by universities, employers and national education authorities in many countries as evidence of a required standard of English.

### Development of PTE General

PTE General is the revised suite of tests formerly known as the London Tests of English. The changes to the tests were based on extensive consultation with test centers, teachers and test takers in a number of countries. The revision process was monitored at every stage by an independent Technical Advisory Group (TAG) made up of some of the world's leading language testing experts (further information about the TAG is available within the research area of [www.pearsonpte.com/pte-general](http://www.pearsonpte.com/pte-general)).

During the revision process, the descriptors within the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF) (Council of Europe, 2001) were used to guide the writing of the specification for each item type in the test and to describe the required performance of test takers at each CEF level (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2). In relating the test scores to the CEF, Pearson follows the procedures as recommended in the Council of Europe manual *Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)*, available at [http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/Manuel1\\_EN.asp](http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/Manuel1_EN.asp).

### Who takes PTE General?

PTE General is intended for learners of English who are speakers of other languages (ESOL). At the different levels the test items do not require any prior knowledge of the world beyond what people may need at a comparable level in their own language to function in their social, academic or professional life.

Children younger than 14 may prefer to sit tests from the suite of Pearson Test of English Young Learners, information for which is available at [www.pearsonpte.com/pte-young-learners](http://www.pearsonpte.com/pte-young-learners).

### What skills are tested?

PTE General assesses the four skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. Test takers are required to successfully complete real life tasks, such as writing messages, understanding talks and presentations, understanding newspaper articles or participating in conversations.

The skills are tested at the six levels matched to the descriptors in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, A1 to C2 (see part 3 Scoring, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

## **Key features**

### **Realistic themes, authentic sources and tasks**

The item types in each PTE General test are grouped together around topics referred to as themes. These are used in item types across language skills, for example listening and reading or reading and writing. Themes in levels A1-2 tend to relate to familiar and routine matters, such as home and shopping. At levels 3-5 they can be more abstract, such as global issues like pollution and conservation. The written component of the test contains three themes and the spoken part two. Sections 7 and 8 in the written part are thematically linked. Sections 12 and 13 in the spoken part are related by theme.

Most of the texts used to assess reading and listening, particularly at levels 3-5, are authentic. They are sourced, for example, from books, magazines, newspapers, websites, radio broadcasts, recorded messages and podcasts. Hence PTE General is a measure of real, practical English.

Test takers are asked to listen once to the recordings in Section 1 of the test. In sections 2 and 3 candidates listen twice.

### **Integrated skills**

PTE General incorporates integrated skills. This is important because when communicating in English, students are often required to combine several language skills to perform a task, for example listening to information and writing about what is heard.

### **Test delivery**

There are 6 test sessions scheduled per year.

PTE General consists of a written paper-based test and a spoken test, which are delivered through a number of registered centers in over 30 territories globally.

Registered test centers delivering PTE General are typically schools, language schools and colleges. Each prospective center is required to provide evidence to ensure that the tests will be conducted according to the regulations as part of registering to become a test center. In some territories there are locally based agents or representatives.

Information about test session dates, test center locations, registering to take PTE General or registering to become a test center is available at [www.pearsonpte.com/pte-general](http://www.pearsonpte.com/pte-general).

### **Test results**

Test results are made available five to eight weeks after the date that the test was taken. Test centers can view results of test takers they have registered via Edexcel Online, our secure online results service. This service is made available to most test centers upon approval to deliver PTE General. Alternatively, results can be delivered by secure post if required.

Two to three weeks after receipt of results, test centers will receive test certificates.

## Test structure

PTE General consists of a written and a spoken test.

The written test is made up of nine sections at all levels and assesses listening, reading and writing.

Written test (all levels)	
Sections	Skills
1	Listening
2	Listening and writing
3	Listening
4-7	Reading
8-9	Writing

The spoken test consists of three sections at levels A1 and 1, and four sections at levels 2-5. It assesses speaking.

Spoken test (A1-1)	
Sections	Skills
10	Speaking
11	Not featured at these levels
12	Speaking
13	Speaking

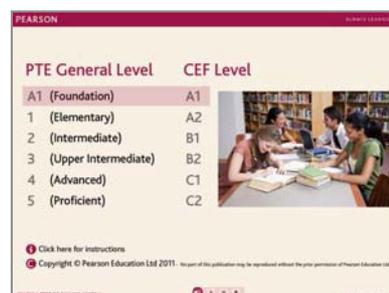
Spoken test (2-5)	
Sections	Skills
10	Speaking
11	Speaking
12	Speaking
13	Speaking

## 2. Preparation

### What resources can I use to prepare test takers for PTE General?

#### Tutorial

The *PTE General Tutorial* provides an interactive tour of the test to give you a detailed overview of the tasks and skills assessed at each of the six levels.

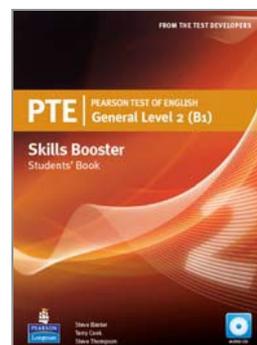


PTE General Level	CEFL Level
A1 (Foundation)	A1
1 (Elementary)	A2
2 (Intermediate)	B1
3 (Upper Intermediate)	B2
4 (Advanced)	C1
5 (Proficient)	C2

Click here for instructions  
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#### Skills Booster

The *PTE General Skills Boosters* offer guided practice of tasks within the test, grammar and vocabulary activities, a writing guide and five practice tests. They can be purchased at levels 2–5 and consist of a Teachers' Book, Students' Book and audio CD.



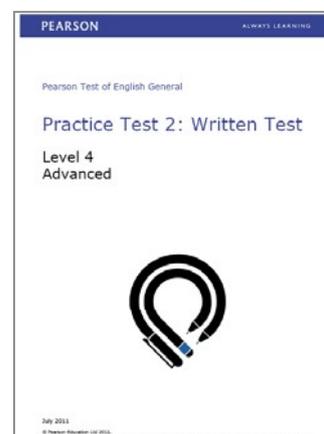
#### Skills Pod

The *PTE General Skills Pod* recommends over 100 published general ELT courses that provide material for teachers to use with test takers to develop skills assessed within the test.



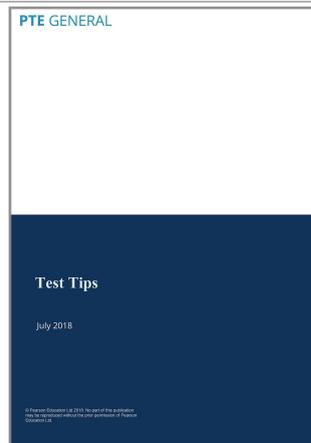
#### Practice Tests

Three practice tests at most levels with audio, transcripts and answer keys are available to download for free.



