



# Guide to Pearson English International Certificate

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## **PTE General Level 5 Proficient**

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## Ofqual Regulation

Pearson English International Certificate (PTE General) tests are regulated 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 regulation, the six levels of 5.5 International Certificate have been allocated to levels of the National Qualifications Framework. International Certificate tests are regulated under the following titles in the UK:

Pearson English International Certificate/PTE General level	Regulated Title	Regulation number
Pearson English International Certificate (PTE General) A1	Pearson Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 1) (CEF A1) (English International Certificate)	500/1903/X
Pearson English International Certificate (PTE General) Level 1	Pearson Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 2) (CEF A2) (English International Certificate)	500/1962/4
Pearson English International Certificate (PTE General) Level 2	Pearson Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 3) (CEF B1) (English International Certificate)	500/1961/2
Pearson English International Certificate (PTE General) Level 3	Pearson Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (CEF B2) (English International Certificate)	500/1926/0
Pearson English International Certificate (PTE General) Level 4	Pearson Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International (CEF C1) (English International Certificate)	500/1964/8
Pearson English International Certificate PTE General Level 5	Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International (CEF C2) (English International Certificate)	500/1963/6

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# Introduction to the guide

## Who is it for?

The Guide to Pearson English International Certificate 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 four key parts:

An **introduction** to Pearson English International Certificate 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 and third part** provide an overview of the structure and the format of the written and the spoken tests.

The **fourth part** of the guide explains each section within the written and spoken tests at Level C2. 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.

## Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The six levels of Pearson English International Certificate have been designed to be 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).

# 1. Introduction to Pearson English International Certificate

## What is Pearson English International Certificate?

Pearson English International Certificate is an assessment solution at 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 International Certificate.

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

## Development of Pearson English International Certificate

Pearson English International Certificate 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 centres, teachers and test takers in several 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.

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 Pearson English International Certificate?

Pearson English International Certificate 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 [quals.pearson.com/international-certificate-yl](http://quals.pearson.com/international-certificate-yl)

## What skills are tested?

Pearson English International Certificate 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 International Certificate 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 11 and 12 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 International Certificate 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

International Certificate 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 usually 6-7 test sessions scheduled per year. International Certificate consists of a written paper-based test and a spoken test, which are delivered through several registered centres in over 30 territories globally. Registered test centres delivering International Certificate are typically schools, language schools and colleges. Each prospective centre 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 centre. Information about test session dates, test centre locations, registering to take International Certificate or registering to become a test centre is available at [quals.pearson.com/international-certificate](https://quals.pearson.com/international-certificate)

### Test results

Test results are made available five to eight weeks after the date that the test was taken. Test centres 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 centres upon approval to deliver International Certificate. Alternatively, results can be delivered by secure post if required.

Certificates are dispatched about one week after results are issued.

## 2. Test structure

International Certificate consists of a **written** and a **spoken** test. The written test is scored out of 75 points and the spoken test out of 25 points at all levels.

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

### Written test (all levels)

Section	Skills	Scoring
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
	Total	75

Figure 1: distribution of sections and score points: written test

The **spoken** test consists of two sections at levels A1 and 1, and three sections at levels 2–5. It assesses speaking.

Spoken test (A1, 1)		Spoken test (2, 3, 4, 5)	
Section	Skills	Section	
10	Not tested	10	Discussion
11	Describe a picture	11	Describe a picture
12	Role Play	12	Role Play
Total:	25 points	Total:	25 points

Figure 2: distribution of sections and score points: spoken test

## 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

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

Figure 4: Level 5 (Proficient) written test



## Spoken test

Section	Skills	Timing	Item types	Objectives
10	Speaking	2 min	Discussion	To assess ability to discuss a concrete or abstract issue
11	Speaking	2 min	Describe a picture	To assess ability to speak continuously on a topic related to two pictures
12	Speaking	2 min	Role play	To assess ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately
Total		6 min	Total: 25 points distributed across the marking criteria	

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.

**SECTION 1**

You will have ten 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:** The speaker is describing how

- A the quality of someone's photographs improved.
- B the subjects of someone's photographs changed.
- C the technology within someone's camera developed.

1. The speaker is complaining about the

- A similarities between TV shows and Netflix.
- B length of certain TV shows.
- C cost of accessing TV shows.

2. The speaker is describing

- A a risky activity she has done.
- B an illness she has experienced.
- C a film that she has seen.

