



# PTE Core

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## Score Guide

Test Taker

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JANUARY 2026

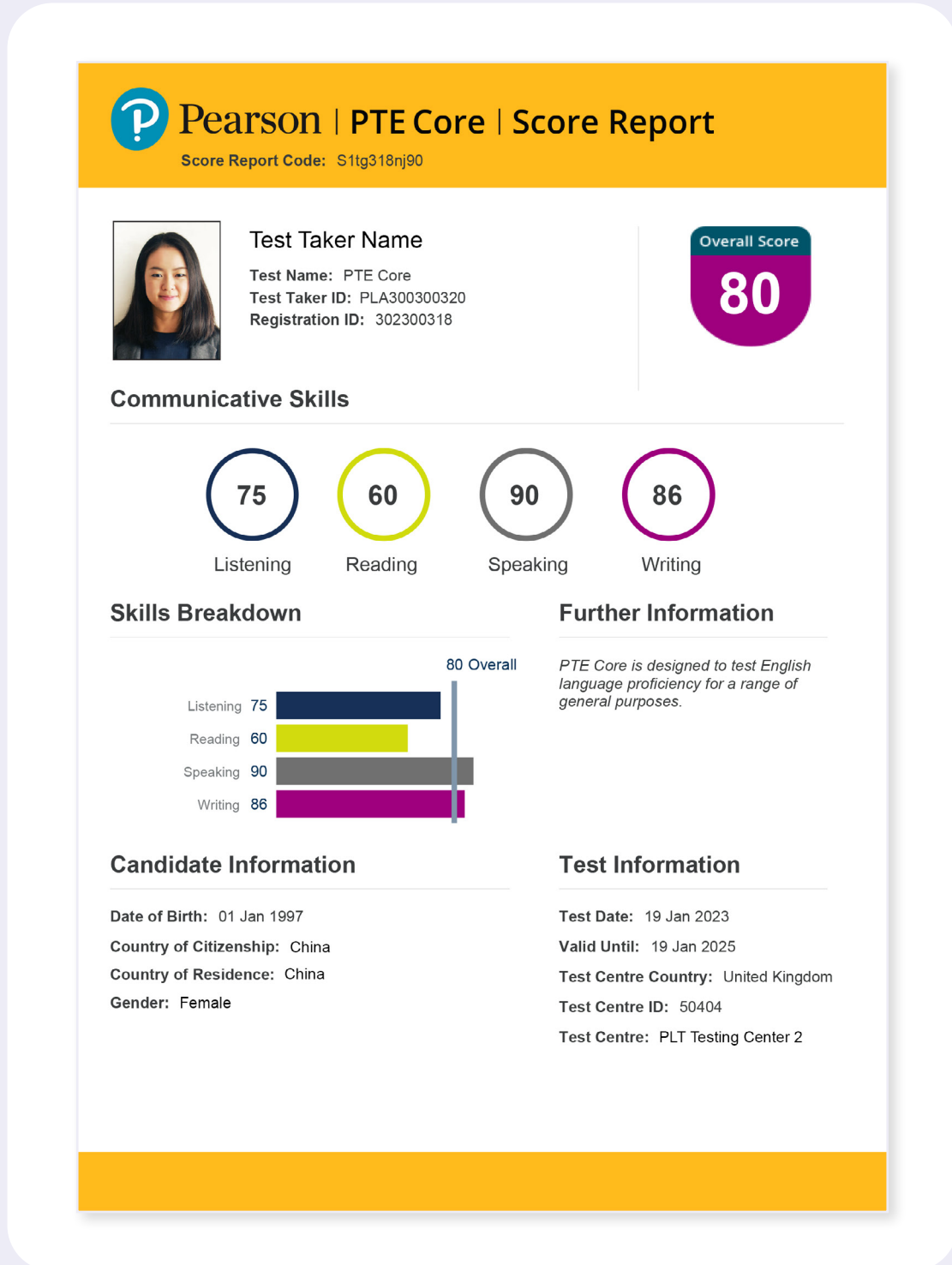
# Introduction

Pearson Test of English (PTE) Core is an international computer-based English language test. It provides a measure of your language ability in order to assist government organizations (such as Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada) that require a standard of English language proficiency for immigration purposes.

The contents of this Guide, along with those published on [our website](#), provide the only official information about PTE Core.

# 1. Reported Scores

The PTE Core Score Report consists of an **overall score** and 4 **communicative skills scores (Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing)** as shown below.



## Overall score

The **overall score** is based on your performance across the entire test. You will complete between 52 and 67 tasks in any given test and a range of 19 different task types.