## Test Tips

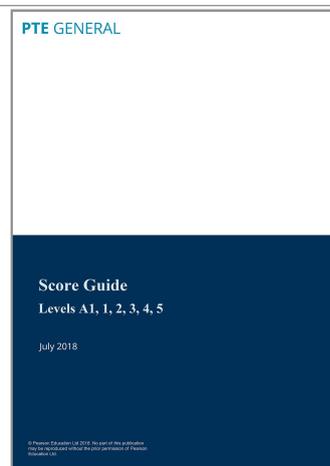
Over 50 test tips are provided for teachers preparing test takers for PTE General at all levels.



## Other resources

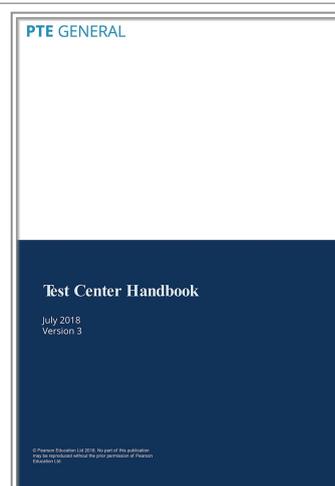
### Score Guide

The *Score Guide* gives detailed information about how sections of PTE General are scored and provides written and spoken samples of test taker performance with commentary for selected tasks.



### Test Center Handbook

The *Test Center Handbook* guides test centers through the process of registering for and administering the test.



All resources listed and others are available from the Pearson Tests of English website at [www.pearsonpte.com/pte-general](http://www.pearsonpte.com/pte-general).

### 3. Scoring

#### Overview of scoring

The PTE General written test is scored out of 75 and the spoken test out of 25.

Figure 1 shows the sections, skills tested and the maximum number of score points that can be achieved for the written paper at levels A1-5.

Sections	Skills	Score points
1	Listening	10
2	Listening and writing	10 (5 listening, 5 writing)
3	Listening	10
4	Reading	5
5	Reading	5
6	Reading	8
7	Reading	7
8	Writing	10
9	Writing	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>

Figure 1. Distribution of score points: written test (all levels)

Figure 2, on the next page, shows the sections, skills tested and the maximum number of score points that can be achieved for the spoken test at levels A1 and 1, and levels 2-5.

Detailed information about scoring is available within the *Score Guide* at [www.pearsonpte.com/pte-general](http://www.pearsonpte.com/pte-general).

Sections	Skills	Score points
<b>Levels A1 - 1</b>		
10	Speaking	25 score points in total; distributed across the marking criteria
12	Speaking	
13	Speaking	
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>
<b>Levels 2-5</b>		
10	Speaking	25 score points in total; distributed across the marking criteria
11	Speaking	
12	Speaking	
13	Speaking	
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>

Figure 2. Distribution of score points: spoken test (A1-1; 2-5)

## Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The six levels of PTE General have been aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF), a widely recognized benchmark for language ability. The CEF includes a set of language levels defined by descriptors of language competencies. The alignment process as described in the manual (Council of Europe, 2009) distinguishes a number of activities (specification, familiarization, standardization training/benchmarking, standard setting and validation). Although Pearson has gone through these activities, continual validation work is carried out using the most recent administrations of the test.

The framework was developed by the Council of Europe (2001) to enable language learners, teachers, universities and potential employers to compare and relate language qualifications gained in different educational contexts.

The CEF describes language proficiency in listening, reading, speaking and writing on a six-level scale, grouped into three bands: A1–A2 (Basic User), B1–B2 (Independent User), C1–C2 (Proficient User). Figure 3 overleaf indicates what students should be able to do at different CEF levels relevant to PTE General.

Students at this level:	Council of Europe levels	PTE General
Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.	Proficient User C2	Level 5 Proficient
Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.	Effective Operational Proficiency Proficient User C1	Level 4 Advanced
Can understand the main ideas of complex texts on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of	Vantage Independent User B2	Level 3 Upper Intermediate
Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.	Threshold Independent User B1	Level 2 Intermediate
Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.	Waystage Basic User A2	Level 1 Elementary
Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.	Breakthrough Basic User A1	Level A1 Foundation

Figure 3. CEF Descriptors relevant to PTE General  
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## 4. Test format

### Overview

The overall timing for the written test at Level 5 is **2 hours and 55 minutes**. The information in Figure 4 indicates for sections of the written test at Level 5: the skills assessed, item types, objectives and the maximum number of score points awarded.

### Written test

Sections	Skills	Item types	Objectives	Score points
1	Listening	3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main detail in short spoken	10
2	Listening and writing	Dictation	To assess ability to understand an extended utterance by transcribing a spoken text	5 listening 5 writing
3	Listening	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts	10
4	Reading	Gap fill 3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts	5
5	Reading	3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main ideas in an extended written text	5
6	Reading	Open-ended question	To assess ability to understand the main points of short and extended written texts	8
7	Reading	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from an extended written text	7
8	Writing	Write correspondence	To assess ability to write a piece of correspondence (150–200 words)	10
9	Writing	Write text	To assess ability to write a short text from own experience, knowledge or imagination (250-300 words)	10
<b>Total</b>				<b>75</b>

Figure 4. Level 5 (Proficient) written test

The overall timing for the spoken test at Level 5 is **8 minutes**. The information in Figure 5 indicates for sections of the spoken test at Level 5: the skills assessed, item types, objectives, timing and the maximum number of score points awarded.

### Spoken test

Sections	Skills	Item types	Objectives	Timing	Score points
10	Speaking	Sustained monologue	To assess ability to speak continuously about matters of personal information and interest	2 minutes	25 score points in total; distributed across the marking criteria
11	Speaking	Discussion	To assess ability to discuss a concrete or abstract issue	2 minutes	
12	Speaking	Describe picture	To assess ability to speak continuously on a topic related to two pictures	2 minutes	
13	Speaking	Role play	To assess ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately	2 minutes	
<b>Total</b>				<b>8 minutes</b>	<b>25</b>

Figure 5. Level 5 (Proficient) spoken test

## 5. Description of item types

### Written test

This part of the guide presents a description of the item type within each section of the written test. This includes what it tests, what test takers have to do, the item type objective, stimulus information and details on scoring.

