

**PTE GENERAL**

# **Score Guide**

**(Levels A1, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)**

**February 2012  
Version 6**

# **PTE GENERAL Score Guide**

# Contents

## About the Score Guide

Who is it for?

What is in the guide?

<b>1. Introduction to Pearson Test of English General</b>	<b>1</b>
Overview	1
<b>2. Scoring</b>	<b>3</b>
Overview	3
Common European Framework of Reference for Languages	4
<b>3. Written component: listening, reading, writing</b>	<b>6</b>
Types of scoring: correct, incorrect and partial credit	6
How sections 2, 8 and 9 are scored	7
Sample responses: sections 8 and 9	15
<b>4. Spoken component: speaking</b>	<b>19</b>
Partial credit scoring: sections 10–13	19
How sections 10–13 are scored	21
Sample responses: sections 10–13	28
<b>5. Marking and awarding</b>	<b>32</b>
Marking	32
Equal weighting per skill	32
Item analysis	32
Awarding	32
<b>6. Results and certificates</b>	<b>33</b>
Results	33
Certificates	34

## References

## Contact us

# About the Score Guide

## Who is it for?

This *Score Guide* is designed for centers and teachers who are preparing test takers for Pearson Test of English General (PTE General). This guide is also a useful reference for anyone who wants to learn more about scoring at each of the test levels.

## What is in the guide?

The guide contains five key parts:

1. **Introduction to Pearson Test of English General**

The first part provides an overview of the test, outlines its development, specifies the target users and explains the skills tested.

2. **Scoring**

The second part includes 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).

3. **Written component: listening, reading, writing**

This part provides a detailed description of scoring within the written component of the test across all levels, which tests listening, reading and writing.

4. **Spoken component: speaking**

The next part explains scoring within the spoken component of the test across all levels, which tests speaking only.

5. **Marking and awarding**

The fifth part explains the key principles in determining the overall test score.

6. **Results and certificates**

The final part includes a sample certificate and provides the procedures for receiving test results.

# 1. Introduction to Pearson Test of English General

## Overview

### What is Pearson Test of English General?

Pearson Test of English General (PTE General) is an assessment solution at six levels of proficiency (A1, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), which assesses and accredits general English language ability. The six levels of the test 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.

All levels of PTE General are recognized globally and are accepted by universities, employers and national education authorities in many countries as evidence of a required level 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 [www.pearsonpte.com/PTEGeneral](http://www.pearsonpte.com/PTEGeneral).

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 [www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/Manuel1\\_EN.asp](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 [www.pearsonpte.com/PTEYoungLearners](http://www.pearsonpte.com/PTEYoungLearners).

## What skills are tested?

PTE General assesses the four skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. Each level (A1, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) provides a measure of test takers' communicative ability and evidence of proficiency in practical language skills. Levels 2–5 in particular are useful for international travel, social interactions, work contexts and study in an English-speaking environment. Test takers are required to successfully complete real-life tasks, such as writing messages, responding to talks and presentations, understanding newspaper articles or participating in conversations.

The skills are tested at six levels which were designed to be aligned to the descriptors in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF), A1 to C2 (see Part 2 Scoring, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, p. 4). Research to be finalized in 2012 will give further information about the alignment of the PTE General tests to the CEF.

## Test format

Each PTE General level consists of a written and a spoken component.

The written component includes nine sections at all levels and assesses listening, reading and writing.

Written component of test	
Sections	Skills
1	Listening
2	Listening and writing
3	Listening
4–7	Reading
8–9	Writing

The spoken component includes three sections at levels A1 and 1, and four sections at levels 2–5. It assesses speaking.

Spoken component of test	
Sections	Skills
10	Speaking
11	Speaking (only featured at levels 2–5, NOT levels A1 and 1)
12	Speaking
13	Speaking

## 2. Scoring

### Overview

The written component of PTE General is scored out of a maximum of 75 score points and the spoken component out of a maximum of 25.

The table below shows the sections, skills tested and the maximum number of score points that can be obtained in the written component of the test at all levels.

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
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>

Score points: written component (all levels)

The table below shows the sections, skills tested and the maximum number of score points that can be obtained in the spoken component of the test at levels A1 and 1, and levels 2–5.

Sections	Skills	Score points
10	Speaking	<b>25 score points</b> in total; distributed across the marking criteria
11	Speaking (only featured at levels 2-5, NOT levels A1 and 1)	
12	Speaking	
13	Speaking	
<b>Total</b>		

Score points: spoken component (all levels)

Each of the four skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking) contributes 25 points (25%) towards the overall score of 100 score points for the whole test. This is shown within the "Candidate Performance Report" below (see Part 6 Results and certificates, p. 33).

Name: Sample test taker		
Centre Number: 88888		
Candidate Number: 0001		
Pearson Test of English General		
Candidate Performance Report for Level 4065 – November 2010		
Listening	.....	15 / 25
Reading	.....	19 / 25
Speaking	.....	17 / 25
Writing	.....	15 / 25
Overall Total Marks 66 / 100		

Sample PTE General Test Taker Performance Report

## 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) (Council of Europe, 2001), 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, further validation work is being carried out using data from the most recent administrations of the test.

The CEF 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) and C1–C2 (Proficient user). The table below indicates what students should be able to do at different CEF levels relevant to PTE General.

Council of Europe		Students at this level:	PTE General
Proficient user	C2	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.	Level 5
	C1	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.	Level 4
Independent user	B2	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.	Level 3
	B1	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.	Level 2
Basic user	A2	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.	Level 1
	A1	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.	Level A1

### 3. Written component: listening, reading, writing

#### Types of scoring: correct, incorrect and partial credit

Item types in the written component of the test are scored as **correct, incorrect or partially correct**. Items that have a maximum score of 1 can only be marked correct or incorrect, and each correctly answered item is awarded 1 point. Items with a score higher than 1 can be given partial credit if the response is partially correct. Responses that are incorrect are marked 0, those that are correct are rewarded with the maximum available score for the item, and those that are partially correct receive a positive score that is lower than the maximum available for that item.

**Sections 1 and 3–7 are scored as either correct or incorrect.** Each item has a weighting of 1 score point. Hence the number of points available for each section is equivalent to the number of items test takers are required to respond to. For example, there are 10 items to answer in Section 1 and the maximum score points available is also 10. The total number of items in sections 1 and 3–7 is 45 together, giving a maximum of **45 score points**.

For **sections 2, 8 and 9 partial credit scoring applies**. In these sections responses are scored as correct, incorrect or partially correct. Test takers complete a dictation (Section 2), write a piece of correspondence (Section 8) and write a creative text (Section 9). Each of these sections has a maximum of 10 points for responses that deserve full credit. The total maximum number of score points for these three sections is **30 score points**.

The **maximum score points available for the written component of the test is 75 in total**: 45 points from sections 1 and 3–7, and 30 score points from sections 2, 8 and 9. These 75 score points are evenly allocated to the three skills assessed, that is 25 for listening, 25 for reading, and 25 for writing.