The overall score ranges between 10–90 points.

**Note:** the overall score is not an average calculation of the communicative skills scores.

## Communicative skills scores

The communicative skills are Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing and their score range is 10–90 points.

Some tasks assess more than one skill at the same time. These are called integrated skills (i.e., Reading and Speaking, Listening and Speaking, Reading and Writing, Listening and Writing, or Listening and Reading). The scores on these tasks contribute to the score of both communicative skills that are assessed at the same time.

The Score Report includes a personalized Skills Profile to provide guidance on how to improve your English proficiency. Please note the Skills Profile is not a core part of your Score Report but is available when you view your Score Report online. The Skills Profile uses your test score to provide specific feedback to help guide your future English language learning.

The screenshot displays the Pearson PTE Core Score Report interface. The main report shows an overall score of 72 and individual scores for Listening (78), Reading (90), Speaking (64), and Writing (82). A 'View Skills Profile' button is highlighted with a purple box. A line from this button points to a detailed 'Your Skills Profile' panel on the right, which lists 10 specific skills with progress bars and icons for each: Open Response Speaking and Writing, Reproducing Spoken and Written Language, Extended Writing, Short Writing, Extended Speaking, Short Speaking, Multiple-skills Comprehension, and Single-skill Comprehension.

## 2. Scoring Overview

While PTE tests are computer-based and machine-scored, human expert scorers are used to train the scoring engine on speaking and writing tasks, by rating test taker responses on every single speaking and writing item. The system then works by replicating the standards established through these human ratings.

Scores for some tasks are based only on whether the response is correct or incorrect, while others are based on correctness, formal aspects (e.g., whether it is over or under the word limit) and the quality of the response (e.g., fluency and pronunciation in the task **Respond to a Situation**).

There are two ways in which score points are awarded:

### Correct or incorrect

Some tasks are scored as either correct or incorrect.

If responses are correct, 1 score point will be given, but if they are incorrect, no points are awarded.

### Partial credit

Other tasks are scored as correct, partially correct or incorrect.

If responses to these tasks are correct, the maximum score points available will be received. If they are only partly correct, some score points will be given, but less than the maximum available. If responses are incorrect, no score points will be received.

Some tasks that involve speaking and writing are also given a score for **Content**. Content means how appropriate the content of a response is in relation to the prompt.

Some writing tasks are scored for **Form**. Form scores are based on formal characteristics of the response, such as the number of words.

The scores for **Content** and **Form** contribute to overall and communicative skills scores.

