

Guide to Pearson English International Certificate

PTE General Level 2 Intermediate

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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 B1. 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.

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

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

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	Skills
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 2** is **1 hour and 35 minutes**. The information in Figure 4 indicates for sections of the written test at Level 2: the skills assessed, item types, objectives and the maximum number of score points awarded. The International Certificate written test is scored out of 75 and the spoken test out of 25.

The overall timing for the spoken test at **Level 2** is **5.5 minutes**. The information in Figure 5 indicates for sections of the spoken test at Level 2: the skills assessed, item types, objectives, timing and the maximum number of score points awarded.

Written test

Section	Skills	Score points	Item types	Objectives
1	Listening	10	3-option multiple choice	Assess ability to understand the gist of short, spoken utterances.
2	Listening and writing	10	Dictation	Assess ability to understand a short utterance by transcribing a spoken text.
3	Listening	10	Text, note completion	Assess ability to extract specific information from spoken texts.
4	Reading	5	Gap fill 3-option multiple choice	Assess ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts.
5	Reading	5	3-option multiple choice	Assess ability to understand the main detail in short written texts.
6	Reading	8	Open-ended question	Assess ability to understand the main points of short written texts.
7	Reading	7	Text, note completion	Assess ability to extract specific information from a written text.
8	Writing	10	Write correspondence	Assess ability to write a piece of correspondence (70-90 words).
9	Writing	10	Write text	Assess ability to write a short text from own experience, knowledge or imagination (100-150 words).
Total: 75 points				

Figure 4: Level 2 (Intermediate) written test

Spoken test

Section	Skills	Timing	Item types	Objectives
11	Speaking	2 min	Discussion	To assess ability to discuss a concrete issue
12	Speaking	1.5 min	Describe a picture	To assess ability to speak continuously about a picture and interpret some aspect of it
13	Speaking	2 min	Role play	To assess ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately
Total		5.5 min	Total: 25 points distributed across the marking criteria	

Figure 5: Level 2 (Intermediate) 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 gist of short-spoken utterances.

SECTION 1



You 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: Where has the man asked the woman to go later?

- A cinema
- B restaurant
- C university

1. What does the customer want to be repaired?

- A her shoe
- B her skirt
- C her shorts

2. What subject does she teach?

- A Mathematics
- B Geography
- C Science

3. Where are the two people?

- A airport
- B bank
- C phone shop

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 gist of short-spoken utterances by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- identifying the situation- identifying the speaker's role- identifying the speakers' relationship- identifying the topic- understanding spatial relations- understanding a description- recognizing the function	<p>Short recordings, one or two speakers Including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- transactional conversations - social conversations- public announcements <p>Including the following language functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- request for goods or services - request for action - request for information- factual information- expression of feelings- offer- invitation

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 jewellery design. 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 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 (PART A)



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

Example: The announcement is at *Old Street Station*

12. _____ have caused trains to be cancelled.
13. Trains to _____ have been replaced by buses.
14. _____ are all departing as usual.
15. Train Time App provides _____
16. Ticket office is found on _____

SECTION 3 (PART B)



You will hear a telephone conversation. First, read the notes below then listen and complete the notes with information from the conversation. You will hear the recording twice.

Example: Tessa's daughter is called *Maria*

17. _____ recently started at Langley School.
18. Maria wants to invite Jessica to _____
19. Jessica should arrive on Sunday at _____
20. Hickory Dickory's is a _____
21. Hickory Dickory's post code is _____

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 recording.

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
Assess ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts.	One or two speakers, giving or exchanging information which requires accurate listening and transcription (e.g., addresses and telephone numbers) Including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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: Having trouble with your teeth? Or simply looking for a polish? There are now new _____ on Woodbridge Road: Mr and Mrs Sheen. Call 0212 689 4135 for appointments or visit us in person.

A doctors
 B dentists
 C cleaners

22. Looking for a cheap summer holiday? Get yourself a bargain price on travel and accommodation! Use our website to find a great _____ on many leading hotels and airlines.

A discount
 B journey
 C meal

23. Take a narrow boat along one of the city's most beautiful _____. Once used to transport goods between factories, these water ways now allow passengers to relax and see another side of the city.

A canals
 B streams
 C lakes

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 competed 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.

The island continent of Australia lies between the Indian and Pacific Oceans in the region of Oceania in the southern hemisphere. It is often described as the Earth's largest island but smallest continent (the other continents are Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Antarctica and Europe, in order of size from largest to smallest). It is also the lowest, the flattest and, apart from Antarctica, the driest continent. The country is unique and varied in every way – in climate, landscape, people, history, culture and animal and plant life.