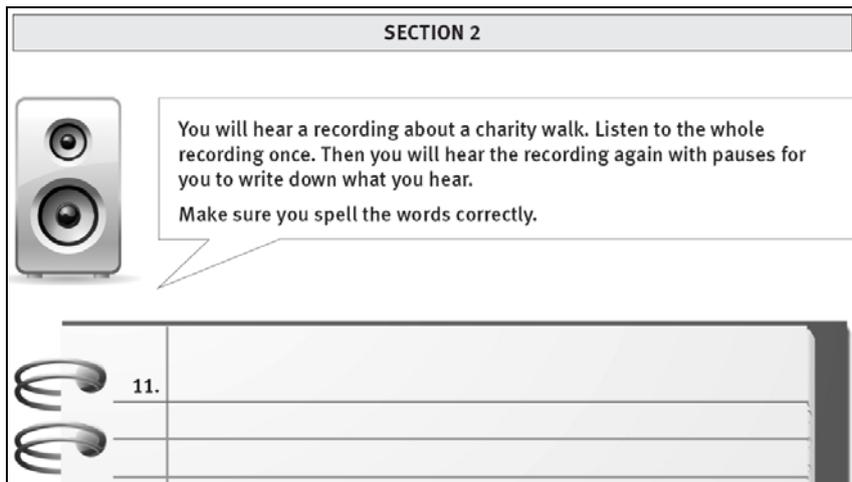
The information in the table below provides an overview of the score points available within the written component of the test, and the type of scoring applied (correct/incorrect or partial credit scoring) across all levels.

Sections	Skills	Item types	Score points	Types of scoring
1	Listening	3-option (graphical) multiple choice	10	Correct/incorrect
2	Listening and writing	Dictation	5 (listening) 5 (writing)	Partial credit
3	Listening	Text, note completion	10	Correct/incorrect
4	Reading	Gap fill 3-option multiple choice	5	Correct/incorrect
5	Reading	3-option (graphical) multiple choice	5	Correct/incorrect
6	Reading	Open-ended question	8	Correct/incorrect
7	Reading	Text, note completion	7	Correct/incorrect
8	Writing	Write correspondence	10	Partial credit
9	Writing	Write text	10	Partial credit
<b>Total</b>			<b>75</b>	

Scoring in the written component of the test (all levels)

# How sections 2, 8 and 9 are scored

## Section 2: Dictation



Section 2 has a total weighting of **10 score points** at all levels. Of these 10 score points, **5 are awarded for listening and 5 for writing**. Each score is calculated separately.

The score for listening is based on the number of correct words the test taker writes down from the recording. The score out of 5 is calculated by dividing the number of accurate words by the total number of words in the recording, which gives the proportion of correct words. The result is then multiplied by 5 and rounded to the nearest whole number. A test taker who has written all words correctly would get the maximum score of 5. For example, if 15 words are accurate from a passage containing 17 words then the score is calculated as follows:

$$15/17 = 0.882$$

$$5 \times 0.882 = 4.412$$

$$\text{Score} = 4$$

The writing score similarly is based on the number of words the test taker spells correctly. The score out of 5 is computed using the number of words spelt accurately and the total number of words in the text. This is then multiplied by 5 and rounded to the nearest whole number. For example, if 13 words are spelt correctly out of a passage containing 17 words then the score is calculated as follows:

$$13/17 = 0.765$$

$$5 \times 0.765 = 3.823$$

$$\text{Score} = 4$$

The mark for listening is added to the scores obtained for the other listening sections (1 and 3) to give a listening score out of 25 reported for performance on the entire test. The mark for writing is added to the scores obtained for the other writing sections (8 and 9) to give a writing score out of 25 reported for performance on the entire test.

## Section 8: Write correspondence and Section 9: Write text

**SECTION 8**



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

47. You have read the article on how to volunteer for different organisations in your local community. Write an email to your friend telling them about your interest in becoming a volunteer. Write 70–90 words and include the following information:

- Say why you would like to become a volunteer.
- Suggest some volunteering activities you could do together.
- Say how both of you could benefit.

**SECTION 9**



Choose one of the topics below and write your answer in 100 – 150 words.

48. A) You read this on a website specialising in bike holidays and decide to write an answer.

We're very interested to hear about outdoor holidays so we can exchange information between our site users. Have you been anywhere interesting recently? If so, tell us about it.

Or

48. B) You see the following on your university website and decide to write an answer.

**Where to eat?**

Have you found any nice, cheap places to eat locally? If so, tell us about them!

Sections 8 and 9 have a weighting of **10 score points each** at all levels of the test.

8

Performance is measured against the following categories:

- **Completing the task.** Test takers must complete the task appropriately in order to receive any score. Irrelevant answers will be scored as 0 for task completion and will not receive score points for any other category.
- **Meeting formal requirements.** Test takers must meet the formal requirements of the test, i.e., write within a specified number of words in an appropriate response format.
- **Performing against the analytic level descriptive criteria.** Score points are awarded for test takers' performance against the analytic descriptive criteria which consist of four traits at each level:
  - **range**
  - **accuracy**
  - **coherence**
  - **orthographic control**
- **Performing against the global section descriptive criteria.** In addition, each section is assessed against a different criterion associated with a trait:
  - **written interaction (Section 8)**
  - **written production (Section 9)**

Test takers are scored on a total of seven traits in Section 8 and seven in Section 9 at each level (task completion, formal requirements, range, accuracy, coherence, orthographic control and written interaction OR written production).

The seven traits are used to create two score types:

**Analytic level score (5 points)** = total score for task completion, formal requirements, range, accuracy, coherence and orthographic control.

**Global section score (5 points)** = total score for written interaction OR written production.

## Analytic level score

### Completing the task

For completing the task, test takers receive 0, 1 or 2 score points. If a 0 is received for task completion, the response will not be assessed on any other criteria and the score will be 0 for the section. The table below shows how scores are allocated for task completion.

<b>0</b>	No engagement with the prompt with regards to content
<b>1</b>	Partial engagement with the prompt with regards to content, i.e., not all aspects of the prompt have been considered
<b>2</b>	Full engagement with the prompt with regards to content, i.e., all aspects are referred to

Marking scale for task completion (written)

## Meeting formal requirements

The table below indicates how scores for formal requirements are given.

<b>0</b>	Complies with neither the word limit nor the response format
<b>1</b>	Either the word limit or the response format is correct
<b>2</b>	Both the word limit as well as the response format are correct

Marking scale for formal requirements (written)

**Please note:** At each level there is a ‘tolerated’ word count for sections 8 and 9. The table below shows the ‘tolerance’ for the writing tasks at each level.

Level	Section 8 word limit	Tolerance	Section 9 word limit	Tolerance
A1	30-50	24-55	50-80	30-88
L1	50-70	40-77	80-100	48-110
L2	70-90	56-99	100-150	60-165
L3	90-120	72-132	150-200	90-220
L4	120-150	96-165	200-250	120-275
L5	150-200	120-220	250-300	150-330

## Performing against the analytic level descriptive criteria

All levels were designed to be aligned to the CEF (see Part 2 Scoring, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, p. 4). Written responses in sections 8 and 9 are scored based on test takers’ performance against the following analytic descriptive criteria, based on Council of Europe descriptors, at each level for the traits range, accuracy, coherence and orthographic control.