#### Section 1

##### Listening

##### 3-option multiple choice

Section 1 comprises a *3-option multiple choice* item type. It assesses listening skills. It tests ability to understand the main detail in short spoken utterances.

**This is the Pearson Test of English General Level 5. This test takes 2 hours and 55 minutes.**

##### Section 1

You will have 10 seconds to read each question and the corresponding options. Then listen to the recording. After the recording you will have 10 seconds to choose the correct option. Put a cross (☒) in the box next to the correct answer, as in the example.

**Example:** What is the speaker doing?

- A recommending an action
- B criticising a practice
- C explaining a process

1. What did the company MJB do?

- A It made a record annual profit.
- B It won a lucrative new account.
- C It changed its advertising company.

2. A particular brand may be memorable if it

- A clearly depicts the product.
- B is associated with a celebrity.
- C appears in the tabloid press.

3. What point does the speaker make about advertising awards?

- A Advertisers waste time discussing them at work.
- B Clients have more respect for advertisers who win them.
- C People are more interested in winning them than they pretend to be.

4. What does the woman say about ecotourism?

- A It focuses on general rather than specific issues.
- B It prioritises the environment ahead of profit.
- C It draws attention to environmental concerns.

5. Who will be interviewed?
- A a photographer
  - B a publisher
  - C a writer
6. What does the man say about travellers in Australia?
- A It is difficult to generalise as they are diverse.
  - B They fairly soon grow tired of travelling.
  - C Most would rather have a good time than earn money.
7. What is on display at the Computer History Museum?
- A the original computer that Babbage made
  - B a replica of the computer made by Babbage
  - C a computer constructed using Babbage's plans
8. How does the man intend to use his computer?
- A to make music
  - B to watch films
  - C for his job
9. How does the woman feel?
- A resigned
  - B annoyed
  - C surprised
10. What does the speaker say about the paparazzi?
- A They look for clues that a famous person is coming.
  - B They go into parts of the airport where they are not allowed.
  - C They go to the airport when they learn that a famous person will be there.

(Total 10 marks)

## Task

Test takers listen once to ten short recordings, either monologues or dialogues, and answer a single 3-option multiple choice question or complete a sentence for each. There are ten questions to answer or sentences to complete; one per recording.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
<p>To assess ability to understand the main detail in short spoken utterances by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- identifying the situation</li><li>- identifying the speaker's role</li><li>- identifying the speakers' relationship</li><li>- identifying the topic</li><li>- recognizing function</li><li>- understanding implied meaning</li><li>- understanding idiomatic expression</li><li>- understanding expression of feeling</li><li>- understanding expression of attitude</li></ul>	<p>Short authentic recordings, one or two speakers Including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- transactional conversations</li><li>- social conversations</li><li>- public announcements</li></ul> <p>Including the following language functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- request for goods or services</li><li>- request for action</li><li>- request for information</li><li>- factual information</li><li>- expression of feelings</li><li>- offer</li><li>- invitation</li><li>- apology/excuse</li><li>- criticism/expression of dissatisfaction</li><li>- suggestion</li><li>- persuasion</li></ul>

## Scores

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correct answer has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of ten score points can be achieved in this section of the test.



## Task

Test takers listen to one person speaking and write exactly what is heard with correct spellings. The extract is played twice, the second time with pauses, giving time to write down word-for-word what is heard. There is one dictation to complete and one recording.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand an extended utterance by transcribing a spoken text	Instructions, news bulletins, announcements, broadcast features and factual information. The extracts are simulated authentic, descriptive and contain relatively formal language

## Scores

This item type has a weighting of ten score points. A maximum of five points for listening and five for writing can be achieved in this section of the test.

## Section 3

### Listening

#### Text, note completion

Section 3 comprises a *Text, note completion* item type. It assesses listening skills. It tests ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts.

#### Section 3

**12-16** You will hear a radio interview. First, read the notes below then listen and complete the notes with information from the interview. You will hear the recording twice.

**Example:** Responsible travel appeals to people who are no longer interested in

..... **mass tourism** .....

12. Responsible travellers prefer learning and discovering rather than completing a

.....

13. While it is not the worst offender, air travel is responsible for an increasing quantity of

.....

14. Using..... is advisable in order to have a better understanding of different cultures and ways of life.

15. .... is a quality that responsible travellers prize in their interactions with local culture.

16. Responsible travellers are aware when their presence might be

.....

17-21 You will hear a lecture on aggressive marketing. First, read the notes below then listen and complete the notes with information from the lecture. You will hear the recording twice.

**Example:** A..... huge marketing budget..... is not required in aggressive marketing as it depends more on creativity and effort.

- 17. Marketing of this type is often aimed at potential buyers when they are in  
.....
- 18. State-of-the-art communication technologies are employed to give the consumer a  
.....
- 19. In aggressive marketing.....have an advantage because of their flexibility and their proximity to consumers.
- 20. It is used in hidden ways so that.....is less likely.
- 21. In the end, it is essential for consumers to feel.....when it comes to marketeers.

**(Total 10 marks)**

**That is the end of the listening section of the test. Now go on to the other sections of the test.**

**Task**

Test takers listen twice to two recordings, either a monologue or dialogue, and complete a text or notes for each using the information heard. There are ten gaps to complete; five per task.

**Objective, stimulus**

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts	Authentic recordings of one or two speakers giving or exchanging information. The items replicate real life situations which require accurate comprehension and transcription of key information, (e.g., taking messages or notes) Including the following: - transactional conversations - public announcements - recorded messages

**Scores**

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correctly completed gap has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of ten score points can be achieved in this section of the test.

## Section 4

### Reading

#### Gap fill 3-option multiple choice

Section 4 comprises a *Gap fill 3-option multiple choice* item type. It assesses reading skills. It tests ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts.

#### Section 4

Read each text and put a cross (☒) by the missing word or phrase, as in the example.

Example:

##### Pre-existing conditions

Please note: you will not be covered for any pre-existing medical conditions that you may have. A condition will be considered pre-existing if it is a condition you have received treatment for, or one you knew about or in our reasonable opinion you.....:

- A were not aware of
- B need treatment for
- C should have known about

22.

Scientists have run pilot programs in schools for the past decade using computerized robots to teach English, science, maths and other subjects at different levels. While the robots to date have backed up human teachers.....:

- A many claim they give welcome assistance
- B eventually they will play a greater role
- C students have responded surprisingly well

23.

When flights are cancelled, you might be lucky enough to find yourself in one of the world's best airports. In this case, you're home free: these are virtual villages unto themselves....., you may face the horror of a bad airport. These monuments to drudgery and life-sapping bureaucracy may drive you to the brink – especially if you have children in tow.

