

Guide to Pearson English International Certificate

PTE General Level 3 Upper Intermediate

Paper Reference:
4063

© March 2021

Version
7.3 DCL1

Prepared by Carla Fernandez
Authorised by Jane Bledsoe

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 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 B2. 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	
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 3** is **2 hours**. The information in Figure 4 indicates for sections of the written test at Level 3: 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 3** is **5.5 minutes**. The information in Figure 5 indicates for sections of the spoken test at Level 3: 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 (90-120 words).
9	Writing	10	Write text	Assess ability to write a short text from own experience, knowledge or imagination (150-200 words).
Total: 75 points				

Figure 4: Level 3 (Upper Intermediate) written test

Spoken test

Section	Kills	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 3 (Upper 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 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: Where are the speakers?

- A at home
- B at a restaurant
- C on a university campus

1. Where is the woman going?

- A her workplace
- B the hospital
- C a holiday

2. What job does the woman do now?

- A Costume designer
- B Television producer
- C Casting director

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">- identifying the speaker's role- identifying the speakers' relationship- identifying the topic- identifying the situation- recognizing function- understanding idiomatic expression- understanding expression of feeling- understanding expression of attitude	<p>Short authentic recordings, one or two speakers Including the following:</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- apology- criticism/expression of dissatisfaction- suggestion- persuasion

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 authentic, descriptive and contain relatively formal language

Scores

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

Section 3: Listening

Text, note completion

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

SECTION 3 (PART A)



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

Example: Bromwich Town Hall reopening is part of *East side redevelopment*

12. Town Hall's repair and modernization has cost _____
13. _____ have created artworks for area around Town Hall.
14. Local council want to create _____
15. There will be a _____ outside the Town Hall.
16. Information about reopening displayed on _____.

SECTION 3 (PART B)



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

Example: Traffic cones are also often called *construction cones*.

17. Appearance varies, but all traffic cones are _____
18. Originally made out of _____
19. First used in UK in _____
20. They _____ cars on roads.
21. _____ have been created to commemorate traffic cones.

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.	Authentic recordings of one or two speakers, giving or exchanging information. The items replicate real life situations which require accurate comprehension and transcription (e.g., taking messages or notes) 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: Join the university gym today for just £15 per month.
One of our _____ will show you the ropes, telling you the most effective and safe way to build muscle and increase stamina.

- A instructors
 B lecturers
 C members

22. HORNSBURY CYCLING CLUB.

Meetings Wednesday, Friday and Sunday at 6pm. All levels of ability welcome.
For safety, all riders must wear a _____.

- A lifejacket
 B thermal vest
 C helmet

23. YOU ARE WHAT YOU DRINK...

Please ensure you do not drop litter in this area. This _____ is your drinking water.

- A suburb
 B reservoir
 C dam

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 (X) in the box next to the correct answer, as in the example.

PENSION REFORMS AFFECT WOMEN'S WELLBEING

UK Pension reforms that increased State Pension age (SPA) for women are affecting the mental and physical wellbeing of some women, potentially resulting in a widening health gap between those from different socioeconomic groups, says new research led by King's College London. Since 2010, the SPA for women born after March 1950 has gradually increased from age 60 to 66. In keeping with most OECD countries, this reform aimed at improving the financial sustainability of the pension system. Yet a study into the impact of extending working lives suggests that the potential consequences of postponing the SPA for the wellbeing of older women, and potentially men, are being overlooked. "Our findings show that the rise in SPA increased employment participation, but it had unanticipated, negative health consequences for women close to retirement in the UK," says researcher Dr Ludovico Carrino. "Women exposed to routine and manual occupations face an increased risk of physical and mental illness as a result of pension postponement," says Dr Carrino. Further research is needed to establish whether a rise in pension age for men could have similar consequences as, clearly, the current one-size-fits-all approach to the SPA rise could have health implications for some employees which outweigh the potential benefits of later retirement. "We need more research that evaluates the impact of programmes aimed at creating longer fulfilling working lives not only on employment outcomes, but also on critical aspects of wellbeing for older people such as mental and physical health, particularly for those in lower occupational groups," say Professors Mauricio Avendano and Karen Glaser, co-authors of the study. There are two possible policy implications from the study. First, the fact that the negative health effects are confined to women from routine and manual jobs raises questions about fairness, and whether pension eligibility rules should consider occupation as a criterion. Second, national policies on SPA need to consider strategies to prevent negative health consequences for women in such occupations. "One such way would be to introduce inclusive labour market policies that facilitate a smooth transition to retirement," says Dr Carrino.