3. What are they discussing?

- A a scientific instrument
- B a children's game
- C an outdoor item to be used in the snow

#### 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 - 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.

## Section 2: Listening and writing

### Dictation

Section 2 comprises a Dictation item type. It assesses **listening** and **writing** skills. It tests ability to understand an extended utterance by transcribing a spoken text.

**SECTION 2**



You will hear a recording about sewing. Listen to the whole recording once. Then you will hear the recording again with pauses for you to write down what you hear. Make sure you spell the words correctly.

### 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
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.

### Task

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

**SECTION 3 (PART A)**




You will hear a talk about public spaces. First, read the notes below then listen and complete the notes with information from the talk. You will hear the recording twice.

**Example:** Cities are fundamentally defined by their *inhabitants*

12. \_\_\_\_\_ happen in public spaces.
13. He has been studying public spaces since \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Most popular public spaces are the \_\_\_\_\_.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ provide a sense of control over public spaces.
16. The relationship between planned order and littering may seem \_\_\_\_\_.

**SECTION 3 (PART B)**



You will hear an interview. First, read the notes below then listen and complete the notes with information from the interview. You will hear the recording twice.

**Example:** Start-ups may fail because they do not have *product market fit*

17. Business people may wrongly think they have found \_\_\_\_\_.
18. Interviewee's current company is called \_\_\_\_\_.
19. Her previous company was acquired by \_\_\_\_\_.
20. At her previous company she had been confronted by \_\_\_\_\_.
21. Allowing \_\_\_\_\_ to include a black box provides them servers and databases.

### Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transactional conversations</li> <li>- public announcements</li> <li>- recorded messages</li> </ul>

### 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 section of the test and put a cross  by the missing word or phrase, as in the example.

**Example:** Walking with Dinosaurs: large as life

She is the height of a two-storey house, the length of two city buses, her teeth are 6-inches long - and she is on the \_\_\_\_\_. Her offspring - who herself measures 14ft from tooth to tail - has been cornered by two armoured herbivores.

- A lookout  
 B defensive  
 C prowl

22. Crowdfunding market will be learning process: study

Critics, such as Ermanno Pascutto, executive director of the Foundation for the Advancement of Investor Rights, are concerned that crowdfunding will expose \_\_\_\_\_ investors to risk from fraud or incompetence as it "abandons the fundamental principles" of securities regulation by eliminating full, transparent disclosure through a prospectus or audited financial statements.

- A naive  
 B corrupt  
 C typical

23. What is aromatherapy used for?

Aromatherapy may promote relaxation and help relieve stress. It has also been used to help treat a wide range of physical and mental conditions, including burns, infections, depression, insomnia, and high blood pressure. But so far there is \_\_\_\_\_ scientific evidence to support claims that aromatherapy effectively prevents or cures illness.

- A sufficient  
 B limited  
 C robust

### 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.

### Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
Assess ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts	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 and answer the questions below. Put a cross  in the box next to the correct answer, as in the example.

##### Snubbed: The Basketball Hall of Fame case for Shawn Marion

The Athletic, Monday 11 May 2020

As three more of his contemporaries were chosen for Springfield orange jackets last month, Shawn Marion was left to ponder why he remains eternally overlooked. Marion's versatility, ahead-of-its-time skill set and contributions on those super fun, "Seven Seconds or Less" Phoenix Suns squads and the 2011 NBA champion Dallas Mavericks were lost on many.

Folks chose to see what they wanted — or, in his case, didn't want — to see during his 16-year NBA career. But Marion knew he was more than a catchy nickname with an unorthodox game. "I left a great imprint on the game and I'm at peace," Marion said in a recent interview with The Athletic. So, when Kobe Bryant, Tim Duncan and Kevin Garnett were all chosen for the exclusive honor that currently eludes him, Marion remains confident that his day will eventually come. Asked what he would do if he ever got the call that he's headed to the Hall of Fame, Marion offered a corrective retort. "What would I do, did you say when?" Marion asked. "When?"

Marion then chuckled to himself, because when worst ever come until a fair examination of his worthiness is followed by a well, actually... Dallas Mavericks Coach Rick Carlisle once called Marion "one of the most underrated players in history." And that's not just hyperbole. His career was played in the shadows of other shinier objects — from Jason Kidd to Stephon Marbury to Amaré Stoudemire and Steve Nash in Phoenix, to Nowitzki in Dallas. But those who played alongside him, and especially those who crunched numbers, recognized what Marion did to accentuate and uplift the talent around him.

