

Guide to Pearson English International Certificate

PTE General

Level 4 Advanced

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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 Pearson English 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 C1. This includes a description of the item types, skills assessed, tasks, objectives, timings and stimulus information. In addition, details about scoring and the marking criteria are presented.

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The six levels of Pearson English International Certificate have been designed to be aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF), a widely recognized benchmark for language ability. The CEF includes a set of language levels defined by descriptors of language competencies. The alignment process as described in the manual (Council of Europe, 2009) distinguishes a number of activities (specification, familiarization, standardization training/benchmarking, standard setting and validation). Although Pearson has gone through these activities, continual validation work is carried out using the most recent administrations of the test. The framework was developed by the Council of Europe (2001) to enable language learners, teachers, universities and potential employers to compare and relate language qualifications gained in different educational contexts. The CEF describes language proficiency in listening, reading, speaking and writing on a six-level scale, grouped into three bands: A1–A2 (Basic User), B1–B2 (Independent User), C1–C2 (Proficient User).

1. Introduction to Pearson English International Certificate

What is Pearson English International Certificate?

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

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

Development of Pearson English International Certificate

Pearson English International Certificate is the revised suite of tests formerly known as the London Tests of English. The changes to the tests were based on extensive consultation with test centres, teachers and test takers in several countries. The revision process was monitored at every stage by an independent Technical Advisory Group (TAG) made up of some of the world's leading language testing experts.

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

Who takes Pearson English International Certificate?

Pearson English International Certificate is intended for learners of English who are speakers of other languages (ESOL). At the different levels the test items do not require any prior knowledge of the world beyond what people may need at a comparable level in their own language to function in their social, academic or professional life. Children younger than 14 may prefer to sit tests from the suite of Pearson Test of English Young Learners, information for which is available at quals.pearson.com/international-certificate-yl

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 4** is **2 hours and 30 minutes**. The information in Figure 4 indicates for sections of the written test at Level 4: 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 4** is **6 minutes**. The information in Figure 5 indicates for sections of the spoken test at Level 4: 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	To assess ability to understand the main detail in short spoken utterances
2	Listening and writing	10	Dictation	To assess ability to understand an extended utterance by transcribing a spoken text
3	Listening	10	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts
4	Reading	5	Gap fill 3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts
5	Reading	5	3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main ideas in an extended written text
6	Reading	8	Open-ended question	To assess ability to understand the main points of short and extended written texts
7	Reading	7	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from an extended written text
8	Writing	10	Write correspondence	To assess ability to write a piece of correspondence (120–150 words)
9	Writing	10	Write text	To assess ability to write a short text from own experience, knowledge or imagination (200–250 words)
Total: 75 points				

Figure 4: Level 4 (Advanced) written test

Spoken test

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

Figure 5: Level 4 (Advanced) 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 does this announcement take place?

- A airport
- B railway station
- C bus station

1. What is the topic of the talk this extract comes from?

- A Design in nature
- B The evolution of Mankind
- C It's us who are to blame

2. What area of work is the man describing??

- A Chemistry
- B Criminology
- C Pharmacology

3. Where does this conversation take place?

- A hospital emergency unit
- B health clinic
- C travel agency

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 situation- identifying the speaker's role- identifying the speakers' relationship- identifying the topic- recognizing function- understanding implied meaning- 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">- 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- apology/excuse- 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 simulated, authentic, descriptive and contain relatively formal language

Scores

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

Section 3: Listening

Text, note completion

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

Task

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

SECTION 3 (PART A)



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

Example: You can't take photos in public places if the photos are for *criminal/terrorist purposes*

12. In some museums you may have to ask
13. People inside their own property have a right to
14. An important point is what you with the photos you take.
15. Things may get more complicated if you want to the photograph.
16. International media companies will expect you to provide them with a along with the photograph.

SECTION 3 (PART B)



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

Example: Another word for food production is: *agriculture*

17. Humans first emerged in the world years ago.
18. Early humans could only get food by
19. It is reasonably well known today when and where plants and food were first
20. People today cannot agree on why man started
21. Part 3 of the talk will examine previous studies from the point of view.