	Level A1	Level 1	Level 2
Range	Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations	Uses basic sentence patterns with memorized phrases, groups of a few words and formulae in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations	Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel and current events
Accuracy	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical and lexical structures and sentence patterns in a memorized repertoire	Uses some simple grammatical and lexical structures correctly, but still systematically makes some basic mistakes	Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used ‘routines’ and patterns associated with more predictable situations
Coherence	Can link words or groups of words with basic linear connectors like ‘and’ or ‘then’	Can use the most frequently occurring connectors to link simple sentences in order to tell a story or describe something as simple as a list of points  Can link groups of words with simple connectors like ‘and’, ‘but’ and ‘because’	Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points
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	Can copy short sentences on everyday subjects  Can write with reasonable phonetic accuracy (but not necessarily fully standard spelling) using short words that are in his/her oral vocabulary	Can produce continuous writing which is generally intelligible throughout. Spelling, punctuation and layout are accurate enough to be followed most of the time

Analytic level descriptive criteria: levels A1–2 (written) © Council of Europe, 2001

	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Range	Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics using some complex sentence forms	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	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and to eliminate ambiguity  Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms
Accuracy	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control  Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding	Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical and lexical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot	Maintains consistent grammatical and lexical control of complex language
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	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured text, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices	Can create coherent and cohesive text making full and appropriate use of a variety of organizational patterns and a wide range of cohesive devices
Orthographic Control	Can produce clearly intelligible continuous writing which follows standard layout paragraphing conventions  Spelling and punctuation are reasonably accurate, but may show signs of mother tongue influence	Layout, paragraphing and punctuation are consistent and helpful  Spelling is accurate, apart from occasional slips	Writing is orthographically free of error

Analytic level descriptive criteria: levels 3–5 (written) © Council of Europe, 2001

The marking scale below from 1–5 is used by examiners to allocate score points to each of the four traits of the analytic level descriptive criteria — range, accuracy, coherence and cohesion and orthographic control.

<b>1</b>	The performance is below the level
<b>2</b>	The performance is just at the level (borderline test taker)
<b>3</b>	The performance is at the level
<b>4</b>	The performance is almost at the next level
<b>5</b>	The performance is at the next level

Analytic level descriptive criteria marking scale (written)

### Computing the analytic level score

To compute the analytic level score for sections 8 and 9, scores obtained in the different categories and traits are added together. The maximum score for levels A1–4 is 24 points and is composed of:

- task completion (2 points)
- formal requirements (2 points)
- range (5 points)
- accuracy (5 points)
- coherence and cohesion (5 points)
- orthographic control (5 points)

The marking scale for Level 5, however, is from 1–3 for range, accuracy, coherence and cohesion and orthographic control given there is no CEF level above C2. Therefore, the maximum score at Level 5 is 16 points and is composed of:

- task completion (2 points)
- formal requirements (2 points)
- range (3 points)
- accuracy (3 points)
- coherence and cohesion (3 points)
- orthographical control (3 points)

The total analytic level score is converted to a scale out of 5, by dividing the obtained score by the maximum score. The result is then multiplied by 5 and rounded to the nearest whole number. Thus, for a test taker at levels A1 and 1 to 4 who has obtained a total score of 16, the score will be computed as follows:

$$16/24 = 0.667$$

$$5 \times 0.667 = 3.333$$

$$\text{Score} = 3$$

For a test taker at Level 5 who has obtained a total score of 16, the score will be computed as follows:

$$16/16 = 1.000$$

$$5 \times 1.000 = 5$$

$$\text{Score} = 5$$

## Global section score

### Performing against the global section descriptive criteria

Written responses in sections 8 and 9 are also scored based on test takers' performance against the following global section descriptive criteria at each level for the traits written interaction in Section 8 and written production in Section 9.

	Level A1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Section 8 Written interaction	Can ask for or pass on personal details in written form	Can write short, simple formulaic notes relating to matters in areas of immediate need	Can convey information and ideas on abstract as well as concrete topics, check information and ask about or explain problems with reasonable precision.  Can write personal letters and notes asking for or conveying simple information of immediate relevance, getting across the point s/he feels to be important	Can express news and views effectively in writing, and relate to those of others	Can express him/herself with clarity and precision, relating to the addressee flexibly and effectively	Can express him/herself with clarity and precision, and great flexibility differentiating finer shades of meaning in complex professional and/or academic texts

	Level A1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<b>Section 9 Written production</b>	Can write simple isolated phrases and sentences	Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like 'and', 'but' and 'because'	Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence	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	Can write clear, well-structured texts on complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples	Can write clear, smoothly flowing, complex texts in an appropriate and effective style and a logical structure which helps the reader to find significant points

Global section descriptive criteria: all levels (written) © Council of Europe, 2001

The marking scale below from 1–5 is used by examiners to allocate score points to the two traits of the global section criteria associated with each section: written interaction in Section 8 and written production in Section 9.

<b>1</b>	The performance is below the level
<b>2</b>	The performance is just at the level (borderline test taker)
<b>3</b>	The performance is at the level
<b>4</b>	The performance is almost at the next level
<b>5</b>	The performance is at the next level

Global section descriptive criteria marking scale (written)

### Computing the global section score

The maximum global section score for levels A1–4 is 5, hence no conversion is required. Given that CEF Level C2 is the highest level, the marking scale for PTE General Level 5 has a maximum score of 3. Assigned marks for Level 5 are converted to a score out of 5 by dividing the obtained score by the maximum score, then multiplying the result by 5 and rounding to the nearest whole number.

## Computing the total writing score for sections 2, 8 and 9

To compute the total writing score, **the converted scores for sections 2, 8 and 9 are added together to give a score out of 25.**

**Please note:** A score of 0 is given for a task where there is no response, the response is totally irrelevant or the response is in a language other than English.

Score range	Traits
<b>Section 2 Dictation</b>	
0-5	Spelling
<b>Section 8 Write correspondence</b>	
<b>Analytic level score</b>	
0-5	Task completion Formal requirements Analytic level descriptive criteria (range, accuracy, coherence, orthographic control)
<b>Global section score</b>	
0-5	Written interaction
<b>Section 9 Write text</b>	
<b>Analytic level score</b>	
0-5	Task completion Formal requirements Analytic level descriptive criteria (range, accuracy, coherence, orthographic control)
<b>Global section score</b>	
0-5	Written production
<b>Total = 0–25</b>	

## Sample responses: sections 8 and 9

This part of the guide provides sample responses and commentary for the writing sections in PTE General to illustrate responses that are “**Below the level**”, “**Clearly at the level**” and “**Just at the level**” and “**Above the level**” and “**Almost at the next level**” at PTE General Levels 2 and 3.

**Please note:** Total converted scores for each section are not given here because this information may be misleading. The overall award given for PTE General is based on a combination of scores for performance on all sections in the test, not just one as per the samples below. The intention here is to give an idea of how a written response is marked against the assessment criteria outlined in the previous section of this guide and what constitutes a strong or weak response for the level.