Get it. Go, Jason Kidd shared those words to Marion upon his arrival in Phoenix and they would serve as the foundation for his rapid-bounce, playing style. Marion had the fortune of playing alongside two Hall of Fame point guards in Kidd and Steve Nash and another talent in Stephon Marbury, whose case was perhaps magnified by his success in China. Nash was the only one to win MVP — which occurred his first two seasons with Marion — but Marion carries a special reverence for Kidd. Marion credits Kidd and Penny Hardaway for teaching him how to be a pro and was disappointed when the Suns dealt Kidd to New Jersey in 2001. Kidd immediately led the Nets to back-to-back Finals appearances, finishing second to O'Neal for MVP honors in his first season in the Eastern Conference. Marion wouldn't reach the Finals until he was reunited with Kidd in Dallas, where both claimed their only title.

Example: What was Shawn Marion not chosen to wear?

- A Springfield orange jacket  
 B Phoenix Suns basketball kit  
 C Dallas Mavericks basketball kit

27. Shawn Marion's style of playing basketball was  
 A unconventional.  
 B unimaginative.  
 C uninteresting.
28. How does Marion feel about being excluded from the Hall of Fame?  
 A He feels frustrated due his friends also being excluded.  
 B He feels at peace because he doesn't want the recognition.  
 C He feels content with the career he had in basketball.
29. Shawn Marion failed to  
 A stand out among the talented players around him.  
 B get the best out of the talented players around him.  
 C build bonds with the talented players around him.
30. Who acted as a role model for Marion?  
 A Steve Nash  
 B Penny Hardaway  
 C Stephen Marbury
31. Which statement about Jason Kidd is true?  
 A His move away to New Jersey proved to be a mistake.  
 B He won the NBA final with Marion on three occasions.  
 C He played with Marion for two different basketball teams.

### 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>opinions</li><li>attitudes</li><li>Implied meanings</li></ul>	Authentic text types includes 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 written texts.

#### SECTION 6

Read the article below and answer the questions.

In 1177 B.C., marauding groups known only as the "Sea Peoples" invaded Egypt. The pharaoh's army and navy managed to defeat them, but the victory so weakened Egypt that it soon slid into decline, as did most of the surrounding civilizations. After centuries of brilliance, the civilized world of the Bronze Age came to an abrupt and cataclysmic end. Kingdoms fell like dominoes over the course of just a few decades. No more Minoans or Mycenaeans. No more Trojans, Hittites, or Babylonians. The thriving economy and cultures of the late second millennium B.C., which had stretched from Greece to Egypt and Mesopotamia, suddenly ceased to exist, along with writing systems, technology, and monumental architecture. But the Sea Peoples alone could not have caused such widespread breakdown. How did it happen?

In this major new account of the causes of this "First Dark Ages," Eric Cline tells the gripping story of how the end was brought about by multiple interconnected failures, ranging from invasion and revolt to earthquakes, drought, and the cutting of international trade routes. Bringing to life the vibrant multicultural world of these great civilizations, he draws a sweeping panorama of the empires and globalized peoples of the Late Bronze Age.

**Example:** What kind of groups are the Sea Peoples? *marauding*

32. Which words describe the manner in which the civilized Bronze Age ceased to exist?

33. What is the phrase (simile) used to describe what happened to the kingdoms of Egypt over just a few decades?

34. How does Eric Cline describe this time in history?

35. What natural disasters contributed to the end of the Bronze Age?

### Task

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

### Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand the main points of short and extended written texts.	Authentic text types includes newspaper articles, magazines, leaflets, brochures and website articles.

### 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 a written text.

### 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
Assess ability to extract specific information from an extended written text.	Text types include newspaper articles, magazine articles, websites 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.

**SECTION 7**

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

**Smart speakers are everywhere – and they’re listening to you more than you think**  
**James Parker, March 26, 2019**

**Introduction**

Smart speakers equipped with digital voice assistants such as Siri and Alexa are now the fastest-growing consumer technology since the smartphone. Nearly 100 million were sold in 2018 alone, a threefold increase on the year before. And nowhere is this growth faster than in Australia. But we should be concerned about what these smart speakers are actually listening to. It’s more than just our voice commands to play a piece of music or turn down the lights. We need to think carefully about where this sort of technology is heading. Very soon it won’t just be our smart speakers listening, but all manner of other devices too. Security systems that listen for the sound of gunshots or broken glass, CCTV cameras outfitted with microphones, auditory surveillance at work, and a growing range of other devices are all cause for concern.