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
Assess ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts.	Authentic recordings of one or two speakers, giving or exchanging information. The items replicate real life situations which require accurate comprehension and transcription of key information (e.g., taking messages or notes) Including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 section of the test and put a cross by the missing word or phrase, as in the example.

Example: Incunabula – The term Incunabula (also incunable or incunabulum) refers to a book, pamphlet or other document that was printed, and not _____, before the start of the 16th century in Europe. The first recorded usage of the term incunabula was in 1639.

- A defined
- B handwritten
- C produced

22. Ransomware – Ransomware is a form of malware that encrypts a victim's files. The attacker then demands a ransom from the victim to restore access to the data _____. Users are shown instructions for how to pay a fee to get the decryption key.

- A upon payment
- B free of charge
- C analysts' findings

23. The water vole – The water vole is under serious threat from habitat loss and _____ by the non-native American mink. Found along our waterways, it is similar-looking to the brown rat, but with a blunt nose, small ears and furry tail.

- A intimidation
- B contemplation
- C predation

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 passage and answer the questions below. Put a cross in the box next to the correct answer, as in the example.

ALEXANDER SELKIRK

Alexander Selkirk lived from 1676 to 13 December 1721. He is famous for spending four years as a castaway on an uninhabited island, an experience on which the Daniel Defoe book *Robinson Crusoe* was based.

Selkirk was born in Fife in Scotland in 1676. He was the seventh son of a shoemaker and tanner and would seem to have been something of a problem child, getting into trouble of various sorts quite quickly. On 27 August 1695 he was summoned to appear before the kirk-session (ecclesiastical court) for his unspecified indecent behaviour in church. Court records note that he failed to appear, having gone away to sea. The charges were postponed until his return.

In 1703 he joined the ship's company of the notorious privateer and explorer William Dampier, captain of the ship *Cinque Ports*, a sixteen gun, ninety ton vessel. After a number of encounters with Spanish vessels, the *Cinque Ports* called in at the uninhabited Juan Fernández Islands, 400 miles out into the Pacific from the coast of Chile, to restock on water and provisions. Selkirk had fallen out with Dampier, and was also deeply concerned about the seaworthiness of the ship because of its battle damage. He asked to be left on the largest island in the group, which is now known as *Robinson Crusoe Island*.

Selkirk regretted his decision as soon as the ship sailed away from the island. He was to spend four years and four months on *Robinson Crusoe Island*. During that time, two ships landed, but both were Spanish vessels and Selkirk had to hide from their crews. On 2 February 1709 the privateer vessel *Duke*, captained by Woodes Rogers and piloted by William Dampier took Selkirk off his island. He found from Dampier that he had been right about the seaworthiness of the *Cinque Ports*. The ship had sunk with all its crew bar Dampier himself and seven men off the coast of Peru.

The now wealthy Alexander Selkirk returned to Fife in 1717, 22 years after he left. Less than a year later he went to sea again, this time as a lieutenant in the Royal Navy. According to the ship's log, the 45 year old Lieutenant Selkirk died of yellow fever at 8pm on 13 December 1721 on board HMS *Weymouth* off the coast of West Africa.

Source for this passage: <https://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/usbiography/s/alexanderselkirk.html>
Status: authentic - modified for length. One or two words changed for level.

Example Who wrote a book about a sailor abandoned on a deserted island?

- A *Robinson Crusoe*.
 B *Alexander Selkirk*.
 C *Daniel Defoe*.

27. How could Alexander Selkirk's childhood best be characterised?

- A Adventurous.
 B Difficult.
 C Criminal.

28. Why did Dampier decide to visit the Juan Fernández Islands?

- A His ship was damaged and needed to be repaired.
 B He needed food and drink for himself and his men.
 C He was escaping from the Spanish naval forces.

29. What did Selkirk think had made the *Cinque Ports* unfit to sail?

- A The weather.
 B The crew.
 C Spanish attacks.

30. When he was alone on the island, Selkirk.

- A kept a diary which he later published.
 B tried to contact the Spanish fleet.
 C realised he had made a mistake.