### Section 8: Write correspondence (Level 2)

#### Task

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

The magazine in Section 7 where you saw the article about rail and air travel asked readers to give their opinions. Write a short letter in response to the article. Write 70 to 90 words and include the following:

- your opinion about cheap air travel and the environment
- whether you prefer travelling by plane or train
- reasons for your opinions

#### Sample responses

##### Test taker A (Below the level)

I'd like to speak in general, most of people do like travelling. Some of them have traviled to their favorite places and the other didn't. So, Ithere are many cheap airlines all the people can travile and enjoyed in their holidays. Seconds for me I prefer to travile by train because I don't like to fly but I have to and all my jurneies I had got in the air plain with out sleeping for one day to sleep during it. But the train makes me feel I'm driving or in a car and I like driving. I'm a afraid at flying that's it. Some times I think to have some thing to make me feel relaxing but I never had. (121 words)

##### Commentary

###### Task completion (1)

The test taker addresses the content points, but only partially, for example, he does not mention the impact on the environment.

###### Formal requirements (0)

The response exceeds the 'tolerated' word limit of 56-99 words.

###### Range (2)

The range of language is limited.

###### Accuracy (1)

There are numerous grammatical and lexical inaccuracies.

###### Coherence (2)

The response is organized, but linking is limited to simple connectors and includes some errors, for example, "seconds".

###### Orthographic control (2)

There are some spelling errors.

###### Written interaction (3)

The test taker manages to express himself adequately and provide simple information of immediate relevance.

### **Test taker B (Clearly at the level)**

I'm a poor student and I have no money. Because of this fact I have no chance to choose. I must travel with the cheapest possibility. But for example business can choose. They could plan with more money for business trips. But nowadays the management policy wants more profit and when they can choose between money and environment, they choose cheap flights! The best example is the financial crisis, where everybody aim the most profit. My own opinion is that the government must control the environment with taxes and bonus for green handlings. (93 words)

### **Commentary**

#### **Task completion (1)**

The test taker does not address all the content points, for example, his own preferences.

#### **Formal requirements (1)**

The response is clearly not a letter, but within the tolerated word limit of 56-99 words.

#### **Range (3)**

The test taker uses sufficient range of language to express his ideas.

#### **Accuracy (3)**

The response is mainly accurate.

#### **Coherence (3)**

The test taker's response is well organized and the points are presented in a linear sequence.

#### **Orthographic control (3)**

The response has no spelling errors, but one full stop is missing.

#### **Written interaction (3)**

The test taker is able to convey information clearly and explain his point of view.

### **Test taker C (Above the level)**

Rail and air travel

It is true that there are more and more cheap flights nowadays. Consequently, a lot of people are using these offers, rather than going by train. You can't stop this trend and I think it is okay to give people, who are not very rich, the chance to fly. Furthermore, we will not solve our environmental problems by cancelling these flights.

I prefer travelling by train. Not only because it produces less CO<sub>2</sub>, but also because of the landscapes you can look at during your travel. (90 words)

### **Commentary**

#### **Task completion (2)**

The test taker fully engages with the prompt.

#### **Formal requirements (1)**

The number of words is within the limit, but the response is clearly not a letter. The use of a title tends to suggest it is a short article.

#### **Range (4)**

There is a slightly restricted range of vocabulary in the last sentence with the use of "landscapes". The response nearly meets the criteria for Level 3.

#### **Accuracy (5)**

There are no grammatical errors.

#### **Coherence (5)**

A variety of linking words are used efficiently.

#### **Orthographic control (5)**

There are no spelling errors, but one full stop is missing.

#### **Written interaction (5)**

The test taker expresses ideas and views effectively and can perform above the level of the CEF descriptor.

## Section 9: Write text (Level 3)

### Task

You see this notice in an English language magazine. Write an article of 150-200 words.

#### Calling All Travellers!

Articles Wanted

We are looking for articles with the title "A Journey I'll Never Forget".

Include Information on:

- where the journey was
- what was so special about it
- why you'll always remember it

**Best articles printed in next month's edition.**

### Sample responses

#### Test taker A (Below the level)

My best Journey was in last year summer 2009 in Alps. I love hiking and with my two best friends decided to go in Slovenia. It was first time for me to visit country and I was amazed; very beautiful nature and [illegible] people. First we stay in Hotel wich was nearest to mountains; we loved food Morning at 6Am we start our journey, first thing we saw was waterfall; called "Slop savica" it is very popular place in Slovenia. you can even see pictures on turistic advertisements. as we continue to walk higher it start to be more and more difficult for me; there was some places to climb without chains; was difficult to find trevelers marks. Generally we reach higher place we could. It was sumer; August and where playing it the snow; wich was very exiting, on our way we could see thee lakes; one cottage (you can only reach by walking 8 hours or by helicopter) my pictures from this trip are my best I think; Most of my friends say so. (176 words)

#### Commentary

##### Task completion (1)

The test taker addresses the content points, but not explicitly or fully.

##### Formal requirements (2)

The response is within the word limit and conforms to the requirements of the response format.

##### Range (2)

The response does not demonstrate the range of language expected at this level.

##### Accuracy (2)

There are a number of grammatical and lexical errors.

##### Coherence (1)

Even though ideas are linked together sequentially, there is a lack of overall coherence and structure.

##### Orthographic control (2)

There are a number of spelling errors.

##### Written production (2)

The response does not synthesize information sufficiently.

### **Test taker B (Just at the level)**

Journey I'll Never Forget

I'll never Forget when I went to london.  
I stayed in london for 5months and it was an amazing experience and a huge change because my life in london was completely different of my life in Colombia.  
It was my first time living without my parents and I had to take care of all my things on my own, I had to work to pay the rent, the food, everything I bought was with MY money.  
Meeting new people in london was great, I met people from all over the world and made some good friends.  
Improving my English was also an important part of the experience, I learned a lot and that's the most important thing because that was the main reason for me to go there. (132 words)

### **Commentary**

#### **Task completion (1)**

Not all the content points are fully addressed, for example, why the journey will always be remembered.

#### **Formal requirements (2)**

The text is clearly an article. The response is slightly below the required word limit but within the tolerated word limit of 90-220 for this task.

#### **Range (2)**

The test taker mainly uses basic grammar and vocabulary to complete the task.

#### **Accuracy (3)**

The response is mainly accurate.

#### **Coherence (2)**

There is limited use of cohesive devices.

#### **Orthographic control (3)**

There are some problems with capitalization ("London") and punctuation.

#### **Written production (3)**

The response is clear, and effectively synthesizes information from different perspectives.

### **Test taker C (Almost at the next level)**

CALLING ALL TRAVELLERS

If you are searching an amazing travel experience, you must visit Dolomiti mountains in the northern Italy going out an about with your friends and your backpack.  
Last year a friend of mine, who HAD got the bug for mountaineering few years ago, persuaded me to join him for 7 days. At first I refused: 7 days without hot water, walking the whole day with an heavy backpack on our shoulders... it sounded completely crazy.  
He insited and, finally, I accepted.  
We started walking from Tobbach, a lovely village surrounded by green grasses and beautiful mountains and we passed near the best known mountains of this group.  
I had really never seen such a stunning place! I enjoyed the peace and beauty of the nature. I tasted a bit of fatigue, but I found out how a friend could help you go on how you could overcome your limits or persver if you have a good companion. I'll always remember this holyday because I learnt a lot about myself, my attitude at coping with bad feelings that come up when you are tired. Besides, this experience is unforgettable because I discovered a complete new way to see the world that surround me. Finally, it was a Journey not only around the world but also in my life. (220 words)

### **Commentary**

#### **Task completion (2)**

The test taker addresses all the content points.