- A On the flip side
- B Despite all this
- C On the whole

24.

A laptop thief with a conscience has posted a memory stick containing precious data to a professor, a week after stealing the device. The professor, who .....when it came to backing up data, had left her bag hidden behind the stairwell of her apartment block. She soon realised her bag had vanished along with ten years of irreplaceable data.

- A suspected she had been stalked
- B claimed she was unaware
- C admitted to being lax

25.

Graduate Opportunity: Copywriter Required

- Break into the highly competitive advertising industry with our ever-growing, prestige company.
- Excellent opportunities for rapid career progression in the copywriting field.
- No experience necessary.....:

Launch your graduate career within a leading, globally recognised multimedia company.

- A and you will work independently
- B but work history in the field is a must
- C as full training is provided

26.

ACON International Travel Insurance lets you enjoy your vacation with the peace of mind that if something goes amiss, we'll be here to help you 24/7, 365 days a year. With our Premium International Travel Insurance Policy, you are dealing directly with the insurer.....there is no extra agent's commission.

- A Just as well
- B That means
- C Besides this

(Total 5 marks)

### Task

Test takers read five short texts, each containing a gap, and choose which of three answer options is the missing word or phrase. There are five gaps to complete; one per text.

## Objectives, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts	Authentic text types include: labels, instructions, signs, notices, menus, advertisements and announcements

## Scores

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correctly completed gap has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of five score points can be achieved in this section of the test.

## Section 5

### Reading

#### 3-option multiple choice

Section 5 comprises a *3-option multiple choice* item type. It assesses reading skills. It tests ability to understand the main ideas in an extended written text.

#### Section 5

Read the article below and answer the questions below. Put a cross (☒) in the box next to the correct answer, as in the example..

##### Hiding Behind the Screen

Human relations, and the self-image of the human being, have been profoundly affected by the Internet and by the ease with which images of other people can be summoned to the computer screen to become the objects of emotional attention. How should we conceptualize this change, and what is its effect on the psychic condition of those most given to constructing their world of interests and relationships through the screen? Is this change as damaging as many would have us believe, undermining our capacity for real relationships and placing a mere fantasy of relatedness in their stead?

First, we should make some distinctions. We all now use the computer to send messages to our friends and to others with whom we have dealings. This sort of communication is not different in any fundamental respect from the old practice of letter writing, except for its speed. Of course, we should not regard speed as a trivial feature. The rapidity of modern communications does not merely accelerate the process whereby relationships are formed and severed; it inevitably changes how those relationships are conducted and understood. Absence is less painful with the Internet and the telephone, but it also loses some of its poignancy; moreover, e-mails are seldom composed as carefully as letters, since the very slowness with which a letter makes its way to its destination prompts us to put more of our feelings into the words. Still, e-mail is reality, not virtual reality, and the changes it has brought about are changes in real communication between real people.

Nor does the existence of social networks, which are also for the most part real communication between real people, involve any attempt simply to substitute a virtual reality for the actual one. On the contrary, they are parasitic on the real relationships they foster, and which they alter in large part by encouraging people to put themselves on display, and in turn to become voyeurs of the displays of others. Some might claim that the existence of these networking sites provides a social and psychological benefit, helping those who shy away from presenting themselves directly to the world to gain a public place and identity.

Yet already something new is entering the world of human relations with these innocent-seeming sites. No more need for weekly meetings, or the circle of friends in the downtown restaurant or bar. All those effortful ways of making contact can be dispensed with: a touch of the keyboard and you are there, where you wanted to be, on the site that defines your friends. But can this be real friendship, when it is pursued and developed in such facile and costless ways?

**Example:** According to the first sentence, what has internet communication influenced?

- A the intensity of feelings people have for others
- B the convenience of establishing contact
- C the way people see themselves

27. What does the writer ask in the first paragraph?

A Is the general public's mindset altered by increased internet use?

B How are the minds of active internet users influenced by their habits?

C What can be done about the harmful effects of internet on the way people interact?

28. What does the writer believe about writing letters?

A It is the same as sending email in many ways.

B It is a dying tradition that should be preserved.

C It is a better way of conveying important information.

29. According to the writer, what change is electronic communication responsible for?

A Email does not feel authentic because it is not as tangible.

B People do not respond as intensely to emails as they do to letters.

C The physical distance between people is less of an issue than it once was.

30. What does the writer say about social networks?

A They allow people to forge relationships based on misrepresentations.

B They feed off actual relationships, changing them in the process.

C They try to take the place of actual relationships.

31. What does the writer imply about friendship in the final paragraph?

A True friendship requires a higher degree of effort than we devote to online relationships.

B It is fortunate that friendships can be maintained more easily than they once were.

C Previous methods of staying in touch are now largely redundant.

**(Total 5 marks)**

## Task

Test takers read a text and answer five questions (or complete five sentences) from a choice of three answer options. There are five answers to choose and one text.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand the main ideas in an extended written text: Including the following: - opinions - attitudes - implied meanings	Authentic text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures. Questions address content, style, connotation, implication and inference

## Scores

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correct answer has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of five score points can be achieved in this section of the test.

## Section 6

### Reading

#### Open-ended question

Section 6 comprises an *Open-ended question* item type. It assesses reading skills. It tests ability to understand the main points of short and extended written texts.

#### Section 6

Read the blog below and answer the questions.

##### Mindset adjustments required in the ad industry

The staff turnover rate in the advertising industry is currently averaging 37% per annum. In a single year, around four out of every 10 people that work for an ad company will walk out the door. This means new staff have to be recruited and trained, which costs time, effort and money – only to have most of those people leave again the next year.

Our own cannibalistic attitude towards recruiting talent seems only to be eclipsed by our inability to demonstrate any loyalty to the companies which have fostered the skills we now use as currency. This is without a doubt the single biggest challenge facing our industry today and people are starting to realize it. "iWork/life balance" is a term we see thrown around a lot these days, with promises and programs now being put in place by some companies to help facilitate this. Nevertheless, in many firms when someone gets up out of their chair and heads for the door at the end of the day on time, they are looked upon poorly, whispered about and even openly mocked. Instead of trying to bring these people down, I suggest we reward those who work efficiently and begin the transformation of the prevailing attitude that needs to take place.

**Example:** What issue in the advertising industry is reflected in the statistics quoted?

..... staff turnover rate .....

32. Which two aspects of staffing does the writer mention as requiring company resources?

.....

33. What quality does the writer claim that employees lack?

.....