31. Who confirmed Selkirk's doubts about the *Cinque Ports*?

- A William Dampier.
 B Woodes Rogers.
 C *Robinson Crusoe*.

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

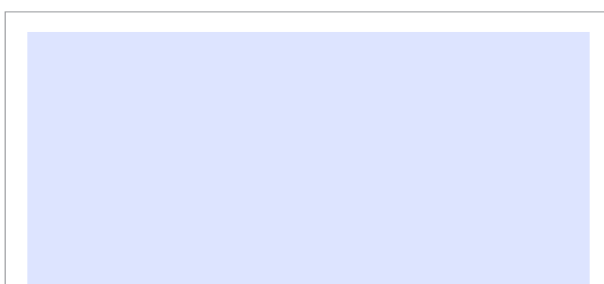
Section 8 comprises a Write correspondence item type. It assesses writing skills. It tests ability to write a piece of correspondence.

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 the Svalbard seed bank. Now write an email to a friend. **Write 120–150 words** and include the following information:

- Discuss the need for a secure location like Svalbard
- Describe the artificial environments that have been created and the reasons for them.
- Evaluate new techniques and technologies that are being explored



Task

Test takers write an email, formal or informal letter based on information given in Section 7. There is one text to write (120–150 words). There is a 'tolerated' word limit of 96-165 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
----------------------------	--

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 **200–250 words**.

Either: A – How can schools and parents best prepare young people for future employment?

Or: B – Discuss some of the arguments for and against keeping animals in zoos.

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 (200-250 words). There is a 'tolerated' word limit of 120-275 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 (120-150 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 (200-250 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: "Social Media should be banned. Young people today have become so obsessed with online communications that they have forgotten how to interact face to face." What do you think?

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

For

- Social Media is largely unmoderated, and thus can be harmful to young people.
- With Social Media we tend to live in an isolated bubble of people who think like us.
- Social Media often encourages people to adopt a 'persona' which is not what they really are.
- Social Media can sometimes be extremely 'antisocial', with exposure to bullying and threatening behaviour that young people find hard to handle

Against

- It is wrong to try to overprotect young people from a world they will have to live in.
- You have choice: to log on, to post, to share and to answer are all choices.
- Social Media provides an important way for people separated by distance to communicate with each other. Think of a mother and her children in different places.
- Social Media allows people with similar if minority interests to communicate with each other.

Image displaying interlocutor script and instructions.

Task

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

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to discuss a concrete or abstract issue	A discussion prompt on a topic about which it is feasible to have equally valid opposing opinions, feelings or ideas. The topic may be a concrete or abstract issue. The test taker will be invited to speculate or respond to a hypothesis


Section 11: Speaking

Describe picture

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

Now, here are two pictures showing different communities. These pictures are being considered for a book called "Different Communities". Please talk about the pictures and tell me how you think these communities have different lifestyles.

(Hand the pictures to the test taker)



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

Which of these pictures would you choose for the cover of the book called "Different Communities" and why?

(Retrieve the pictures)

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

Task

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

Objective, stimulus

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

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.
(Hand the card to the test taker. Allow up to 15 seconds to study the card)

Test taker's card

You are with your friend. The examiner is your friend. You want your friend to join a local community club with you.
Your goal: Persuade your friend to join the community club with you.

Interlocutor's script

I am your friend. You want me to join a local community club with you. Tell me why you think it is a good idea to join the club.

Ready? I'll start.

Are you still planning on joining that new community group?