We are also getting increasingly comfortable talking to our technology, according to a consumer adoption report:

Over 43% of Australian smart speaker owners say that since acquiring the devices they are using voice assistants more frequently on smartphones.

We are no longer surprised to find we can talk to our phones, cars, televisions, watches, even our Barbie dolls, and expect a response. But the recent consumer report also says Australians worry about such speakers. Nearly two-thirds of people surveyed say they had some level of concern over the privacy risks posed by smart speaker technology – 17.7% said they were “very concerned”. The report doesn’t specify what those concerns are. Perhaps we are concerned about recordings of our conversations being emailed to colleagues without our knowledge or consent, or admitted as evidence in court.

But I believe we are much less concerned than we should be about where this industry is headed next. Smart speakers aren’t just listening to what we say. Increasingly, they are also listening to how and where we say it. They’re listening to our vocal biometrics, to how we stutter and pause, to our tone of voice, accent and mood, to our state of wellness, to the size and shape of the room we’re sitting in, and to the ambient noises, music and TV shows on in the background. All for the purpose of extracting more and more data about who we are and what kinds of things we do. Even more importantly, though, the rapid rise smart speakers heralds the coming era of machine listening, where we can expect all manner of networked devices to be listening to, processing and responding autonomously to our auditory environments: listening for both sound and speech, with and without our consent, virtually all the time.

### 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
Assess ability to extract specific information from an extended written text.	Text types include newspaper articles, magazine articles, websites 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.

## Section 8: Writing

### Write correspondence

Section 8 comprises a Write correspondence item type. It assesses writing skills. It tests ability to write a piece of correspondence.

**SECTION 8**

Use the information in Section 7 to help you write your answer. Use your own words.

47. You have just read a passage about smart speakers in Section 7. Now, write an email to someone who you live with explaining your feelings about smart speakers. Write **150–200** words and include the following information:

- Whether or not you want a smart speaker in your house
- What you consider the major benefits of smart speakers
- What you consider the major drawbacks of smart speakers

### Task

Test takers write an email, formal or informal letter 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.

### Objective, 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:

<b>Range</b>	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
<b>Accuracy</b>	Maintains consistent grammatical and lexical control of complex language
<b>Coherence and cohesion</b>	Can create coherent and cohesive text making full and appropriate use of a variety of organizational patterns and a wide range of cohesive devices.
<b>Orthographic control</b>	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:

<b>Written interaction</b>	Can express news and views effectively in writing, and relate to those of others
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## Section 9: Writing

### Write text

Section 9 comprises a Write text item type. It assesses writing skills. It tests ability to write a short text from own experience, knowledge or imagination.

**SECTION 9**

48. Choose **one** of the topics below and write your answer in 250–300 words.

Either: A – Travel helps to promote understanding and communication between countries? Do you agree?  
A

Or: B – Education is the single most important factor in the development of a country. Do you agree?  
B

Put a cross  in the box next to the task you have chosen.

Write your answer here. Do not write outside of the box.

### Task

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

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

There is one text to write (250-300 words). There is a ‘tolerated’ word limit of 150-330 words for Section 9.

### 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, explain advantages and disadvantages or develop an argument

## 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:

<b>Range</b>	Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics using some complex sentence forms
<b>Accuracy</b>	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control. Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding
<b>Coherence and cohesion</b>	Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear coherent discourse, though there may be some 'jumpiness' in a long contribution
<b>Orthographic control</b>	Can produce clearly intelligible continuous writing which follows standard layout and paragraphing conventions Spelling and punctuation are reasonably accurate, but may show signs of mother tongue influence

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

<b>Written interaction</b>	Can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest, synthesizing and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources
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## Summary: Written test item type information