34. What ideal do some companies attempt to work towards?

.....

35. According to the writer, what has to change in order to solve the problems?

.....

Read the article below and answer the questions.

**More Airline Embarrassment**

Just days after the baggage-handlers returned to work after a strike over the length of their shifts, more chaos abounds at Rockford airport. The national airline North Plain Air faces a baggage nightmare after a stray rock-climbing rope jammed a vital conveyor in Rockford yesterday. The airline is believed to have approximately 600 pieces of luggage awaiting delivery nationwide and airline spokesperson Carolina Triani has advised passengers to return to their final airport destination and search through the piles to find their bags. In what is shaping up to be a PR disaster for the airline, Triani has admitted to "bag issues" at Rockford Airport but could not confirm the number of bags still missing.

Passengers claim that on arrival, their luggage was nowhere to be seen. Portstown-bound passengers were told they could walk out on to the tarmac to search through trolleys of missing bags if they were willing to sign a form and don a yellow vest. Alternatively, they could fill out a lost luggage form and wait for a call.

Passenger John Farry said his flight experienced delays thanks to the baggage drama and, on landing, he saw passengers and crew from earlier flights still waiting for their luggage. Alas, his own bags remain at large.

**Example:** What were airport employees dissatisfied about?

..... (the length of their) shifts .....

36. What piece of airport equipment was damaged?

.....

37. What information is the spokesperson unable to give?

.....

38. What did passengers in Portstown have to do before being allowed to look for their bags on the tarmac?

.....

39. What did John Farry find when he arrived at his destination?

.....

**(Total 8 marks)**

**Task**

Test takers read two texts and answer eight questions about them using single words or short answers. There are eight questions to answer; four per text.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand the main points of short and extended written texts	Authentic text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures and website articles. Questions address content, style, connotation, implication and inference

## Scores

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correct answer has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of eight score points can be achieved in this section of the test.

## Section 7

### Reading

#### Text, note completion

Section 7 comprises a *Text, note completion* item type. It assesses reading skills. It tests ability to extract specific information from an extended written text.

#### Section 7

Read the article below and complete the notes. Write no more than three words from the article in each gap.

##### **The Influence of Food Advertising on Children**

Almost all of the studies on the impact of television advertising on children's food preferences and behaviors were conducted in the mid 1970s and the 1980s. These studies focused on the relationship between children's exposure to television advertising and their food preferences, food intake or purchase requests. A recent review on the effects of television food advertising on preschool and school-age children's food behavior concluded that: 1) studies of food preferences using experimental designs have consistently shown that children exposed to advertising will choose advertised food products at significantly higher rates than children who were not exposed; 2) findings from food purchase request studies based on surveys, diaries, experimental trials, and direct observation of mother-child pairs shopping have consistently shown that children's exposure to food television advertising increases the number of attempts children make to influence food purchases their parents buy; 3) purchase requests for specific brands or categories of food products also reflect product advertising frequencies; and 4) fewer studies have been conducted on food advertising effects on actual food intake, in part due to difficulty in managing children's exposure to advertising or to foods outside experimental settings.

However, considering all the evidence to date, the weight of the scientific studies suggests that television food advertising is associated with more favorable attitudes and behaviors towards the advertised product. The research evidence is strong showing that preschoolers and grade school children's food preferences and food purchase requests for high sugar and high fat foods are influenced by television exposure to food advertising.

Advertising and marketing aimed at children is rapidly becoming a pervasive presence on the Internet, with new techniques constantly being developed, yet advertising on the Web is virtually unrestricted. Advertising and content for children are often seamlessly interwoven in online "infomercials," interactive forms of product placement, and branded environments on food company websites.

In the mid 1990s, children's media advocacy groups documented a number of exploitative data collection marketing practices on children's websites used to gather personal information from children. These included interactive surveys with animated characters or spokespersons, guest books, registrations, incentives, contests, and prizes for filling out surveys. This information permitted companies to conduct market research which then could be used to create personalized marketing to children.

It is evident that food advertising targeting children is well-funded and saturates their environment from multiple channels. Furthermore, much of the non-television advertising, such as the food companies' web sites, toys and in-school marketing, is indirect and subtle (e.g., is it a toy or an ad?). Finally, available evidence suggests that food ads on television have an influence on children's food choices. As children have become an increasingly important target market for the food industry, consumer and child advocate organizations have become increasingly concerned that adequate safeguards do not exist to protect children from exploitative commercial gain.

**Example:** Most research into the way in which.....television advertising..... influences what children like to eat was done several decades ago.

- 40. In the mid-1970s and 1980s, researchers studied the connection between how much advertising children saw and what they wanted to eat, what they ate and their .....
- 41. Because of problems in controlling the subjects' environment, little research exists on how advertising influences children's.....
- 42. Overall, the research indicates that food advertising on TV is linked to positive.....in relation to what is being advertised.
- 43. Food company websites frequently blend advertisements and..... in such a way that children cannot distinguish between the two.
- 44. In the 1990s several instances were found where companies used unfair means to get children to give them.....
- 45. Using knowledge gained by suspect means, companies were able to make.....aimed at children.
- 46. Lobby groups would like to see.....in place for children.

**(Total 7 marks)**

**Task**

Test takers read a text and use information from it to fill seven gaps in a second incomplete text or notes. There are seven gaps to complete, one source text and a second incomplete text or notes.

**Objective, stimulus**

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to extract specific information from an extended written text	Authentic text types include: newspaper, magazine and website articles, or textbooks

**Scores**

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correctly completed gap has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of seven score points can be achieved in this section of the test.



## Task

Test takers write an email, formal or informal letter or response in another format based on information given in Section 7. There is one text to write (150–200 words). There is a 'tolerated' word limit of 120–220 words for Section 8. If the response is below or over this, test takers will automatically score 0 for the section.

## Objectives, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to write a piece of correspondence	Instructions which include the purpose of the text, the intended content of the message and the recipient. The task gives the test taker the opportunity to use language flexibly and effectively, to persuade, convince, amuse, impress or otherwise move the reader

## Scores

This item type has a weighting of ten score points.

