

Guide to Pearson Test of English General

Level A1 (Foundation)



November 2011
Version 5

Ofqual Accreditation

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

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

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

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

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

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Introduction to the guide

Who is it for?

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

What is in the guide?

This guide contains five key parts:

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

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

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

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

The final part of the guide gives an explanation of each section within the written and spoken tests at Level A1. This includes a description of the item types, skills assessed, tasks, objectives, timings and stimulus information. In addition, details about scoring and the marking criteria are presented.

1. Introduction to Pearson Test of English General

Overview

What is Pearson Test of English General?

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

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

Development of PTE General

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

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 PTE General?

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

Children younger than 14 may prefer to sit tests from the suite of Pearson Test of English Young Learners, information for which is available at pearsonpte.com/PTEYOUNGLEARNERS.

What skills are tested?

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

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

Key features

Realistic themes, authentic sources and tasks

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

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

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

Integrated skills

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

Test delivery

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

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

Information about test session dates, test center locations, registering to take PTE General or registering to become a test center is available at [pearsonpte.com/TestCenters/Pages/Resources](https://www.pearsonpte.com/TestCenters/Pages/Resources).

Test results

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

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

Test structure

PTE General consists of a written and a spoken test.

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

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

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

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

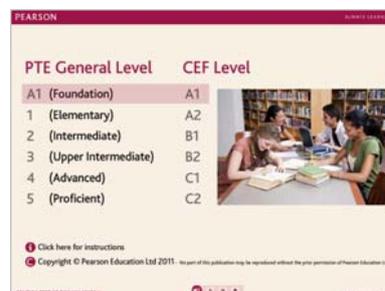
Spoken test (2–5)	
Sections	Skills
10	Speaking
11	Speaking
12	Speaking
13	Speaking

2. Preparation

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

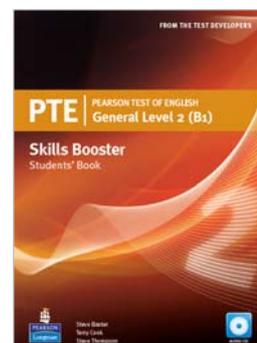
Tutorial

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



Skills Booster

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



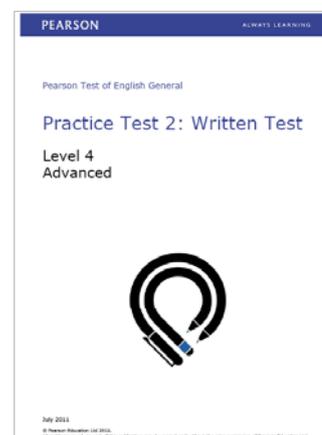
Skills Pod

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



Practice Tests

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



Test Tips

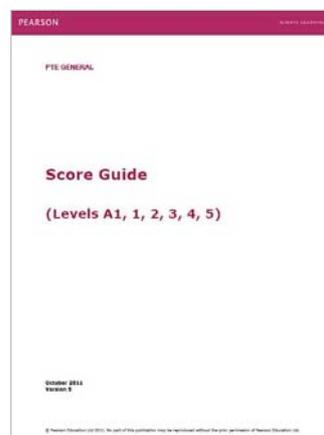
Over 50 test tips are provided for teachers preparing test takers for PTE General at all levels.



Other resources

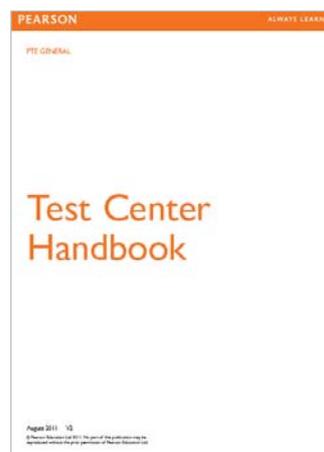
Score Guide

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



Test Center Handbook

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



All resources listed and others are available from the Pearson Tests of English website at www.pearsonpte.com/resources/Pages/home.