#### **Formal requirements (2)**

The response conforms to the required format. It is above the word limit but within the tolerated word limit of 90 - 220 words for this task.

#### **Range (4)**

The test taker uses a range of expressions to convey information effectively.

#### **Accuracy (3)**

There are some inaccuracies in places where the test taker attempts to use idiomatic vocabulary, for example, "tasted a bit of fatigue" and some minor errors, for example, "green grasses".

#### **Coherence (4)**

The response is very well constructed and uses appropriate linking devices.

#### **Orthographic control (4)**

There are some spelling errors.

#### **Written production (4)**

The response is clear and detailed, and synthesizes information very effectively.

# 4. Spoken component: speaking

## Partial credit scoring: sections 10–13

**SECTION 10 (1.5 minutes)**

[Put one of the main prompts to the test taker and allow them to speak continuously for up to 1 minute. Use the related follow-up prompts to encourage them to continue talking]

*Now I'd like you to speak on your own for about 1 minute.*

**Main prompt 1:** • Which kind of transport do you prefer on short and long journeys?

**Follow-up prompts:** • Why is travel by car convenient?

**SECTION 11 (2 minutes)**

*Now, we are going to discuss something together. The question is:*  
"Is it better to shop in markets or in supermarkets?"

*What do you think?*

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

For markets: A market...

supermarkets.  
service.

**SECTION 12 (1.5 minutes)**

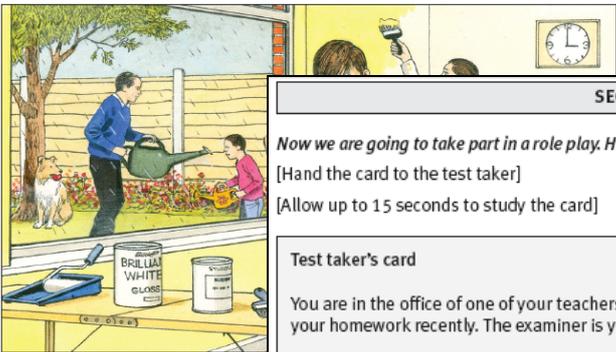
*Now, here is a picture of a family at home. Please tell me what you can see in the picture.*

[Hand the picture to the test taker]

[Allow the test taker to speak for about 45 seconds, then put this secondary prompt]

*Please tell me how the father (outside) is feeling and what you think is going to happen in a minute.*

[Retrieve the picture]



**SECTION 13 (2 minutes)**

*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 in the office of one of your teachers. Your teacher wants to discuss why you haven't handed in your homework recently. The examiner is your teacher.

- Say what you have done wrong and apologise.
- Explain the problem.
- Apologise again. Offer to do the homework you missed.
- Suggest a time.
- Conclude the conversation.

**Interlocutor's script**

*Your teacher wants to discuss why you haven't handed in any homework recently. I am your teacher.*  
*Alright? I'll start.*

- *Hello (name). Please come in (pause).*
- *Do you know why I wanted to see you today?*
- *I mean, you're a very good student. What's wrong?*
- *I understand now. Next time, please tell me if you have a problem.*
- *Yes, that sounds a good idea. When can you finish it?*

[Conclude the conversation as appropriate]

[Retrieve the card]

*Thank you. That is the end of the test.*

**Partial credit scoring applies to all sections of the spoken component of the test.** The information in the table below indicates that across all sections of the spoken component, three at levels A1 and 1 (10, 12 and 13), and four at levels 2–5 (10, 11, 12 and 13), the **maximum number of score points is 25.**

Sections	Skills	Item types	Score points
10	Speaking	Sustained monologue	25
11	Speaking	Discussion (only featured at levels 2–5, NOT levels A1 and 1)	
12	Speaking	Describe picture	
13	Speaking	Role play	

Scoring in the spoken component of the test (all levels)

## How sections 10–13 are scored

A maximum of **25 score points** is available across the three sections of the spoken component of the test at levels A1 and 1, and the four sections at levels 2–5. Performance is measured against the following categories:

- **Performing against the analytic level descriptive criteria.** Test takers' performance is assessed against the analytical descriptive criteria which consist of five traits at each level:
  - **fluency**
  - **interaction**
  - **range**
  - **accuracy**
  - **phonological control**
- **Performing against the global section descriptive criteria.** In addition, each of the four sections of the spoken component is assessed against a different criterion associated with a trait:
  - **sustained monologue (Section 10)**
  - **turn taking (Section 11)**
  - **thematic development (Section 12)**
  - **sociolinguistic appropriateness (Section 13)**

Test takers are scored on a total of eight traits at levels A1–1 (A1 and 1 do not include Section 11) (fluency, interaction, range, accuracy, phonological control; and per section sustained monologue in Section 10, thematic development in Section 12 and sociolinguistic appropriateness in Section 13). At levels 2–5, nine traits including turn taking are scored because Section 11 is included.

## Analytic level score

### Performing against the analytic level descriptive criteria

All levels were designed to be aligned to the CEF (see Part 2 Scoring, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, p. 4). Spoken responses in sections 10–13 are scored based on test takers' performance against the following analytic descriptive criteria, based on the Council of Europe descriptors, at each level for the traits fluency, interaction, range, accuracy and phonological control.

	Level A1	Level 1	Level 2
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	Can make him/herself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident	Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production
Interaction	Can 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	Can answer questions and respond to simple statements  Can indicate when he/she is following, but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord	Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversation on topics that are familiar or of personal interest  Can repeat back what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding
Range	Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations	Uses basic sentence patterns with memorized phrases, groups of a few words and formulae in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations	Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel and current events
Accuracy	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical and lexical structures and sentence patterns in a memorized repertoire	Uses some simple grammatical and lexical structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes	Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used 'routines' and patterns associated with more predictable situations
Phonological control	Pronunciation is of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases	Pronunciation is generally clear enough to be understood	Pronunciation is clearly intelligible even if occasional mispronunciations occur

Analytic level descriptive criteria: levels A1–2 (spoken) © Council of Europe, 2001

	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Fluency	<p>Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo, although can be hesitant as he/she searches for patterns and expressions</p> <p>There are few noticeable long pauses</p>	<p>Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject may hinder a natural smooth flow of language</p>	<p>Can express him/herself spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it</p>
Interaction	<p>Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, although may not always do this elegantly</p> <p>Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension and inviting others in</p>	<p>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 skilfully to those of other speakers</p>	<p>Can interact with ease and skill, picking up and using non-verbal and intonational cues apparently effortlessly</p> <p>Can interweave his/her contribution into the joint discourse with fully natural turn taking, referencing and allusion making</p>
Range	<p>Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics, without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and eliminate ambiguity</p> <p>Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms</p>
Accuracy	<p>Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control</p> <p>Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes</p>	<p>Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot and generally corrected when they occur</p>	<p>Maintains consistent grammatical and lexical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g., in forward planning, in monitoring others' reactions)</p>
Phonological control	<p>Has acquired clear, natural pronunciation and intonation</p>	<p>Can vary intonation and place sentence stress correctly in order to express finer shades of meaning</p>	<p>Speech is immediately and clearly understood</p> <p>Uses assimilations and deletions comparable to native-like speech</p>

Analytic level descriptive criteria: levels 3–5 (spoken) © Council of Europe, 2001

The marking scale below from 1–5 is used by examiners to allocate score points to each of the five traits of the analytic level descriptive criteria: fluency, interaction, range, accuracy and phonological control.