Source: Society Now, Spring 2019 <https://esrc.ukri.org/files/news-events-and-publications/publications/magazines/society-now/society-now-issue-34/> Page 3

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	Authentic 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 article below and answer the questions.

ONLINE URBAN DESIGN POSSIBILITIES

A new online design and crowdsourcing platform developed by a European-wide partnership including University College London demonstrates a way of enabling members of the public to participate in creating, sharing and voting on design ideas for the regeneration of public spaces. The Incubators of Public Spaces project explored ways to encourage community input into the urban design of public spaces. In the project, residents of Pollards Hill housing estate, London Borough of Merton, were invited to redesign their courtyards using the newly developed platform and a 3D interactive model. The Incubators of Public Spaces initiative identified opportunities to make grassroots initiatives more accessible to a wider audience but researchers also noted challenges arising from, for example, IT literacy constraints.

Source: Society Now, Spring 2019 <https://esrc.ukri.org/files/news-events-and-publications/publications/magazines/society-now/society-now-issue-34/> Page 6

Example: What are being explored online? *Urban design possibilities*

32. What part of the world are the participating institutions from?
.....
33. Whose help with improving public spaces does the project hope to gain?
.....
34. What part of the Pollards Hill estate was redesigned online?
.....
35. The lack of which skill may be a barrier to widening participation in the project?

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 include: 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.

BECOMING PRESIDENT

In order to be elected president, a person must meet the eligibility requirements laid out in the Constitution. After that, the person must secure his or her political party's nomination. Finally, he or she must face a demanding campaign and election process.

Eligibility

According to the Constitution anyone who wishes to become president must be:

- At least thirty-five years old
- A resident of the United States for at least fourteen years
- A natural-born citizen

The last requirement has caused some confusion and controversy. According to U.S. law, a child born abroad to parents who are American citizens is also a citizen, but it is not clear from the Constitution whether such a person could be president. The courts have not ruled on whether an American citizen born outside of the United States may be president. A variety of people have tried to amend the Constitution to allow citizens born abroad to be president, but so far they have had no success.

America's Youngest President

Even though the Constitution allows anyone at least thirty-five years old to be president, every American president thus far has been much older. The average age of presidents at inauguration is fifty-four. Most people think that John F. Kennedy was the nation's youngest president—he was forty-three when elected in 1960—but that's not accurate. In reality, Kennedy was the youngest person to be elected president. The youngest person to be president, however, was Theodore Roosevelt, who was forty-two when he became president following the assassination of William McKinley in 1901.

Campaigning

The major parties select their presidential nominee at their national conventions, held every four years. At the conventions, delegates from each state vote and whichever candidate wins a majority of delegates becomes the party's nominee. To win delegates, candidates compete in primary elections, held in each state prior to the convention. Before acquiring the party nomination, a presidential candidate must prove that he or she can attract voters by winning primaries.

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 the article about composting. Now write an email to a friend.

Write 90–120 words and include the following information:

- Why you want to start composting
- What composting consists of
- If he wants to do the same and why/why not

Task

Test takers write an email, formal or informal letter based on information given in Section 7. There is one text to write (90–120 words). There is a 'tolerated' word limit of 72-132 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 convey emotion or highlight the personal significance of events and experiences.

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 sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics using some complex sentence forms
Accuracy	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control. Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding
Coherence and cohesion	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
Orthographic control	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:

Written interaction	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 **150–200 words**.

Either: A – Many young people take a year off between leaving school and starting university. This is called a ‘Gap Year’. Do you think this is a good idea?

A

Or: B – Should mobile phones be allowed in the classroom? What do you think? Write an essay. Give reasons and examples to support your ideas.