3. Scoring

Overview of scoring

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

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

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

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

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

Detailed information about scoring is available within the *Score Guide* at pearsonpte.com/PTEGeneral/Pages/PTEGeneralScoreGuide.

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

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

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The six levels of PTE General have been 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). Figure 3 overleaf indicates what students should be able to do at different CEF levels relevant to PTE General.

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

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

Overview

The overall timing for the written test at Level A1 is **1 hour and 15 minutes**. The information in Figure 4 indicates for sections of the written test at A1: the skills assessed, item types, objectives and the maximum number of score points awarded.

Written test

Sections	Skills	Item types	Objectives	Score points
1	Listening	3-option graphical multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the gist of short spoken utterances	10
2	Listening and writing	Dictation	To assess ability to understand a short utterance by transcribing a spoken text	5 listening 5 writing
3	Listening	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from spoken texts	10
4	Reading	Gap fill 3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts	5
5	Reading	3-option graphical multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main detail in short written texts	5
6	Reading	Open-ended question	To assess ability to understand the main points of short written texts	8
7	Reading	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from a written text	7
8	Writing	Write correspondence	To assess ability to write a short piece of correspondence (30-50 words)	10
9	Writing	Write text	To assess ability to write a short text based on a picture (50-80 words)	10
Total				75

Figure 4. Level A1 (Foundation) written test

The overall timing for the spoken test at Level A1 is **5 minutes**. The information in Figure 5 indicates for sections of the spoken test at Level A1: the skills assessed, item types, objectives, timing and the maximum number of score points awarded.

Spoken test

Sections	Skills	Item types	Objectives	Timing	Score points
10	Speaking	Sustained monologue	To assess ability to speak about matters of personal information and interest	1.5 minutes	25 score points in total; distributed across the marking criteria
11	Not featured at this level				
12	Speaking	Describe picture	To assess ability to speak about a picture	2 minutes	
13	Speaking	Role play	To assess ability to perform and respond to basic language functions appropriately	1.5 minutes	
Total				5 minutes	

Figure 5. Level A1 (Foundation) 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 graphical multiple choice

Section 1 comprises a 3-option graphical multiple choice item type. It assesses listening skills. It tests ability to understand the gist of short spoken utterances.

SECTION 1

 You have 10 seconds to read each question. Listen and put a cross in the box next to the correct answer, as in the example. You have 10 seconds to choose the correct option.

Example: Which table does she want?

		
A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

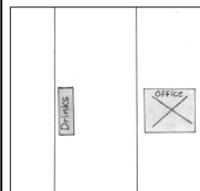
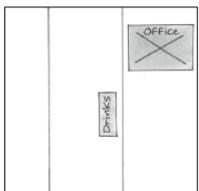
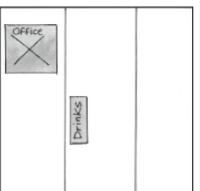
1. What is the man's job?

		
A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>

2. Where is the woman?

		
A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>

3. Where is the office?

		
A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>

4. Who is the man?

		
A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>

5. Where is the woman?



A B C

6. Which shop is the woman describing?



A B C

7. Where does the man go in winter?



A B C

8. What is the woman doing?



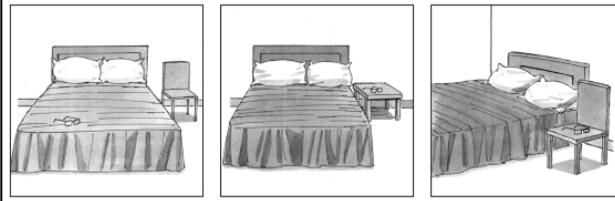
A B C

9. What is the man describing?



A B C

10. Where are the man's glasses?



A B C

(10 marks)

Task

Test takers listen once to ten short recordings and answer a single question for each by choosing which of three pictures matches what is heard. There are ten questions to answer; one per recording.