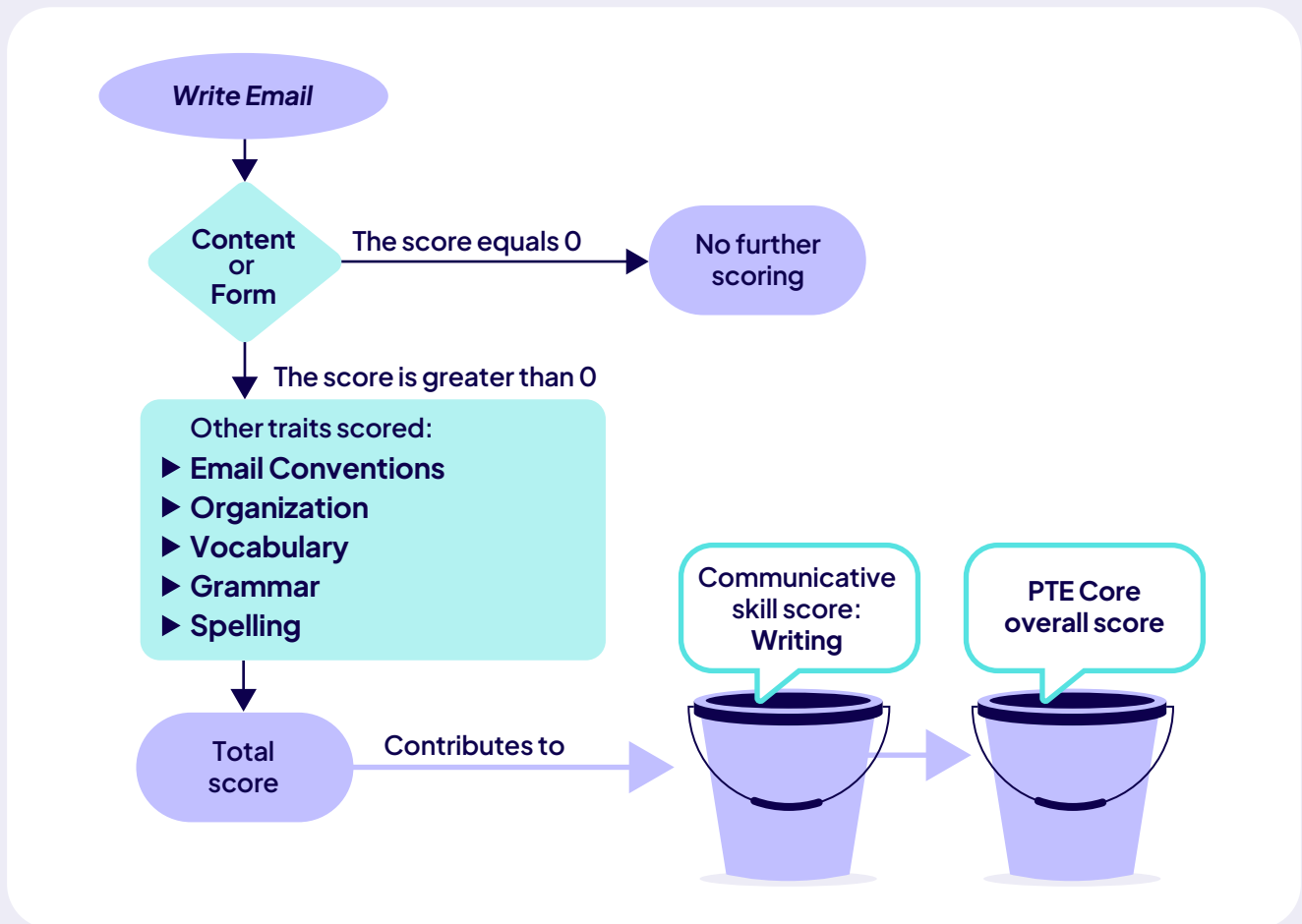
When the response is scored as 0 for content or form, no score points for the response will be given. Here are three examples giving descriptions of responses that will not receive any score points:

- ④ An email written on a completely different topic from the task prompt (**Content**)
- ④ An email which is less than 30 words (**Form**)
- ④ An email that does not deal properly with the prompt due to significant amounts of pre-prepared/memorized material (**Content**)

## Example of scoring

The diagram below shows how scores are calculated for the task **Write Email**.

The task is rated on **Content**, **Email Conventions**, **Form**, **Organization**, **Vocabulary**, **Grammar**, and **Spelling**.



**Write Email** is first scored on **Content** and then on **Form**. If no response, or an irrelevant response is given, the **Content** is scored as 0. Responses that contain significant amounts of pre-prepared/memorized material are not relevant responses and do not properly address the prompt. If the response is of the appropriate length (Form), a score will be given and the response will then be rated on the remaining traits: **Email Conventions**, **Organization**, **Vocabulary**, **Grammar**, and **Spelling**. The scores for these traits are used to calculate the final total score for the task.

The total score for the task contributes to the **communicative skill score** for writing, as well as to the **overall score** reported for performance on the entire test.

# 3. Using PTE Core Scores

## How you can use PTE Core scores

The Score Report provides **an overall score** and scores out of 90 for each of the 4 **communicative skills (Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing)**.

Organizations and institutions that accept PTE Core set their own minimum score requirements. Contact the organization or institution of your choice to check their English language test score requirements.

## Sending scores to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

If you are applying for a Canadian visa, you may require a Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) score in one or more skills. The exact requirements will depend on the visa you are applying for and can be found on the [\*\*Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada \(IRCC\) official website\*\*](#).

You can use the table on [\*\*page 9\*\*](#) to convert your PTE score to a CLB score.

The IRCC does not accept paper or PDF versions of PTE Core Score Reports. To validate your score, they will use the information you have shared with them to access your report through our secure portal.

There are two ways you can share your Score Report. You can either share it directly (e.g., via application form, email, phone), or via the myPTE score assignment process.

### 1. Sharing your Score Report Code directly

Your Score Report shows a Score Report Code (SRC). The SRC is specific to each instance of a test, so if you take more than one PTE Core test, you will receive a SRC for each. Your SRC can be shared with the IRCC in many ways - on an application, via email, or through whichever means you communicate with them.