Suggested prompts:

- *Maybe I won't like the activities they do there.*
- *I don't think I'll enjoy it, I'm quite shy.*
- *I haven't got a lot of free time at the moment.*
- *I don't know if my parents will let me go.*
(Agree to try it)

(Retrieve the card)

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

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

Task

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

Objective, stimulus

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

Scores

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

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

Fluency	Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject may hinder a natural smooth flow of language
Interaction	Can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface his/her remarks in order to get or keep the floor and to relate his/her own contributions skillfully to those of other speakers
Range	Has a good command of a broad range of language allowing him/her to select a formulation to express him/herself clearly in an appropriate style on a wide range of general, academic, professional or leisure topics without having to restrict what he/she wants to say
Accuracy	Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot and generally corrected when they occur of his/her mistakes
Phonological control	Can vary intonation and place sentence stress correctly in order to express finer shades of meaning

Summary: Spoken test item type information

Section	Item types	Objectives	Tasks	Stimulus
Section 10: Speaking	Discussion	To assess ability to discuss a concrete or abstract issue	(2 minutes) Give and support opinions on a topic in response to prompts put by the interlocutor	A discussion on a topic about which it is feasible to have equally valid opposing opinions, feelings or ideas. The topic may be a concrete or abstract issue. The test taker will be invited to speculate or respond to a hypothesis
Section 11: Speaking	Describe picture	To assess ability to speak continuously on a topic related to two pictures	(2 minutes) Speak without interruption about two related pictures in response to a prompt posed by the interlocutor (1 minute). This is followed by a second instruction to interpret some aspect of the pictures. The visuals are designed to elicit language of comparison and contrast as well as expression of ideas, opinions and feelings	Two related pictures and two questions. The first prompt focuses on the pictures; "Please talk about the pictures" or "Please tell me what you can see in the pictures" in relation to a topic or imagined purpose, such as their inclusion in a publication. The second prompt is an instruction to the test taker to interpret some aspect of the pictures or to express a personal reaction to them. The pictures may include some unusual element that invites comment or explanation. They could illustrate two alternative options and may allude to a topical issue
Section 12: Speaking	Role play Language functions: There is no limit to the range of language functions that may be expected at this level	To assess ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately	(2 minutes) Take part in a role play with the interlocutor using a role card with information and instructions. The situation may involve some difference of status or social distance between participants (necessitating adjustment of register). It may require test takers to state a problem which then needs to be solved jointly, explain or justify a course of action or speculate about the possible consequences of future action	The interlocutor gives the test taker up to 15 seconds to read a role card with: - an explanation of the situation - a specification of the roles to be taken by the test taker and the interlocutor - a specification of the test taker's goal (e.g., to reach an agreement, complete a transaction, etc.) - if necessary and appropriate, instructions as to the tone or mood that the test taker should adopt - visual support where appropriate

7. Results, reports and certificates

Results

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

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

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

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

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

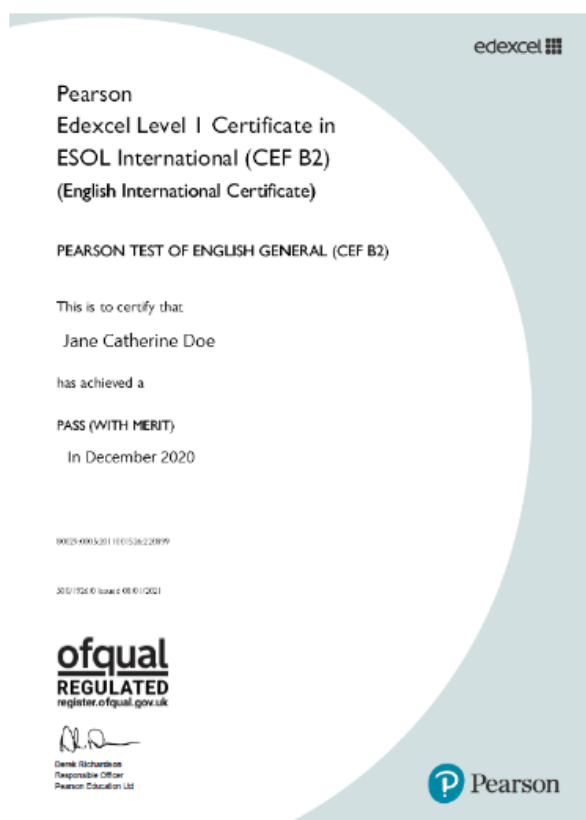
To learn more about post-results services, please visit our [website](#). For any queries, please contact our customer service team at pqs.internationaleo@pearson.com.

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.

Pearson International Certificate

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



8 Contact us

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

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