Written responses (sections 8 and 9) are scored according to **how well** test takers perform against the following criteria:

Range	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and to eliminate ambiguity Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms
Accuracy	Maintains consistent grammatical and lexical control of complex language
Coherence and Cohesion	Can create coherent and cohesive text making full and appropriate use of a variety of organizational patterns and a wide range of cohesive devices
Orthographic Control	Writing is orthographically free of error

In addition, performance in this section is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

Written interaction	Can express him/herself with clarity, precision and great flexibility differentiating finer shades of meaning in complex professional and/or academic texts
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## Task

Test takers write a piece of free writing from a choice of two given topics. The form of the text may be:

- factual: leaflet, blog entry, article
- critical: review or report
- analytical: essay

There is one text to write (250–300 words). There is a 'tolerated' word limit of 150-330 words for Section 8. If the response is below or over this, test takers will automatically score 0 for the section.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to write a short text from own experience, knowledge or imagination	A choice of two topics providing the test taker with the opportunity to give their point of view, expand supporting points, give reasons and relevant examples

## Scores

This item type has a weighting of ten score points.

Written responses (sections 8 and 9) are scored according to **how well** test takers perform against the following criteria:

Range	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and to eliminate ambiguity
Accuracy	Maintains consistent grammatical and lexical control of complex language
Coherence and Cohesion	Can create coherent and cohesive text making full and appropriate use of a variety of organizational patterns and a wide range of
Orthographic control	Writing is orthographically free of error

In addition, performance in this section is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

Written production	Can write clear, smoothly flowing, complex texts in an appropriate and effective style and a logical structure which helps the reader to find significant points
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## Summary: written test item type information

Section	Item types	Objectives	Tasks	Stimulus
<b>Section 1: Listening</b>	3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main detail in short spoken utterances by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identifying the situation</li> <li>- identifying the speaker's role</li> <li>- identifying the speakers' relationship</li> <li>- identifying the topic</li> <li>- recognizing function</li> <li>- understanding implied meaning</li> <li>- understanding idiomatic expression</li> <li>- understanding expression of feeling</li> <li>- understanding expression of attitude</li> </ul>	Listen once to ten short recordings, either monologues or dialogues, and answer a single 3-option multiple choice question or complete a sentence for each. Ten items	Short authentic recordings, one or two speakers Including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transactional conversations</li> <li>- social conversations</li> <li>- public announcements</li> </ul> Including the following language functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- request for goods or services</li> <li>- request for action</li> <li>- request for information</li> <li>- factual information</li> <li>- expression of feelings</li> <li>- offer</li> <li>- invitation</li> <li>- apology/excuse</li> <li>- criticism/expression of dissatisfaction</li> <li>- suggestion</li> <li>- persuasion</li> </ul>
<b>Section 2: Listening and writing</b>	Dictation	To assess ability to understand an extended utterance by transcribing a spoken text	Listen to one person speaking and write exactly what is heard with correct spellings. The extract is played twice, the second time with pauses, giving time to write down word-for-word what is heard. One dictation	Instructions, news bulletins, announcements, broadcast features and factual information. The extracts are simulated authentic, descriptive and contain relatively formal language
<b>Section 3: Listening</b>	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts	Listen twice to two recordings, either a monologue or dialogue, and complete a text or notes for each using the information heard. Ten gaps	Authentic recordings of one or two speakers giving or exchanging information. The items replicate real life situations which require accurate comprehension and transcription of key information, (e.g., taking messages or notes) Including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transactional conversations</li> <li>- public announcements</li> <li>- recorded messages</li> </ul>
<b>Section 4: Reading</b>	Gap fill 3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts	Read five short texts, each containing a gap, and choose which of three answer options is the missing word or phrase. Five gaps	Authentic text types include: labels, instructions, signs, notices, menus, advertisements, announcements
<b>Section 5: Reading</b>	3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main ideas in an extended written text Including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- opinions</li> <li>- attitudes</li> <li>- implied meanings</li> </ul>	Read a text and answer five questions or complete five sentences from a choice of three answer options. Five questions or gaps	Authentic text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures. Questions address content, style, connotation, implication and inference

<b>Section 6: Reading</b>	Open-ended question	To assess ability to understand the main points of short and extended written texts	Read two texts and answer eight questions about them using single words or short answers. Eight questions	Authentic text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures and website articles. Questions address content, style, connotation, implication and inference
<b>Section 7: Reading</b>	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from an extended written text	Read a text and use information from it to fill seven gaps in a second incomplete text or notes. Seven gaps	Authentic text types include: newspaper, magazine and website articles or textbooks
<b>Section 8: Writing</b>	Write correspondence	To assess ability to write a piece of correspondence	Write an email, formal or informal letter or response in another format based on information given in Section 7. One text (150–200 words)	Instructions which include the purpose of the text, the intended content of the message and the recipient. The task gives the test taker the opportunity to use language flexibly and effectively, to persuade, convince, amuse, impress or otherwise move the reader
<b>Section 9: Writing</b>	Write text	To assess ability to write a short text from own experience, knowledge or imagination	Write a piece of free writing from a choice of two given topics. The form of the text may be: - factual: leaflet, blog entry, article - critical: review or report - analytical: essay. One text (250–300 words)	A choice of two topics providing the test taker with the opportunity to give their point of view, expand supporting points, give reasons and relevant examples

Figure 6. Level 5 (Proficient) written test item type information

# Spoken test

This part of the guide presents a detailed description of the item type within each section of the spoken test. This includes what it tests, what test takers have to do, timing, the item type objective, stimulus information and details on scoring.

## Section 10

### Speaking

#### Sustained monologue

Section 10 comprises a *Sustained monologue* item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to speak continuously about matters of personal information and interest.

PTE General Speaking Test: Level 5

**SECTION 10: PERSONAL INFORMATION (2 MINUTES)**

*Now I'd like you to speak on your own for about one and a half minutes.*

**Main prompt 1:**

- *How important is it to plan for the future?*

**Follow-up prompts:**

- *Do you generally prefer to make plans or to be spontaneous? Why?*
- *Do you have a clear idea of what you want to do in the future? Why / Why not?*
- *Do you think it is important for young people to have ambitions? Why / Why not?*
- *Why do you think young people often don't think about the long term future?*

**Main prompt 2:**

- *Describe the characteristics that you look for in a friend.*

**Follow-up prompts:**

- *Why is it important for people to have friends?*
- *Would you rather have a few close friends or a large group of friends? Why?*
- *Do you think that it is important for friends to have similar interests? Why / Why not?*
- *What are some common reasons that friendships come to an end?*

**Main prompt 3:**

- *Tell me about something you do to help protect the environment.*

**Follow-up prompts:**

- *Do you think recycling should be compulsory? Why / Why not?*
- *What do you think is the most serious environmental problem we are facing today?*
- *How would you encourage others to act in the interests of the natural environment?*
- *Should you be doing more to care for the environment or is it up to governments to make regulations? Why?*

**Main prompt 4:**

- *Describe the sorts of things that you like reading and the reasons why.*

**Follow-up prompts:**

- *What was the last thing you really enjoyed reading?*
- *How do your reading habits differ from the older generation's reading habits?*
- *How do you think your reading habits will change in the future?*
- *How could you get someone who hates reading to enjoy it?*

Image displaying interlocutor script and instructions.