<b>1</b>	The performance is below the level
<b>2</b>	The performance is just at the level (borderline test taker)
<b>3</b>	The performance is at the level
<b>4</b>	The performance is almost at the next level
<b>5</b>	The performance is at the next level

Analytic level descriptive criteria marking scale (spoken)

The marking scale for Level 5, however, is from 1-3 given there is no CEF level above C2.

## Global section score

### Performing against the global section descriptive criteria

Spoken responses in sections 10–13 are also scored based on test takers' performance against the following global section descriptive criteria, based on the Council of Europe descriptors, (sustained monologue in Section 10, turn taking in Section 11, thematic development in Section 12 and sociolinguistic appropriateness in Section 13).

	Level A1	Level 1	Level 2
<b>Section 10 Sustained monologue</b>	Can describe him/herself, what he/she does and where he/she lives	Can describe his/her family, living conditions, educational background, present or most recent job  Can describe people, places and possessions in simple terms  Can describe plans, arrangements, habits and routines, past activities and personal experiences  Can explain what he/she likes or dislikes about something	Can give straightforward descriptions on a variety of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest  Can reasonably fluently relate a straightforward narrative or description as a linear sequence of points  Can give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions  Can relate the plot of a book or film and describe his/her reactions  Can describe dreams, hopes and ambitions  Can describe events, real or imagined  Can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions, plans and actions
<b>Section 11 Turn taking</b>	Not at this level		Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversation on topics that are familiar or of personal interest
<b>Section 12 Thematic development</b>	Can describe something using isolated words or simple phrases	Can tell a story or describe something in a simple list of points	Can reasonably fluently relate a straightforward narrative or description as a linear sequence of points

	Level A1	Level 1	Level 2
Section 13 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	Can handle very short social exchanges, using everyday polite forms of greeting and address  Can make and respond to invitations, suggestions, apologies	Can perform and respond to a wide range of language functions, using their most common exponents in a neutral register

Global section descriptive criteria: levels A1–2 (spoken) © Council of Europe, 2001

	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Section 10 Sustained monologue	Can give clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest OR  Can develop a clear argument, expanding and supporting his/her points of view at some length with subsidiary points and relevant examples  Can construct a chain of reasoned arguments  Can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options	Can give clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects	Can give clear, smoothly flowing, elaborate and often memorable descriptions  Can give elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion
Section 11 Turn taking	Can initiate, maintain and end discourse appropriately with effective turn taking  Can use stock phrases (e.g., "That's a difficult question to answer.") to gain time and keep the turn whilst formulating what to say	Can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface his/her remarks appropriately in order to get the floor, or to gain time and keep the floor whilst thinking	Can if necessary manipulate a discussion  Can get or keep the floor even in hostile, emotional or contentious situations  Appropriately balances politeness and determination
Section 12 Thematic development	Can develop a clear description or narrative, expanding and supporting the main points with relevant supporting detail and examples	Can give elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion	Can give extended and clearly structured descriptions and narratives, effectively using a variety of organizational patterns which help readers to easily follow the line of argument and distinguish main and secondary points

	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Section 13 Sociolinguistic appropriateness	<p>Can express him/herself confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned</p> <p>Can express him/herself appropriately in situations and avoid errors of formulation</p>	<p>Can recognize a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts</p> <p>Can use language flexibly and effectively for social purposes, including emotional, allusive and joking usage</p>	<p>Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning</p> <p>Appreciates fully the sociolinguistic and sociocultural implications of language used by native speakers and can react accordingly</p>

Global section descriptive criteria: levels 3–5 © Council of Europe, 2001

The marking scale below from 1–5 is used by examiners to allocate score points to the four traits associated with each section: sustained monologue in Section 10, turn taking in Section 11 (not at levels A1 and 1), thematic development in Section 12, and sociolinguistic appropriateness in Section 13.

1	The performance is below the level
2	The performance is just at the level (borderline test taker)
3	The performance is at the level
4	The performance is almost at the next level
5	The performance is at the next level

Global section descriptive criteria marking scale (spoken)

The marking scale for Level 5, however, is from 1-3 given there is no CEF level above C2.

### Computing the total speaking score for sections 10-13

The weighted score for the spoken component is 25% of the overall score. To calculate this, the **analytical level score** (for the traits fluency, interaction, range, accuracy and phonological control) over sections 10-13 and the **global section score** (for each of the traits associated with each section: Section 10 sustained interaction, Section 11 turn taking, Section 12 thematic development and Section 13 sociolinguistic appropriateness) are **added together** to give a total between **0 and 40 (levels A1 and 1)**, **0 and 45 (levels 2-4)** and **0 and 27 (Level 5)**.

**Please note:** A score of 0 is given for an entire section where there is no response, the response is totally irrelevant or the response is in a language other than English.

Score range	Traits
<b>Analytic level score</b>	
<b>Sections 10-13</b>	
0-5	Fluency
0-5	Interaction
0-5	Range
0-5	Accuracy
0-5	Phonological control
<b>Global section score</b>	
<b>Section 10</b>	
0-5	Sustained interaction
<b>Section 11 (not levels A1 and 1)</b>	
0-5	Turn taking
<b>Section 12</b>	
0-5	Thematic development
<b>Section 13</b>	
0-5	Sociolinguistic appropriateness
<b>Total = 0–40 (levels A1 and 1), 0–45 (levels 2–4)</b>	

Score ranges and traits (levels A1-4) (spoken)

Score range	Traits
<b>Analytic level score</b>	
<b>Sections 10–13</b>	
0-3	Fluency
0-3	Interaction
0-3	Range
0-3	Accuracy
0-3	Phonological control
<b>Global section score</b>	
<b>Section 10</b>	
0-3	Sustained interaction
<b>Section 11 (not levels A1 and 1)</b>	
0-3	Turn taking
<b>Section 12</b>	
0-3	Thematic development
<b>Section 13</b>	
0-3	Sociolinguistic appropriateness
<b>Total = 0–27 (Level 5)</b>	

Score ranges and traits (Level 5) (spoken)

The scores for each section are calculated in relation to the maximum score. For example, a test taker at Level 2 may score a total of 30 marks over the nine traits. **This score is converted to a score out of 25 by applying the ratio of 30:45** (score achieved for the four sections divided by the maximum number of score points available), then multiplied by 25. The result is rounded to the nearest whole number giving a weighted score of 17:  
 $30/45 = 0.667 \times 25 = 16.6$  (Rounded to 17)  
 Score = 17

## Sample responses: sections 10–13

This part of the guide provides sample responses and commentary for the four spoken sections in the test to illustrate responses that are “**Just at the level**” and “**Almost at the next level**” at PTE General Level 2.

**Please note:** Total converted scores for each section are not given here because this information may be misleading. The overall award given for PTE General is based on a combination of scores for performance on all sections in the test, not just one as per the samples below. The intention is to give an idea of how a spoken response is marked against the assessment criteria outlined in the previous section of this guide and what constitutes a strong and acceptable response for the level.