Objective, stimulus

Objective

To assess ability to understand the gist of short spoken utterances by:

- identifying the situation (e.g., store, restaurant, etc.)
- identifying a speaker's role (e.g., movie box office attendant)
- following an instruction (e.g., giving directions)
- understanding spatial relations (e.g., the position of an object in a room)
- understanding a description (e.g., girl with long dark hair)

Stimulus

Short recordings, one speaker

Including the following:

- transactional utterances, e.g., buying
- social utterances, e.g., greeting
- public announcements, e.g., train times

Including the following language functions:

- single instruction
- request for goods or services
- request for action
- request for information
- factual information
- description

Scores

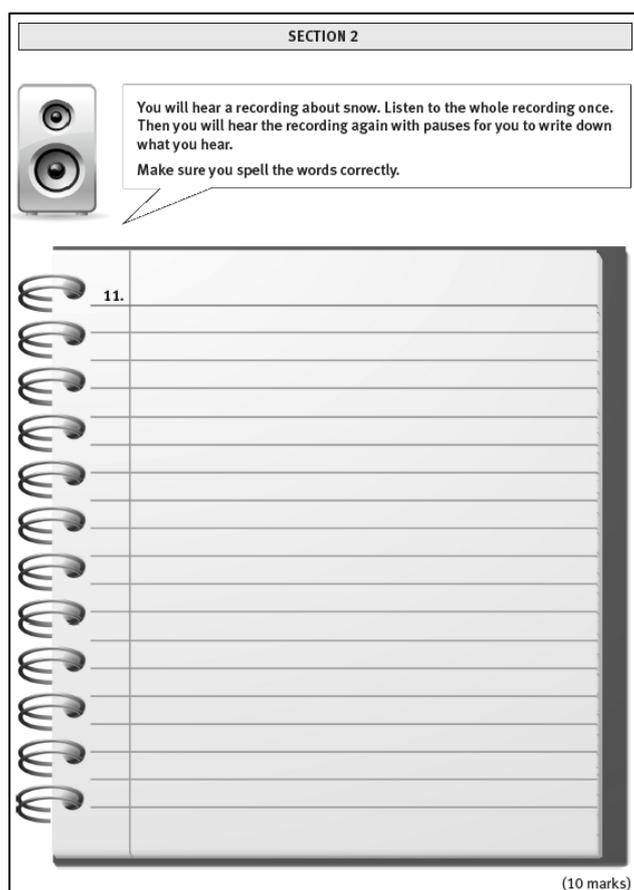
This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correct answer has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of ten score points can be achieved in this section of the test.

Section 2

Listening and writing

Dictation

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



Task

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

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand a short utterance by transcribing a spoken text	Instructions, news bulletins, announcements, broadcast features and factual information

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 spoken texts.

SECTION 3

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

Example. Message for: Mr Taylor

12 Full Name: _____

13 Wants: _____

14 Bedrooms: _____

15 Cost per week: _____

16 Will phone again: _____

SECTION 3 CONTINUED

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

Example. Restaurant Name: Dino's

17 Job: _____

18 Weekly pay: _____

19 Start date: _____

20 Call: _____

21 Telephone number: _____

(10 marks)

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

Task

Test takers listen twice to two monologues 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
To assess ability to extract specific information from spoken texts	One speaker giving information which requires accurate listening and transcription (e.g., addresses, telephone numbers and names)