## Task

Test takers speak without interruption in response to a main prompt posed by the interlocutor (up to 1.5 minutes). Follow-up questions are asked to encourage the test taker to continue talking. Prompts focus on present circumstances, past experience, tastes, preferences and future plans. This section of the test is **2 minutes**.

## Objective, stimulus

Task Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to speak continuously about matters of personal information and interest	Questions may require the test taker to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- choose between two alternatives</li><li>- explain in detail reasons for an opinion or preference</li><li>- speculate or respond to a hypothetical question</li><li>- highlight or comment on a particular aspect of a topic</li><li>- speak in a way that is particularly vivid or persuasive</li></ul>

## Scores

The score points for speaking are aggregated and contribute up to 25 marks towards the total score over the written and spoken tests of 100 marks.

The test taker is scored on **how well** they perform over the four speaking sections against the following criteria:

Fluency	Can express him/herself spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of
Interaction	Can interact with ease and skill, picking up and using non-verbal and intonational cues apparently effortlessly Can interweave his/her contribution into the joint discourse with fully natural turn taking, referencing and allusion making
Range	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and eliminate ambiguity
Accuracy	Maintains consistent grammatical and lexical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g., in forward planning, in monitoring)
Phonological control	Speech is immediately and clearly understood Uses assimilations and deletions comparable to native-like speech

In addition, performance in this section is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

Sustained monologue	Can give clear, smoothly flowing, elaborate and often memorable descriptions Can give elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion
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## Section 11

### Speaking

#### Discussion

Section 11 comprises a *Discussion* item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to discuss a concrete or abstract issue.

**SECTION 11: DISCUSSION (2 MINUTES)**

*Now, we are going to discuss something together. The question is: "People living a hundred years in the future will have an easier life than we do now." What do you think?*

(Use the following arguments as appropriate to take an opposing view to that of the test taker)

**For an easier life in the future**

- Technology is improving all the time – machines may do menial jobs that are now done by humans.
- Advances in science may lead to cures for diseases that we cannot currently treat.
- Globalisation is forcing us to look at solutions on a world scale – there will be more international cooperation.
- As non-renewable resources run out, people will be forced to explore alternative sources of energy which are better for the environment.

**Against an easier life in the future**

- Direct human contact will become rarer as we rely more heavily on technology to communicate.
- Even if we find cures for some diseases, new diseases will emerge.
- Maintaining a high standard of living will take its toll on the environment.
- Overpopulation will put a strain on resources.

Image displaying interlocutor script and instructions.

#### Task

Test takers give and support opinions on a topic in response to prompts put by the interlocutor. This section of the test is **2 minutes**.

#### Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to discuss a concrete or abstract issue	A discussion prompt on a topic about which it is feasible to have equally valid opposing opinions, feelings or ideas. The discussion is designed to elicit expression of complex and abstract ideas

#### Scores

The score points for speaking are aggregated and contribute up to 25 marks towards the total score over the written and spoken tests of 100 marks.

The test taker is scored on **how well** they perform over the four speaking sections against the following criteria:

Fluency	Can express him/herself spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it
Interaction	Can interact with ease and skill, picking up and using non-verbal and intonational cues apparently effortlessly Can interweave his/her contribution into the joint discourse with fully natural turn taking, referencing and allusion making
Range	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and eliminate ambiguity
Accuracy	Maintains consistent grammatical and lexical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g., in forward planning, in monitoring others')
Phonological control	Speech is immediately and clearly understood Uses assimilations and deletions comparable to native-like speech

In addition, performance in this section is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

Turn taking	Can if necessary manipulate a discussion Can get or keep the floor even if hostile, emotional or contentious situations Appropriately balances politeness and determination
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## Section 12

### Speaking

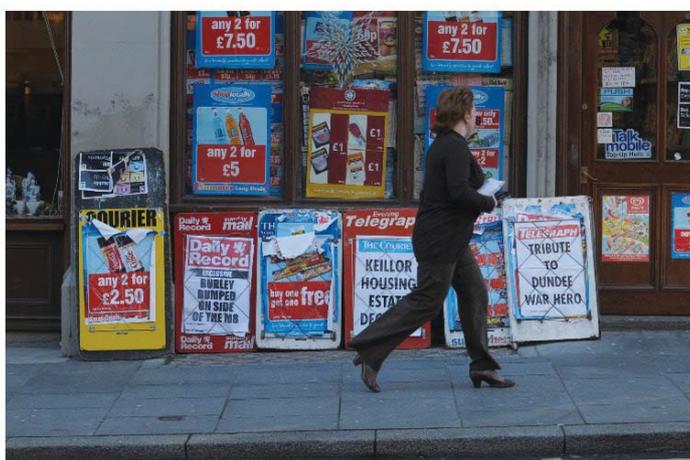
#### Describe picture

Section 12 comprises a *Describe picture* item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to speak continuously on a topic related to two pictures.

#### SECTION 12: PICTURE (2 MINUTES)

Now, here are two pictures showing advertising on the street. These pictures are being considered for an article about our exposure to advertising in daily life. Please tell me what you can see in the pictures.

(Hand the pictures to the test taker)



(Allow the test taker to speak for about one minute, then ask this secondary prompt)

*Which of these pictures would you choose for the article about exposure to advertising and why?*

(Retrieve the pictures)

Image displaying interlocutor script and instructions, and example pictures given to test takers.

#### Task

Test takers speak without interruption about two related pictures in response to a prompt posed by the interlocutor (1 minute). This is followed by a second instruction to interpret some aspect of the pictures. The visuals are designed to elicit language of comparison and contrast as well as expression of ideas, opinions and feelings. This section of the test is **2 minutes**.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to speak continuously on a topic related to two pictures	Two related pictures and two questions. The first prompt focuses on the pictures; "Please talk about the pictures" or "Please tell me what you can see in the pictures" in relation to a topic or imagined purpose, such as their inclusion in a publication. The second prompt is an instruction to the test taker to interpret some aspect of the pictures or to express a personal reaction to them. The pictures may include some unusual element that invites comment or explanation. They could illustrate two alternative options and may allude to a topical issue

## Scores

The score points for speaking are aggregated and contribute up to 25 marks towards the total score over the written and spoken tests of 100 marks.