Use the relevant audio files for test takers A-D accompanying this guide.

### Section 10 Sustained monologue (Level 2)

#### Task

**Main prompt 2:** Tell me something about a holiday which you enjoyed.

**Follow-up prompts:** How many weeks’ holiday do you have each year?

- Where do people in your country usually go on holiday?
- Do you prefer to relax or be active on holiday? Why?
- What special place would you like to go to for a holiday in the future?

#### Sample response

##### Test taker A (Just at the level)

##### Commentary

##### Fluency (3)

The test taker is able to keep going comprehensibly, but, for the most part, there is a lot of hesitation and pausing for repair. Sometimes, he communicates no more than the minimum.

##### Interaction (2)

The test taker responds to the interlocutor, but does not generally help the conversation along.

##### Range (4)

The test taker demonstrates a good lexical knowledge and a fair range of structures — present perfect, present continuous, etc.

##### Accuracy (3)

Overall, the response is reasonably accurate, even though the test taker occasionally makes basic errors.

##### Phonological control (3)

Pronunciation is generally clearly intelligible, but with a marked accent and rather repetitive intonation. There are also some mispronunciations.

##### Sustained interaction (3)

The test taker describes aspects of holidays quite clearly, in a linear sequence of points using simple phrases and sentences.

## Section 11 Discussion (Level 2)

### Task

Now, we are going to discuss something together. The question is:

**“Is it better to shop in markets or in supermarkets?”**

What do you think?

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

For markets: A market...

- is a good place to buy local food which is very fresh.
- is an interesting place with other things to do and see.
- has special or interesting foods which you would not find in supermarkets.
- is a place where you can get to know a seller and get personal service.

Against markets: A supermarket...

- can offer cheap prices on a wide range of goods.
- is a quick, easy and convenient place to shop.
- is a place where you can find all the things you need in one place.
- is inside so it is more comfortable in bad weather

### Sample response

**Test taker B  
(Just at the  
level)**

#### **Commentary**

##### **Fluency (3)**

Overall, the test taker keeps going comprehensibly with a fairly even tempo. There are some hesitations and disjointed periods.

##### **Interaction (3)**

There is limited initiation and some breakdown of the interaction. Generally though, the test taker engages with the interlocutor and uses appropriate register.

##### **Range (3)**

The test taker is inconsistent, performing better at the beginning. She demonstrates use of enough language to get by. Some impressive vocabulary is used (“phobia”, “humid”) and some complex sentences. However, the test taker is sometimes short of resources, e.g., for describing clothes.

##### **Accuracy (3)**

The test taker systematically makes some basic errors. Present continuous is not used, though most other structures are used correctly, e.g., comparatives.

##### **Phonological control (3)**

Although the test taker has a marked accent, sometimes with disjointed rhythm and mispronunciation, the response is clearly intelligible and at times the intonation sounds quite natural.

##### **Turn taking (3)**

The test taker is able to use phrases to extemporize at times and overall, she interacts effectively with the interlocutor. The test taker does not initiate discourse and only responds to the interlocutor.

## Section 12 Describe picture (Level 2)

### Task

*Now, here is a picture of boys in a school. Please tell me what you can see in the picture.*

[Hand the picture to the test taker]

[Allow the test taker to speak for about 45 seconds, then put this secondary prompt]

*Please tell me how the people are feeling and what you think is going to happen in a minute.*

[Retrieve the picture]



### Sample response

**Test taker C**  
**(Almost at the**  
**next level)**

#### **Commentary**

##### **Fluency (4)**

The test taker keeps going comprehensibly, and, for the most part, produces natural-sounding stretches of language with an even tempo, even though there are pauses and hesitations at times.

##### **Interaction (3)**

Generally, the test taker maintains the interaction well, though she is less successful in some parts.

##### **Range (4)**

The test taker employs a rich vocabulary. She uses tenses and some complex structures appropriately, thus demonstrating she has more than enough language to get by.

##### **Accuracy (4)**

The response is generally accurate and at times demonstrating a quite sophisticated repertoire, even though the test taker still makes some basic mistakes.

##### **Phonological control (4)**

Pronunciation is clear and intelligible with a natural-sounding intonation at times. There are few mispronunciations.

##### **Thematic development (3)**

The test taker makes a good start with a full and rich description, but fails to further develop her thoughts around the picture.

## Section 13 Role play (Level 2)

### Task

*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 eating breakfast in the kitchen when your father/mother comes in. The examiner is your father/mother. You are surprised that he/she hasn't gone to work yet.

- Greet your father/mother and express surprise.
- Find out the reason why he/she is not going to work.
- Offer to get some medicine.
- Offer other help before you go to school.
- End the conversation. Say when you are leaving.

#### **Interlocutor's script**

*You are eating breakfast in the kitchen when your father/mother comes in. I am your father/mother.*

*You are surprised that I haven't gone to work yet. Alright? You start.*

- *I'm not going to work this morning.*
- *(Yes) I don't feel very well. I've got a headache and a bad cold.*
- *No, it's OK thanks. I've taken some already.*
- *No, I'll be fine after a rest. Thanks.*

[Finish the conversation as appropriate]

[Retrieve the card]

*Thank you. That is the end of the test.*

### Sample response

#### **Test taker D (Almost at the next level)**

#### **Commentary**

##### **Fluency (5)**

The test taker's performance meets Level 3 descriptors, as she produces stretches of language with a fairly even tempo and only occasional pauses.

##### **Interaction (5)**

The test taker maintains the interaction with the interlocutor well. She is able to initiate, sustain and end discourse with appropriate register. She also engages with the situation and contributes to the conversation well.

##### **Range (4)**

The test taker demonstrates that she has more than enough language to get by. She uses a variety of lexis, stock phrases and structures.

##### **Accuracy ~ (4)**

The response is generally accurate, displaying good control of most structures, but with some errors and incorrect word choice; e.g., "use to" for "usually".

##### **Phonological control (4)**

Pronunciation is clearly intelligible with good rhythm and some correct manipulation of intonation to indicate surprise and interest. Sometimes, though, a repetitive, non-English tune is used.

##### **Sociolinguistic appropriateness (4)**

The test taker convincingly performs the functions of reassuring, expressing surprise and sympathy, and offering suggestions. She conducts the role play in an appropriately informal register with few mistakes.

## 5. Marking and awarding

### Marking

Each item or trait in the test is scored according to the criteria explained in detail in parts 3 and 4 of this guide. Sections 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the written component of the test are scored as correct or incorrect, whilst sections 2, 8 and 9 are marked using partial credit scoring (see Part 3, Written component: listening, speaking, writing, p. 6). All sections of the spoken component of the test are assessed using partial credit scoring (see Part 4, Spoken component: speaking, p. 19).

### Equal weighting per skill

A key principle in determining the overall score that a test taker receives out of 100 for the total test, i.e., the written and spoken components of the test, is that skills assessment is balanced and each of the four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) is awarded a weighting of 25%. So each skill contributes equally (25 score points) to the overall score. The overall score is the sum of all the skill scores; a test taker does not need to achieve a particular score in any one skill to gain a pass grade. The score points per skill as a mark out of 25 are provided in a breakdown of scores that is included with the test taker's results in the "Candidate Performance Report" (see Part 6, Results and certificates, p. 33).