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	
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  <p>Read each text and put a cross (X) by the missing word or phrase, as in the example.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Example. Passenger announcement: all flights leaving the airport this morning are due to fog. A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> delayed B <input type="checkbox"/> flying C <input type="checkbox"/> seen</p> </div> <p>22. Forget the cold weather. Have a winter holiday in the Call John for details on 01322 446517.</p> <p>A <input type="checkbox"/> snow B <input type="checkbox"/> sun C <input type="checkbox"/> spring</p> <p>23. Ice on roads. Do not drive fast and put your lights on.</p> <p>A <input type="checkbox"/> Danger B <input type="checkbox"/> Cars C <input type="checkbox"/> Help</p>	<p>24. for John.</p> <p>12 eggs 1kg flour orange juice apples shampoo kitchen paper</p> <p>A <input type="checkbox"/> Food and drink B <input type="checkbox"/> Recipe C <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping list</p> <p>25. Please do not in front of our garage. There is a public car park in the next street next to the children's playground.</p> <p>A <input type="checkbox"/> drive B <input type="checkbox"/> play C <input type="checkbox"/> park</p> <p>26. Bill Spark's Retirement It is Bill's day at work next Friday. Let's join him in his office at 5pm to help him celebrate and wish him well for the future.</p> <p>A <input type="checkbox"/> last B <input type="checkbox"/> first C <input type="checkbox"/> difficult</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(5 marks)</p>

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
To 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 graphical multiple choice

Section 5 comprises a 3-option graphical multiple choice item type. It assesses reading skills. It tests ability to understand the main detail in short written texts.

SECTION 5

For each question, put a cross (X) in the box below the correct picture, as in the example.

Example: Which is a picture of the holiday?

correspondence this side only

The weather is very hot. We go out in the morning but in the afternoon we sit under the trees and sleep.

address only this side

POSTCARD

place correct postage here



A



B



C

27. What is the correct picture for the sale?

Winter Clothing Sale

25% off all coats, scarves and skiwear

Hurry! Ends Saturday



A



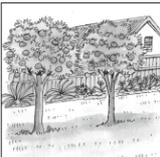
B



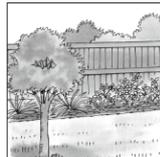
C

28. Which is the correct picture?

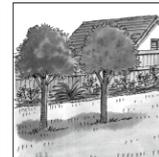
This is a photo of my garden in spring. The trees and flowers look beautiful. In Autumn the trees have apples on them.



A



B



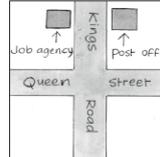
C

29. Which place is the job agency?

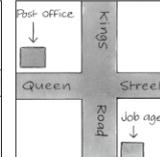
The job agency is opposite the post office in Queen Street. Be careful. There's another post office in Kings Road. It's not there.



A



B



C

30. Which is the correct picture?

Please meet Colin Young at the airport at ten tomorrow. He's got short, dark hair and wears glasses. He'll be with his daughter.



A



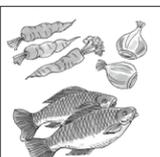
B



C

31. What does John buy?

John. For dinner tonight get some carrots, onions and fish from the supermarket. Oh and wash some potatoes. They're in the cupboard.



A



B



C

(5 marks)

Task

Test takers read five short texts and for each one select, from a choice of three answer options, the picture which matches the content of the text. There are five pictures to choose; one per text.

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand the main detail in short written texts	Texts giving descriptions or directions, relating to pictures, maps or diagrams

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

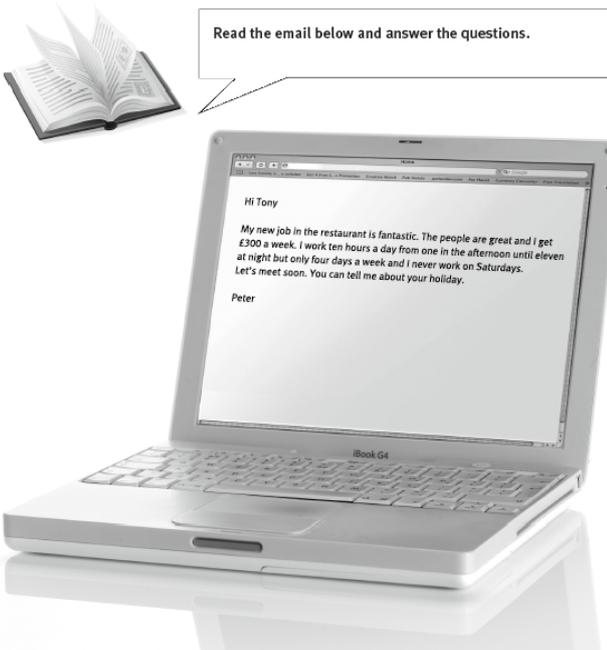
Reading

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 email below and answer the questions.