Section	Item types	Objectives	Tasks	Stimulus
1: Listening	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 speaker's role</li> <li>- identifying the speakers' relationship</li> <li>- identifying the topic</li> <li>- identifying the situation</li> <li>- recognizing the function</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 recordings of 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>- factual information</li> <li>- expression of feelings</li> <li>- offer</li> <li>- invitation</li> <li>- apology</li> <li>- criticism/expression of dissatisfaction</li> <li>- suggestion</li> <li>- persuasion</li> </ul>
2: Listening and writing	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 authentic, descriptive and contain relatively formal language
3: Listening	Text, note completion	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>
4: Reading	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 and announcements
5: Reading	3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main ideas in an extended written text	Read a text and answer five questions or complete five sentences from a choice of three answer options. Five questions or gaps	Text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures or web articles
6: Reading	Open-ended question	Assess ability to understand the main points of short written texts.	Read two texts and answer eight questions about them using single words or short answers. Eight questions	Text types include: extended informative text found in newspapers, magazines, leaflets, brochures and website articles
7: Reading	Text, note completion	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	Text types include letters, emails, advertisements, newspaper articles, magazine articles, websites or textbooks

8: Writing	Write correspondence	Assess ability to write a short piece of correspondence.	Write an email or formal or informal letter 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 convey emotion or highlight the personal significance of events and experiences
9: Writing	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 response may be: factual: leaflet, blog entry, article, news advert, instructions, fact sheet, interview - critical: review, report, essay, speech, comment - analytical: essay, analysis of issue or argument, explanation One text (250–300 words)	A choice of two topics which provides the test taker with the opportunity to give an opinion or reasons



## 6. Description of item types: Spoken test

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

### Section 10: Speaking

#### Discussion

Section 10 is a Discussion item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to discuss a concrete issue or abstract issue

Now, we are going to discuss something together. The question is: "Should bottled water be banned in order to reduce the amount of plastic used for bottles?" What do you think?

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

#### For

- Banning bottled water would reduce waste and protect the environment.
- Drinking water is usually available from taps in homes, restaurants and shops.
- There are usually drinking water foundations in public areas and offices already.
- Banning bottled water can protect local water supplies in the areas water is taken from

#### Against

- It is better to drink water than sugary drinks, which are also sold in plastic bottles.
- Consumers should have the right to choose which products they buy.
- Bottled water bans are token gestures, not real solutions to the problem of plastic waste.
- Bottled water can provide an emergency water supply, so a total ban would be dangerous

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 topic may be a concrete or abstract issue. The test taker will be invited to speculate or respond to a hypothesis

## Section 11: Speaking

### Describe picture

Section 11 comprises a Describe picture item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to speak continuously on a topic related to two pictures.

Now, here are two pictures showing different types of job. These pictures are being considered for the front cover of a children's book called 'People who help us'. Please tell me what you can see in the pictures.

*[Hand the pictures to the test taker]*



Alright? Begin now please.

*[Allow the test taker to speak for about one minute, then ask this secondary prompt.]*

Which picture do you think would be best for the front cover of the children's book?

*[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.

## Section 12: Speaking

### Role play

Section 12 comprises a Role play item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to perform and respond to basic language functions appropriately.

Now we are going to take part in a role play. Here is a card with the situation on it. Please read it to yourself.

*[Hand the card to the test taker. Allow up to 15 seconds to study the card]*

#### Test taker's card

**The situation:** You are organising a concert at your college, and you are trying to persuade people to take part as singers and musicians. The examiner is a friend of yours, with musical ability.

**Your goal:** Persuade the examiner to take part in your concert.

#### Interlocutor's script

You are organising a concert and I am your friend. You want to persuade me to perform in the concert.

Alright? I'll start.

So, what is it that you would like me to do?

#### Suggested prompts

- What kind of concert are you organising?
- What other musicians do you have lined up?
- Tell me about the venue and the equipment that will be available.
- What other musicians have you spoken to, and what have they said?

*[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 three speaking sections against the following criteria:

<b>Fluency</b>	Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject may hinder a natural smooth flow of language
<b>Interaction</b>	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
<b>Range</b>	Has a good command of a broad range of language allowing him/her to select a formulation to express him/herself clearly in an appropriate style on a wide range of general, academic, professional or leisure topics without having to restrict what he/she wants to say
<b>Accuracy</b>	Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot and generally corrected when they occur of his/her mistakes
<b>Phonological control</b>	Speech is immediately and clearly understood Uses assimilations and deletions comparable to native-like speech

## Summary: Spoken test item type information

Section	Item types	Objectives	Tasks	Stimulus
Section 10: Speaking	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 on a topic about which it is feasible to have equally valid opposing opinions, feelings or ideas. The topic may be a concrete or abstract issue. The test taker will be invited to speculate or respond to a hypothesis
Section 11: Speaking	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
Section 12: Speaking	Role play Language functions: There is no limit to the range of language functions that may be expected at this level	To assess ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately	(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: - 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

## 7. Results, reports and certificates

### Results

Candidate results can be accessed via the [Edexcel Online \(EOL\) system](#). Please check the [exam timetable](#) for the date these results will be available. Candidates' "Statements of Provisional Results" will be sent out via courier on the date listed in the test timetable. The statement of results is divided into two, length-ways, with a perforated seam down the middle. Separate the copies and issue one to the candidate and keep the other for your records. Although results are dispatched on fixed dates, Pearson is unable to guarantee the dates on which they will be received; delays may occur in transit.