Australia's way of life has traditionally been influenced by European culture, but today Australian society is multicultural: in 2011, about 21% of the population had been born in the UK, 9% in New Zealand, 6% in China, just over 5% in India and 3.5% in Italy. More than 85% of Australians live near or on the coast, and 89% of the population live in urban areas (towns or cities), which makes Australia one of the most urbanized countries in the world.

Climate

About 70% of the country is very dry and nearly 40% of the country is desert. Most of the desert areas are in the centre and in the west. Parts of northern Australia are tropical and have heavy rainfall in the summer, but are dry in the winter. In the south-east and the south-west corners the climate is temperate. As a result, most of the biggest cities are found there. Snow in Australia is rare, but there are places for skiing in the Snowy Mountains region of south-eastern New South Wales and north-eastern Victoria, a few hours from Melbourne and Sydney. The most popular time to ski is late August.

Source: Gascoigne, J. (2015) *Australia*, Macmillan Readers. Pp.8-9. ISBN: 978-0230470286.

Accessed at: <http://www.macmillanreaders.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Australia-sample-chapter.pdf>

Example: Which statement about Australia is correct?

- A It is surrounded by one ocean.
- B It is next to two different oceans.
- C It lies in the middle of four oceans.

27. According to the article, which is the fourth largest continent?

- A South America
- B Europe
- C North America

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	Text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures or 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 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 story below and answer the questions.

ASTON VILLA FOOTBALL CLUB – CLARET MEMBERSHIP

Claret is our official fan membership for supporters aged 18 and over.

Adult: **£30**

Over 65: **£25**

With a membership, you will join The Pride – with access to a great range of benefits.

Benefits include:

- A welcome pack*
- A voucher for £10 off a home league game this season
- Priority ticket access for home & away matches
- Access to Pride Rewards
- Opportunities for exclusive competitions
- To find out more about Pride Rewards visit avfc.co.uk/rewards

* Your welcome pack will take up to 28 days to arrive.

Example Which football club is offering Claret Membership? *Aston Villa*

32. What is the minimum age for Claret Membership?
33. How much does Claret Membership cost for elderly people?
34. What may take nearly a month to be delivered?
35. What can Claret members enter that other people cannot?

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 written texts	Text types include: extended informative text found in 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.

SECTION 7

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

The Olympic Games are organized by the International Olympic Committee, or IOC. The IOC chooses the best place for the Summer and Winter Olympics every four years. Councils for the different sports and for the host country help to organize the Games. There is a lot of work to do when a country hosts the Olympics. Often new stadiums and swimming pools are needed and the host country also has to build an Olympic village where the athletes sleep, eat and relax during the Games. The host country often has to improve roads and public transport – that means more buses and trains. It is important that athletes and spectators can travel easily to and from the Games. Hosting the Olympics is very expensive, but the Games can bring a lot of money to the host country. When a country hosts the Olympics, many tourists travel there. People all around the world see and learn about the country. The very first Olympic Games were held in Greece nearly three thousand years ago. The Olympics have grown and changed a lot since then. Because they are so old and so big, there are many Olympic traditions. The Olympics have their own anthem, or song, and their own special flag. The flag has five coloured rings. Every Olympic Games also has its own mascot – an animal or object that is specially chosen for that year's Games. The mascot is chosen by the host country and is seen in every piece of information about the Olympics that year. Often the mascot is something that makes people think of the host country. For the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney, the mascots were three Australian animals. The mascot for the 1980 Olympics in Moscow, Russia, was a bear called Misha.

Source: Bladen, R. (2012) Macmillan Reader: The Story of the Olympics Pre Int. p. 9 978-0230422223 Macmillan <http://www.macmillanreaders.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Olympics-chapter-1.pdf>

Example: The IOC runs *the Olympic Games*

40. Summer and Winter Olympics take place once _____
41. Each Olympic sport has its own _____ that assists in organizing the Games.
42. Host countries build new _____, swimming pools and a place for athletes to stay.
43. The Olympics can bring money and _____ into the host country.
44. The Olympics began in _____
45. The Olympic flag features five _____
46. Olympic _____ are animals or objects that are associated with the host country.