Hi Tony

My new job in the restaurant is fantastic. The people are great and I get £300 a week. I work ten hours a day from one in the afternoon until eleven at night but only four days a week and I never work on Saturdays. Let's meet soon. You can tell me about your holiday.

Peter

Example. Who is the email to? Tony

32. Where is Peter's new job?

33. How much money does Peter get per week?

34. What time does Peter finish work?

35. When does Peter want to see Tony?

SECTION 6 CONTINUED

Read the leaflet below and answer the questions.



Harry's Takeaway - "The Restaurant in your House"
In July Harry's Takeaway in Newtown is 25 years old.
Special offers: 1st July to 31st July
3 course meals from £15
2 course meals from £12.50
Free delivery (in 15 minutes for homes in Newtown)
Phone: 0789-654-769

Example. What is the name of the restaurant? Harry's Takeaway

36. Where is the restaurant?

37. When do the special offers start?

38. How much does a person pay for 2 courses?

39. What does the restaurant do for free?

(8 marks)

Task

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

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand the main points of short written texts	Text types include: letters, emails, newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures or websites

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 text and complete the notes. Write no more than three words in each gap from the text.
<p>Come to Niederau – a beautiful village in Austria. In summer it's not exciting but in winter it's great. There's snow on the mountains and it's very pretty. It's mostly cold and sunny and sometimes it snows but usually at night. In the mornings and afternoons you can go skiing. You can't ski? Don't worry, there's a great ski-school.</p> <p>The Alpland hotel is waiting for you. Drivers can park behind the hotel and visitors arriving by plane can use the hotel minibus. Tell us when you book your accommodation.</p>	
Example. Niederau is a <u>village in Austria</u> .	
40. Summer is
41. Winter weather is
42. Usual weather is
43. In the daytime
44. for beginners.
45. Accommodation:
46. Travel from the airport by
(7 marks)	

Task

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

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to extract specific information from a written text	Text types include: letters, emails, advertisements, newspaper articles, magazine articles, websites or textbooks

Scores

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

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to write a short piece of correspondence	Instructions which include the purpose of the text, the intended content of the message and the recipient

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 a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations
Accuracy	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical and lexical structures and sentence patterns in a memorized repertoire
Coherence and cohesion	Can link words or groups of words with basic linear connectors like 'and' or 'then'
Orthographic control	Can copy familiar words and short phrases, e.g., simple signs or instructions, names of everyday objects, names and set phrases used regularly Can spell his/her address, nationality and other personal details

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

Written interaction	Can ask for or pass on personal details in written form
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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 a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations
Accuracy	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical and lexical structures and sentence patterns in a memorized repertoire
Coherence and cohesion	Can link words or groups of words with basic linear connectors like 'and' or 'then'
Orthographic control	Can copy familiar words and short phrases, e.g., simple signs or instructions, names of everyday objects, names and set phrases used regularly Can spell his/her address, nationality and other personal details

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

Written interaction	Can write simple isolated phrases and sentences
----------------------------	---