### Item analysis

The marks returned for each item are subject to analysis. The analysis consists of a series of statistical procedures which determine the measurement characteristics of each item, the sections of the test and the test as a whole. This analysis is used for a number of purposes:

- To identify items that are not behaving in an expected way. These items are excluded from the analysis and the test taker's score.
- To calibrate all items in the test in relation to a known scale. This scale has been established in relation to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.
- To determine the relative difficulty, in relation to the scale, of the items and sections of the test.
- To determine the individual skill scores, on the weighted scale, out of 25, for each test taker.
- To help determine, alongside other evidence, the most appropriate grade boundaries for Pass, Pass with Merit and Pass with Distinction, maintaining the standards set in previous administrations.

### Awarding

The score points for the spoken component out of 25 are combined with those for the written component out of 75 to give an overall score out of 100. The overall score is graded and awarded to the test taker as any of the following: Fail, Pass, Pass with Merit, Pass with Distinction.

The number of points required to achieve each grade varies within a range of scores from session to session. Test forms from different sessions are equated to ensure that test takers are treated fairly. It should not matter to the test taker where or when they sit the examination.

The grade awarded appears on the test taker's certificate (see Part 6, Results and certificates, p. 33).

## 6. Results and certificates

### Results

Test results are made available five to eight weeks after the date that the test was taken. Test centers can view the results of test takers they have registered via Edexcel Online, a secure online results service, or by secure post.

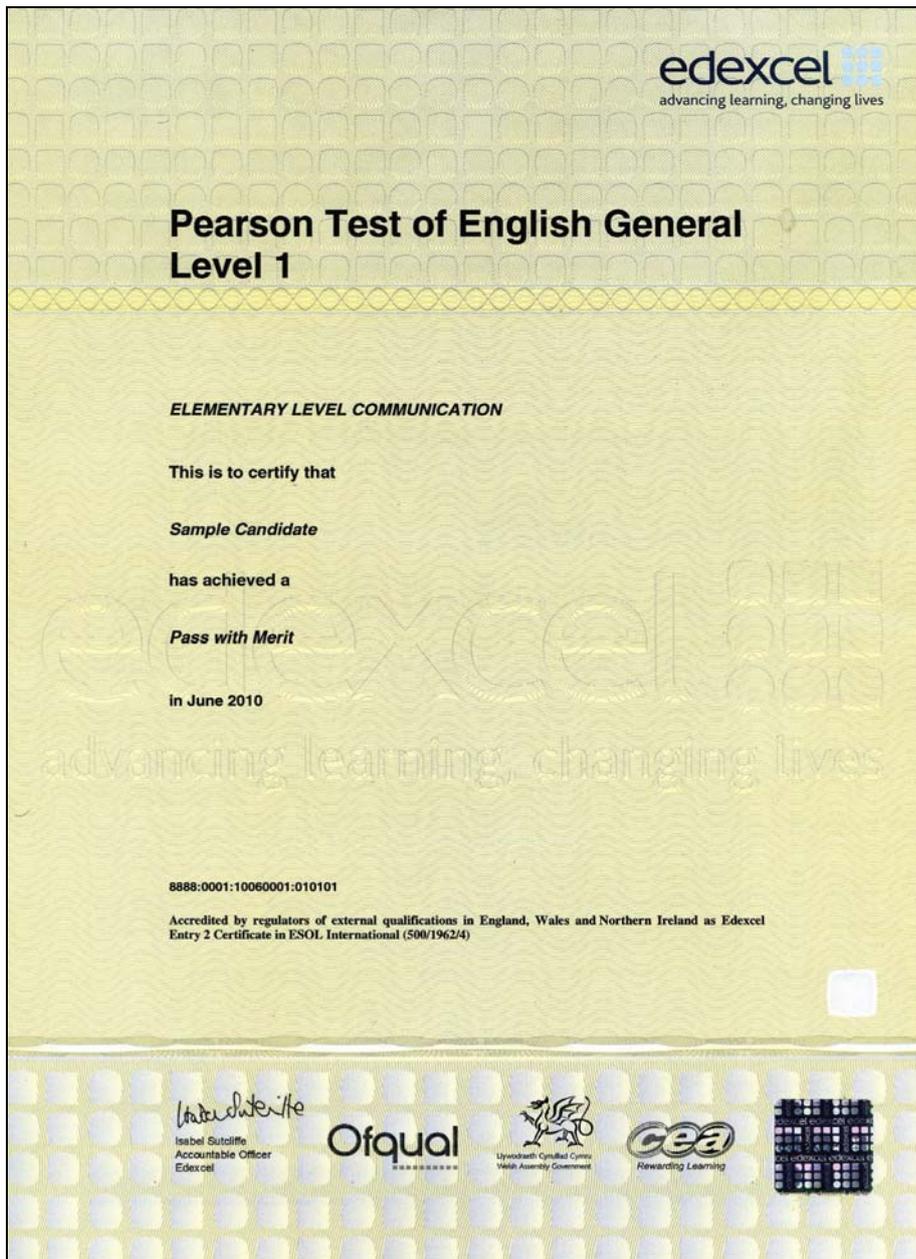
Test takers are also provided with a breakdown of their overall score out of 100 and skills scores out of 25 within their Performance Report. This is emailed to test centers following the dispatch of results.

Name: Sample test taker		
Centre Number: 88888		
Candidate Number: 0001		
Pearson Test of English General		
Candidate Performance Report for Level 4065 – November 2010		
Listening	.....	15 / 25
Reading	.....	19 / 25
Speaking	.....	17 / 25
Writing	.....	15 / 25
Overall Total Marks 66 / 100		

Sample PTE General Test Taker Performance Report

# Certificates

Two to three weeks after receipt of results test certificates are issued, which indicate the grade awarded: Fail, Pass, Pass with Merit or Pass with Distinction.



Sample PTE General Test Taker Certificate

The reverse of the certificate gives the National Qualification Framework (NQF) levels equivalent to PTE General as well as the Common European Framework (CEF) levels and the level descriptors (see Part 2 Scoring, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, p. 4).

PTE	NQF - Listed on the National Database of Accredited Qualifications as:
PTEG A1	Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 1)
PTEG 1	Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 2)
PTEG 2	Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 3)
PTEG 3	Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International
PTEG 4	Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International
PTEG 5	Edexcel Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International

NQF	CEF
Entry 1	A1
Entry 2	A2
Entry 3	B1
Level 1	B2
Level 2	C1
Level 3	C2

*Common Reference Levels: global scale*

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise 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.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding longer texts, and recognise 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 organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive device.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. 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.
	B1	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 whilst 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 & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	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 direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
	A1	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.

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Reverse of PTE General Sample Certificate

Further information about the dispatch of results and certificates, is available within the *Test Center Handbook* at [www.pearsonpte.com/PTEGENERAL/Pages/home.aspx](http://www.pearsonpte.com/PTEGENERAL/Pages/home.aspx).

## References

Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Council of Europe (2009). *Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR): A Manual*, Strasbourg: Language Policy Division. [www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/Manuel1\\_EN](http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/Manuel1_EN).

## Contact us

**You can contact us in the following ways:**

- Visit [www.pearsonpte.com](http://www.pearsonpte.com).
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