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 letters, emails, advertisements, newspaper articles, magazines, websites 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

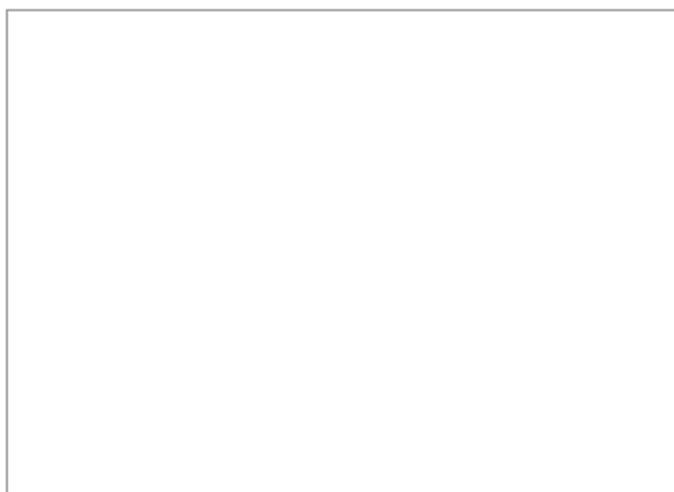
Section 8 comprises a Write correspondence item type. It assesses writing skills. It tests ability to write a piece of correspondence.

SECTION 8

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

47. You have read a passage about the Olympic Games. Now write a formal letter to your local government about having a major sports event in your local area. **Write 70 to 90 words** and include the following information:

- benefits of major sports events
- drawbacks of major sports events
- what needs to be changed in your local area



Task

Test takers write a short email, letter, postcard, note or blog entry based on information given in Section 7. There is one text to write (70–90 words). There is a 'tolerated' word limit of 56-99 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 express thoughts, describe experiences, feelings and events

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	Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel and current events
Accuracy	Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used 'routines' and patterns associated with more predictable situations
Coherence and cohesion	Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points
Orthographic control	Can produce continuous writing which is generally intelligible throughout Spelling, punctuation and layout are accurate enough to be followed most of the time

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

Written interaction	Can convey information and ideas on abstract as well as concrete topics, check information and ask about or explain problems with reasonable precision Can write personal letters and notes asking for or conveying simple information of immediate relevance, getting across the point he/she feels to be important
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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 **100-150 words**.

Either: A – Some people love social media websites, where they can share photos and post messages, while others hate them. Nowadays it seems most people feel social media has both positive and negative effects. Write an essay on the following subject:

How can we improve social media?

Or: B – Your teacher has asked you to help promote your local area to visitors.

Write an article describing the shopping areas near where you study.

A

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: blog entry, article, instructions
- critical: review, report, essay
- analytical: essay, analysis of issue or argument, explanation

There is one text to write (100-150 words). There is a 'tolerated' word limit of 60-165 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 an opinion or reasons

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	Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some circumlocution on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel and current events
Accuracy	Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used 'routines' and patterns associated with more predictable situations
Coherence and cohesion	Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points
Orthographic control	Can produce continuous writing, which is generally intelligible throughout Spelling, punctuation and layout are accurate enough to be followed most of the time

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

Written interaction	Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into linear sequence
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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 gist of short spoken utterances by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifying the situation - identifying the speaker's role - identifying the speakers' relationship - identifying the topic - understanding spatial relations - understanding a description - recognizing the function 	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"> - transactional conversations - social conversations Including the following language functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - request for goods or services - request for action - factual information - expression of feelings - offer - invitation - apology
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 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	One or two speakers, giving or exchanging information which requires accurate listening and transcription (e.g., addresses and telephone numbers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - transactional conversations - public announcements - recorded messages
4: Reading	Gap fill 3-option multiple choice	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	Short authentic-style texts presented with realistic layout and typography. Texts 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.	Instructions which include the purpose of the text, the intended content of the message and the recipient. The task gives the test

			One text (70-90 words)	taker the opportunity to express thoughts, describe experiences, feelings and events
9: Writing	Write text	To assess ability to write a short text from own experience, knowledge or imagination	<p>Write a piece of free writing from a choice of two given topics. The form of the response may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - factual: blog entry, article, instructions - critical: review, report, essay - analytical: essay, analysis of issue or argument, explanation <p>One text (100-150 words)</p>	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 have to 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

Now we are going to discuss something together. The question is: "Should children wear uniform to school?" What do you think?

[Use the following arguments as appropriate to take an opposing view to that of the test taker].

For

- Uniforms make children feel part of a team with their classmates.
- Uniforms stop parents and children worrying about which clothes to wear.
- It is often cheaper to buy uniforms than other styles of clothing.
- Uniforms encourage children to care more about ideas than appearance.

Against

- Young people should be allowed to express themselves with different clothing.
- Uniforms are boring and sometimes uncomfortable.
- People are different, so they should be allowed to dress differently.
- When young people have to wear the same clothing, they worry more about physical size.