Summary: written test item type information

Sections	Item types	Objectives	Tasks	Stimulus
Section 1: Listening	3-option graphical multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the gist of short spoken utterances by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifying the situation (e.g. store, restaurant, etc.) - identifying a speaker's role (e.g., movie box office attendant) - following an instruction (e.g., giving directions) - understanding spatial relations (e.g., the position of an object in a room) - understanding a description (e.g., girl with long dark hair) 	Listen once to ten short recordings and answer a single question for each by choosing which of three pictures matches what is heard. Ten questions	Short recordings, one speaker Including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - transactional utterances, e.g., buying - social utterances, e.g., greeting - public announcements, e.g., train times Including the following language functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - single instruction - request for goods or services - request for action - request for information - factual information - description
Section 2: Listening and writing	Dictation	To assess ability to understand a short 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
Section 3: Listening	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from spoken texts	Listen twice to two monologues and complete a text or notes for each using the information heard. Ten gaps	One speaker giving information which requires accurate listening and transcription (e.g., addresses, telephone numbers and names)
Section 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	Text types include: labels, instructions, signs, notices, menus, advertisements and announcements
Section 5: Reading	3-option graphical multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main detail in short written texts	Read five short texts and for each one select, from a choice of three answer options, the picture which matches the content of the text. Five pictures	Texts giving descriptions or directions, relating to pictures, maps or diagrams
Section 6: Reading	Open-ended question	To 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: letters, emails, newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures or websites
Section 7: Reading	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from a 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
Section 8: Writing	Write correspondence	To assess ability to write a short piece of correspondence	Write a short email, letter, postcard, note or blog entry based on information given in Section 7. One text (30–50 words)	Instructions which include the purpose of the text, the intended content of the message and the recipient
Section 9: Writing	Write text	To assess ability to write a short text based on a picture	Write a short text based on a visual image. The test taker chooses one of two pictures. The form of the response may be a diary entry, short story or description. One text (50–80 words)	Instructions to write a short text based on a visual image

Figure 6. Level A1 (Foundation) written test item type information

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

Sustained monologue

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

SECTION 10 (1.5 minutes)	
[Put one of the preliminary prompts and main prompts to the test taker. Use the related follow-up prompts to encourage them to continue talking]	
Preliminary prompt 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where is your home?
Main prompt 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell me something about it.
Follow-up prompts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are there a lot of shops near your home?• Have you got a garden?• What is your favourite room?• Where do you watch television?
Preliminary prompt 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How many friends have you got?
Main prompt 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell me about one of them.
Follow-up prompts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe him / her.• What do you like doing with him / her?• When do you meet him / her?• How often do you meet?
Preliminary prompt 3:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where do you and your family live?
Main prompt 3:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell me about your family.
Follow-up prompts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you got any brothers or sisters?• How old are the people in your family?• What are your parents' jobs?• What do your parents do in their free time?
Preliminary prompt 4:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does your father do?
Main prompt 4:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell me about your father's job.
Follow-up prompts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where does your father work?• How does your father go to work?• Is your father's job easy or difficult?• What time does your father get home in the evening?

Task

Test takers speak about personal information and interests in response to questions posed by the interlocutor. This section of the test is **1.5 minutes**.

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to speak about matters of personal information and interest	A series of questions put by the interlocutor. These always begin with "Can you tell me your name please?" and are followed by further questions or instructions which invite a more extended response, such as "Tell me something about your room."

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 manage very short isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words and to repair communication
Interaction	Can ask and answer questions about personal details Can interact in a simple way, but communication is totally dependent on repetition and rephrasing by the interlocutor as well as repair by the test taker
Range	Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations
Accuracy	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical and lexical structures and sentence patterns in a memorized repertoire
Phonological control	Pronunciation is of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases

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

Sustained monologue	Can describe him/herself, what he/she does and where he/she lives
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Section 12

Speaking

Describe picture

Section 12 comprises a *Describe picture* item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to speak about a picture.

SECTION 12 (2 minutes)

Now, here is a picture of a book shop. Please tell me what you can see and what is happening in the picture.

[Hand the picture to the test taker]

[Allow the test taker to speak for about 1 minute. If necessary, use the following prompts to sustain the discourse]

How many people are in the picture?

What's this man/woman wearing / doing? [Indicate the person chosen]

What's the child doing?

Can you describe this person? [Indicate the person chosen]

[Retrieve the picture]



Task

Test takers describe a picture in response to questions posed by the interlocutor. This section of the test is **2 minutes**.

Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to speak about a picture	A picture depicting a scene which is designed to elicit descriptions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - people - interiors (e.g., home, school, stores, restaurants) - public places (e.g., streets, parks) - everyday activities

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 manage very short isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words and to repair communication
Interaction	Can ask and answer questions about personal details Can interact in a simple way, but communication is totally dependent on repetition and rephrasing by the interlocutor as well as repair by the test taker
Range	Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations
Accuracy	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical and lexical structures and sentence patterns in a memorized repertoire
Phonological control	Pronunciation is of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases

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

Thematic development	Can describe something using isolated words or simple phrases
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Section 13

Speaking

Role play

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

SECTION 13 (1.5 minutes)
<p><i>Now we are going to take part in a role play. Here is a card with the situation on it.</i></p> <p>[Hand the card to the test taker]</p> <p>[Allow up to 15 seconds to study the card]</p>
<p>Test taker's card</p> <p>You are a customer in a clothes shop. The examiner is the shop assistant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell the assistant you want a shirt for your brother.• Give your brother's age.• Ask for a different colour.• Ask how much it is.• Give the assistant the money.• Thank the assistant.
<p>Interlocutor's script</p> <p><i>We are in a clothes shop. I am a shop assistant and you are a customer.</i></p> <p><i>Alright? I'll start.</i></p> <p><i>Good afternoon, can I help you?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Certainly. How old is he?</i>• <i>Here is a nice blue shirt.</i>• <i>How about this green/grey/yellow one?</i>• <i>It's thirty pounds.</i>• <i>Thank you, have a good day.</i> <p>[Retrieve the card]</p> <p><i>Thank you. That is the end of the test.</i></p>

Task

Test takers take part in a role play with the interlocutor using a role card with information and instructions. This section of the test is **1.5 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 - asking for things - asking for information - giving information - responding to requests - offering - responding to offers - thanking 	<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 and the roles - 4–5 instructions involving at least two different functions - visual support where appropriate <p>Including the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - basic social encounters and gatherings - shopping - ordering food and drink - public transportation - about town

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 manage very short isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words and to repair communication
Interaction	Can ask and answer questions about personal details Can interact in a simple way, but communication is totally dependent on repetition and rephrasing by the interlocutor as well as repair by the test taker
Range	Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations
Accuracy	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical and lexical structures and sentence patterns in a memorized repertoire
Phonological control	Pronunciation is of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases

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

Sociolinguistic appropriateness	Can establish basic social contact by using the simplest everyday polite forms of, for example: greetings and farewells, introductions, saying please, thank you, sorry
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Summary: spoken test item type information

Sections	Item types	Objectives	Tasks	Stimulus
Section 10: Speaking	Sustained monologue	To assess ability to speak about matters of personal information and interest	(1.5 minutes) Speak about personal information and interests in response to questions posed by the interlocutor	A series of questions put by the interlocutor. These always begin with "Can you tell me your name please?" and are followed by further questions or instructions which invite a more extended response, such as "Tell me something about your room."
Section 11: Speaking	Not featured at this level			
Section 12: Speaking	Describe picture	To assess ability to speak about a picture	(2 minutes) Describe a picture in response to questions posed by the interlocutor	A picture depicting a scene which is designed to elicit descriptions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - people - interiors (e.g., home, school, stores, restaurants) - public places (e.g., streets, parks) - everyday activities
Section 13: Speaking	Role play	To assess ability to perform and respond to basic language functions appropriately Including the following language functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - greeting and leave-taking - asking for things - asking for information - giving information - responding to requests - offering - responding to offers - thanking 	(1.5 minutes) Take part in a role play with the interlocutor using a role card with information and instructions	The Interlocutor gives the test taker up to 15 seconds to read a role card with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an explanation of the situation and the roles - 4–5 instructions involving at least two different functions - visual support where appropriate Including the following situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - basic social encounters and gatherings - shopping - ordering food and drink - public transportation - about town

Figure 7. Level A1 (Foundation) spoken test item type information

Contact us

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