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 (150-200 words). There is a ‘tolerated’ word limit of 90-220 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:

Range	Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics using some complex sentence forms
Accuracy	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control. Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding
Coherence and cohesion	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
Orthographic control	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:

Written interaction	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"> - identifying the speaker's role - identifying the speakers' relationship - identifying the topic - identifying the situation - recognizing the function - understanding idiomatic expression - understanding expression of feeling - understanding expression of attitude 	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 - public announcements 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 - criticism/expression of dissatisfaction - suggestion - persuasion
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"> - transactional conversations - public announcements - recorded messages
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 (90-120 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 (150–200 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 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 topic is: "Zoos belong to another age, and there is no place for them today". What do you think?

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

For

- Help to educate people
- Help with conservation of endangered species
- Offer breeding programs when animals in the wild can't find a mate
- Help with rehabilitation of abandoned wild animals that have been kept as pets

Against

- Animals have rights and we shouldn't interfere with these
- Animals in captivity suffer from stress and boredom when confined
- Removing animals from the wild reduces genetic diversity and thus further endangers survival of species
- Animals can escape, causing environmental hazards and threatening lives of people who live nearby.

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 topic about which it is feasible to have equally valid opposing opinions, feelings or ideas. The topic may be a concrete or abstract issue or one related to an area of general interest. 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 about a picture and interpret some aspect of it.

Now, here are two pictures showing children at school. 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]

Do you think the changes that have taken place in the classroom and teaching today are producing better educated children than in 1936, when the earlier photo was taken?

[Retrieve the pictures]

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 two related picture and interpret some aspect of them	Two related pictures and two questions. The first prompt is always "Tell me what you can see in the pictures." 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 may 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 a student. You are talking about your work at school. The examiner is your teacher.

Your goal: You want to persuade the teacher to give you less handwritten work and to let you use computers more for researching on the Internet

Interlocutor's script

You are a student at a school. You are talking about changes you want to make at school. I am your teacher.

Alright? You start.

Suggested prompts

- But it's important that you get practice in handwriting
- Does everyone have access to a computer?
- There is a good school library, you know
- I suppose we have to move with the times

[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
<p>To assess ability to perform and respond to basic language functions appropriately</p> <p>Including the following language functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - greeting and leave-taking (and self introduction) - asking for things - asking for information - responding to requests - offering - accepting - responding to offers - thanking, giving information - apologizing, asking for directions - giving or following instructions - inviting - accepting/declining invitations - suggesting or advising - responding to suggestions or advice - congratulating - expressing sympathy - complaining - negotiating - justifying a course of action 	<p>The interlocutor gives the test taker up to 15 seconds to read a role card with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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:

Fluency	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo, although can be hesitant as he/she searches for patterns and expressions There are few noticeable long pauses
Interaction	Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, although may not always do this elegantly Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension and inviting others in
Range	Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics, without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms
Accuracy	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes
Phonological control	Has acquired clear, natural pronunciation and intonation

Summary: Spoken test item type information

Section	Item types	Objectives	Tasks	Stimulus
Section 10: Speaking	Discussion	Assess the 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 topic about which it is feasible to have equally valid opposing opinions, feelings or ideas. The topic may be a concrete or abstract issue or one related to an area of general interest. The test taker will be invited to speculate or respond to a hypothesis
Section 11: Speaking	Describe picture	To assess ability to speak continuously about two related pictures and interpret some aspect of them	(1.5 minutes) Speak without interruption about two pictures in response to a prompt posed by the interlocutor (up to 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 is always "Tell me what you can see in the pictures." 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 may illustrate two alternative options and may allude to a topical issue
Section 12: Speaking	Role play	To assess ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately Including the following language functions: - greeting and leave-taking (and self introduction) - asking for things - asking for information - responding to requests - offering - accepting - responding to offers - thanking - giving information - apologising - asking for directions - giving or following instructions - inviting - accepting/declining invitations - suggesting or advising - responding to suggestions or advice - congratulating - expressing sympathy - complaining - negotiating - justifying a course of action	(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.

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.

Phone:

+44 (0) 120 4770 696

Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm GMT.

Address:

Language Testing Division of Pearson

Operations Team

80 Strand

London

WC2R 0RL

UK