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 issue	<p>Discussion on a concrete topic about which it is feasible to have equally valid opposing opinions, feelings or ideas. The topic is chosen so that its pros and cons can be expressed using relatively simple, high frequency language (e.g., "I prefer to travel by train because it is quicker.")</p> <p>Example topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- town vs. country- preference for types of movies or books- emails vs. letters- preferences for forms of transportation- advantages and disadvantages of fast food- beach holiday vs. holiday in the mountains- advantages and disadvantages of the Internet

Section 11: Speaking

Describe picture

Section 11 comprises a describe picture item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to speak continuously about a picture and interpret some aspect of it.

Now, here is a picture of people outside a shop. Please tell me what you can see in the picture.

[Hand the picture to the test taker]



Alright? Begin now please.

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

Tell me which products you think people most want to buy, and why?

[Retrieve the picture]

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

Task

Test takers speak without interruption about a picture in response to a prompt posed by the interlocutor (up to 45 seconds). This is followed by a second instruction to interpret some aspect of the picture. This section of the test is **1.5 minutes**.

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to speak continuously about a picture and interpret some aspect of it	A picture showing a scene or a sequence of events, and two questions. The first prompt is always "Tell me what you can see in the picture." The second prompt is an instruction to the test taker to interpret some aspect of the picture or to express a personal reaction to it. The picture contains some element that invites comment or interpretation, e.g., a person engaged in an unusual activity or expressing some emotion. It may show alternative possibilities (such as different hobbies or sports) or the before and after states of some process or event.

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: The examiner is one of your parents. You want your parent to give you money for a new smart phone.

Your goal: Get your parent to give you money for a new smart phone.

Interlocutor's script

I am your parent. You want me to give you money for a new smart phone.

Alright? You start.

Suggested prompts

- But you already have a phone. Why do you need a new one?
- How will the phone help with your studies?
- Why can't you pay for the phone yourself?
- If I give you the money, how will you help me?
- Okay, I'll give you the money, if you...

[Retrieve the card]

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 require the test taker to negotiate a minor difficulty, such as declining an invitation or making a complaint about some routine matter that can be easily rectified. It could involve collaborating to solve a problem or make an arrangement. This section of the test is **2 minutes**.

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to perform and respond to basic language functions appropriately Including the following language functions: - greeting and leave-taking - asking for things asking for information - responding to requests - offering - accepting - responding to offers - thanking, giving information - apologizing, asking for directions	The interlocutor gives the test taker up to 15 seconds to read a role card with: - an explanation of the situation and the roles - 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:

Fluency	Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production
Interaction	Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversation on topics that are familiar or of personal interest Can repeat back what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding
Range	Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel and current events
Accuracy	Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used 'routines' and patterns associated with more predictable situations
Phonological control	Pronunciation is clearly intelligible even if occasional mispronunciations occur

Summary: Spoken test item type information

Section	Item types	Objectives	Tasks	Stimulus
Section 10: Speaking	Discussion	Assess the ability to discuss a concrete issue	(2 minutes) Give and support opinions on a topic in response to prompts put by the interlocutor	Discussion on a concrete topic about which it is feasible to have equally valid opposing opinions, feelings or ideas. The topic is chosen so that its pros and cons can be expressed using relatively simple, high frequency language (e.g., "I prefer to travel by train because it is quicker.") Example topics include: - town vs. country - preference for types of movies or books - emails vs. letters - preferences for forms of transportation - advantages and disadvantages of mobile phones - DVD at home vs. movie theater - advantages and disadvantages of fast food - beach holiday vs. holiday in the mountains - advantages and disadvantages of the Internet
Section 11: Speaking	Describe picture	To assess ability to speak continuously about a picture and interpret some aspect of it	(1.5 minutes) Speak without interruption about a picture in response to a prompt posed by the interlocutor (up to 45 seconds). This is followed by a second instruction to interpret some aspect of the picture	A picture showing a scene or a sequence of events, and two questions. The first prompt is always "Tell me what you can see in the picture." The second prompt is an instruction to the test taker to interpret some aspect of the picture or to express a personal reaction to it The picture contains some element that invites comment or interpretation, e.g., a person engaged in an unusual activity or expressing some emotion. It may show alternative possibilities (such as different hobbies or sports) or the before and after states of some process or event
Section 12: Speaking	Role play	To assess ability to perform and respond to basic language functions appropriately Including the following language functions: - greeting and leave-taking - asking for things - asking for information - responding to requests - offering, accepting - responding to offers - thanking, giving information - apologizing, asking for directions	(2 minutes) Take part in a role play with the interlocutor using a role card with information and instructions. The situation may require the test taker to negotiate a minor difficulty, such as declining an invitation or making a complaint about some routine matter that can be easily rectified. It could involve collaborating to solve a problem or make an arrangement	The interlocutor gives the test taker up to 15 seconds to read a role card with: - an explanation of the situation and the roles - instructions and/or the objective - 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.

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.

Certificates

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.

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