The test taker is scored on **how well** they perform over the four speaking sections of the test against the following criteria:

Fluency	Can express him/herself spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of
Interaction	Can interact with ease and skill, picking up and using non-verbal and intonational cues apparently effortlessly Can interweave his/her contribution into the joint discourse with fully natural turn taking, referencing and allusion making
Range	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and eliminate ambiguity
Accuracy	Maintains consistent grammatical and lexical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g., in forward planning, in monitoring)
Phonological control	Speech is immediately and clearly understood Uses assimilations and deletions comparable to native-like speech

In addition, performance in this section of the spoken test is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

Thematic development	Can give extended and clearly structured descriptions and narratives, effectively using a variety of organizational patterns which help readers to easily follow the line of argument and distinguish main and secondary points
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## Section 13

### Speaking

#### Role play

Section 13 comprises a *Role play* item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately.

**SECTION 13: ROLE PLAY (2 MINUTES)**

Now we are going to take part in a role play. Here is a card with the situation on it.  
(Hand the card to the test taker. Allow up to 15 seconds to study the card)

**Test taker's card**

A friend has asked you to put up some posters in local shop windows to promote a charity concert. The examiner is a shopkeeper.

Your goal: Persuade the shopkeeper to let you put a poster in a prominent place in the shop window.

**Interlocutor's script**

*You would like to put up a poster in my shop window. I am the shopkeeper.*

*Ready? I'll start.*

*Hello. How can I help you?*

**Suggested prompts:**

- *We don't usually allow people to put things up in the window.*
- *How long would you want to leave it there?*
- *It would have to go on the far side so people can see the window display.*
- *I'd rather you didn't put glue on the glass – how are you going to put it up?*  
(Agree to allow the poster to be put up)

(Retrieve the card)

*Thank you. That is the end of the test.*

Image displaying interlocutor script and instructions, and example role card given to test takers.

#### Task

Test takers take part in a role play with the interlocutor using a role card with information and instructions. The situation may involve some difference of status or social distance between participants (necessitating adjustment of register). It may require test takers to state a problem which then needs to be solved jointly, explain or justify a course of action or speculate about the possible consequences of future action. This section of the test is **2 minutes**.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately Language functions: There is no limit to the range of language functions that may be expected at this level	The interlocutor gives the test taker up to 15 seconds to read a role card with: - an explanation of the situation - a specification of the roles to be taken by the test taker and the interlocutor - a specification of the test taker's goal (e.g., to reach an agreement, complete a transaction, etc.) - if necessary and appropriate, instructions as to the tone or mood that the test taker should adopt - visual support where appropriate

## Scores

The score points for speaking are aggregated and contribute up to 25 marks towards the total score over the written and spoken tests of 100 marks.

The test taker is scored on **how well** they perform over the four speaking sections of the test against the following criteria:

Fluency	Can express him/herself spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of
Interaction	Can interact with ease and skill, picking up and using non-verbal and intonational cues apparently effortlessly Can interweave his/her contribution into the joint discourse with fully natural turn taking, referencing and allusion making
Range	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and eliminate ambiguity
Accuracy	Maintains consistent grammatical and lexical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g., in forward planning, in monitoring
Phonological control	Speech is immediately and clearly understood Uses assimilations and deletions comparable to native-like speech

In addition, performance in this section is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

Sociolinguistic appropriateness	Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning Appreciates fully the sociolinguistic and sociocultural implications of language used by native speakers and can react accordingly
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## Summary: spoken test item type information

Sections	Item types	Objectives	Tasks	Stimulus
<b>Section 10: Speaking</b>	Sustained monologue	To assess ability to speak continuously about matters of personal information and interest	(2 minutes) Speak without interruption in response to a main prompt posed by the interlocutor (up to 1.5 minutes). Follow-up questions are asked to encourage the test taker to continue talking. Prompts focus on present circumstances, past experience, tastes, preferences and future plans	Questions may require the test taker to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- choose between two alternatives</li> <li>- explain in detail reasons for an opinion or preference</li> <li>- speculate or respond to a hypothetical question</li> <li>- highlight or comment on a particular aspect of a topic</li> <li>- speak in a way that is particularly vivid or persuasive</li> </ul>
<b>Section 11: Speaking</b>	Discussion	To assess ability to discuss a concrete or abstract issue	(2 minutes) Give and support opinions on a topic in response to prompts put by the interlocutor	A discussion prompt on a topic about which it is feasible to have equally valid opposing opinions, feelings or ideas. The discussion is designed to elicit expression of complex and abstract ideas
<b>Section 12: Speaking</b>	Describe picture	To assess ability to speak continuously on a topic related to two pictures	(2 minutes) Speak without interruption about two related pictures in response to a prompt posed by the interlocutor (1 minute). This is followed by a second instruction to interpret some aspect of the pictures. The visuals are designed to elicit language of comparison and contrast as well as expression of ideas, opinions and feelings	Two related pictures and two questions. The first prompt focuses on the pictures; "Please talk about the pictures" or "Please tell me what you can see in the pictures" in relation to a topic or imagined purpose, such as their inclusion in a publication. The second prompt is an instruction to the test taker to interpret some aspect of the pictures or to express a personal reaction to them The pictures may include some unusual element that invites comment or explanation. They could illustrate two alternative options and may allude to a topical issue
<b>Section 13: Speaking</b>	Role play	To assess ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately Language functions: There is no limit to the range of language functions that may be expected at this level	(2 minutes) Take part in a role play with the interlocutor using a role card with information and instructions. The situation may involve some difference of status or social distance between participants (necessitating adjustment of register). It may require test takers to state a problem which then needs to be solved jointly, explain or justify a course of action or speculate about the possible consequences of future action	The interlocutor gives the test taker up to 15 seconds to read a role card with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an explanation of the situation</li> <li>- a specification of the roles to be taken by the test taker and the interlocutor</li> <li>- a specification of the test taker's goal (e.g., to reach an agreement, complete a transaction, etc.)</li> <li>- if necessary and appropriate, instructions as to the tone or mood that the test taker should adopt</li> <li>- visual support where appropriate</li> </ul>

Figure 7. Level 5 (Proficiency) spoken test item type information

## Contact us

**You can contact us in the following ways:**

- Visit [www.pearsonpte.com/pte-general](http://www.pearsonpte.com/pte-general)
- Email us at [pltsupport@pearson.com](mailto:pltsupport@pearson.com)
- Telephone us on +44 (0)845 543 0243
- Fax us on +44 (0)20 7010 6611
- Write to us at the Language Testing division of Pearson, 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL, UK