Please note: Statements of results are provisional and in certain circumstances may not reflect the grade awarded on candidates' certificates.

Pearson takes the responsibility for issuing accurate results very seriously. We have quality assurance checks at every point in the exam cycle, from recruiting examiners to setting grade boundaries. We know however that there may be times when a candidate wants reassurance about a grade. In these circumstances, you may refer to our post-results services.

For Pearson English International Certificate and Pearson English International Certificate Young Learners, there are two services available:

1. Review of Marking - A review of marking is a check that our examiners have marked externally assessed components correctly. It can be requested via Edexcel Online (EOL), it costs £39.50 per paper and the outcome will be available within 20 days of the date the application was submitted. This is referred to on EOL as EAR2.
2. Appeal - An appeal is a check that our awarding body has followed procedures accurately, fairly, and consistently to regulatory requirements. The maximum amount that we will charge is £120 per examination component for the initial appeal investigation, and £150 for any subsequent appeal hearing.

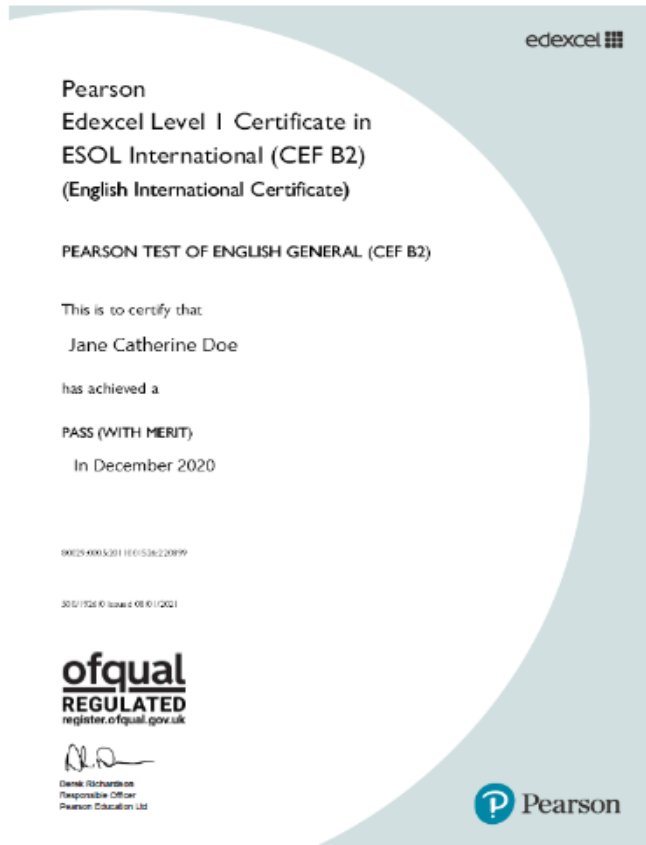
To learn more about post-results services, please visit our [website](#). For any queries, please contact our customer service team at [pqs.internationaleo@pearson.com](mailto:pqs.internationaleo@pearson.com).

### Candidate Performance Reports

Candidates' "Performance Reports" will be distributed to centres via email following the dispatch of the results documents. They should be printed in A4 format and distributed to the candidates by the centres.

## Certificate

Two to three weeks after receipt of provisional results, test certificates are issued and sent via courier to the test centre on the [date listed in the test timetable](#). If any test taker details are incorrect, you will need to make candidate amendments on [EOL](#). Click [here](#) to see step-by-step video guides that explain the process. Although certificates are dispatched on fixed dates, Pearson is unable to guarantee the dates on which they will be received; delays may occur in transit.





## 8. Contact us

For all administration enquiries relating to the conduct of International Certificate please contact our customer service team. Please contact our customer service team at [pqs.internationaleo@pearson.com](mailto:pqs.internationaleo@pearson.com).

Phone:

**+44 (0) 120 4770 696**

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