### 2. Sharing your Score Report via the myPTE score assignment process

To share your PTE Core Score Report with the IRCC, you must do so through our secure portal and follow the instructions below:

1. Login to your [\*\*myPTE account\*\*](#).
2. Click **'My activity'**.
3. On the card where your test information is displayed, click **'Share results'**.
4. Type **'IRCC'** in the field marked **'Institution/Organization/Department/School'** and click **'Search'**.
5. Tick the box next to **'IRCC'** when it appears in the list.
6. Click **'Select Programmes'** and then **'Next'** again to confirm.

## 4. Alignment between PTE Core and CLB

Based on research and empirical studies, Pearson has produced an alignment table showing the relationship between the PTE Core test scores and the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB).

CLB	PTE Listening	PTE Reading	PTE Speaking	PTE Writing
10	89–90	88–90	89–90	90
9	82–88	78–87	84–88	88–89
8	71–81	69–77	76–83	79–87
7	60–70	60–68	68–75	69–78
6	50–59	51–59	59–67	60–68
5	39–49	42–50	51–58	51–59
4	28–38	33–41	42–50	41–50
3	18–27	24–32	34–41	32–40

**Please note:** Alignment tables will be reviewed periodically and updated if required. Please refer to the [IRCC](#) website for the most up-to-date information on PTE score requirements.

## 5. Automated Scoring

Pearson uses several proprietary, patented technologies to automatically score test takers' performance on PTE Core. These technologies were originally developed for PTE Academic, from which PTE Core was adapted. An extensive field test program was conducted to test PTE Academic's tasks and evaluate their effectiveness, as well as to obtain the data necessary to train the automated scoring engines to evaluate both the written and spoken PTE Academic questions. Data was collected from more than **10,000 test takers** from 38 cities in 21 countries who participated in the field test. These test takers came from **158 different countries** and spoke **126 different first languages**, including (but not limited to) Cantonese, French, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Marathi, Polish, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Turkish, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

### Scoring written English skills

The written portion of PTE Core is scored using the Intelligent Essay Assessor™ (IEA™), an automated scoring tool that is powered by Pearson's Knowledge Analysis Technologies™ (KAT™) engine. The KAT engine evaluates writing as accurately as skilled human markers using a proprietary application of the mathematical approach known as Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA). Using LSA (an approach that generates semantic similarity of words and passages by analyzing large bodies of relevant text) the KAT engine 'understands' the meaning of text much the same as a human does.

### Scoring spoken English skills

The spoken portion of PTE Core is automatically scored using Pearson's Versant technology. The technology uses a speech processing system that is specifically designed to analyze and automatically score speech from a range of linguistic backgrounds. In addition to recognizing words, the system locates and evaluates relevant segments, syllables and phrases in speech and then uses statistical modeling technologies to assess spoken performance.

To understand the way that the Versant technology is 'taught' to score spoken language, think about a person being trained by an expert rater to score speech samples during interviews. First, the expert rater gives the trainee rater a list of things to listen for in the test taker's speech during the interview. Then the trainee observes the expert testing numerous test takers, and, after each interview, the expert shares with the trainee the score he or she gave the test taker and the characteristics of the performance that led to that score. Over several dozen interviews, the trainee's scores begin to look very similar to the expert rater's scores. Ultimately, one could predict the score the trainee would give a particular test taker based on the score that the expert gave.

More information about automated scoring is available on our website:

<https://www.pearsonpte.com/scoring/automated-scoring>

## 6. Spoken and Written Samples

The sections below show examples of Speaking and Writing tasks. The scoring mechanisms in these tasks are based on collecting data on multiple relevant traits, giving them each a score, and then converting them all to an overall score in either Speaking or Writing.

The automated system is trained on the trait scores of hundreds of tasks scored by human expert markers. Once trained, our automated systems can then score all new Speaking and Writing tasks quickly and accurately.

The automated scoring system correlates highly with human ratings.

### Test takers' spoken samples

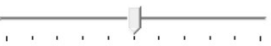
Samples of test takers' spoken responses at the levels of CLB 4, CLB 5, and CLB 7 of the Canadian Language Benchmarks with comments from the Language Testing division of Pearson can be found below and on [our website](#).

#### Example Respond to a Situation task

**Listen to and read a description of a situation. You will have 20 seconds to think about your answer. Then you will hear a beep. You will have 40 seconds to answer the question. Please answer as completely as you can.**

You saw on a sign in your apartment building that a neighbor, Fred, is selling his car. The car is perfect for you. So, you call Fred to ask about seeing the car in person, but he doesn't answer. Leave a message. What would you say in the message?

Status: Ready

Volume 

## Scoring

The **Respond to a Situation** task is scored on 3 different traits:

- Appropriacy
- Pronunciation
- Fluency

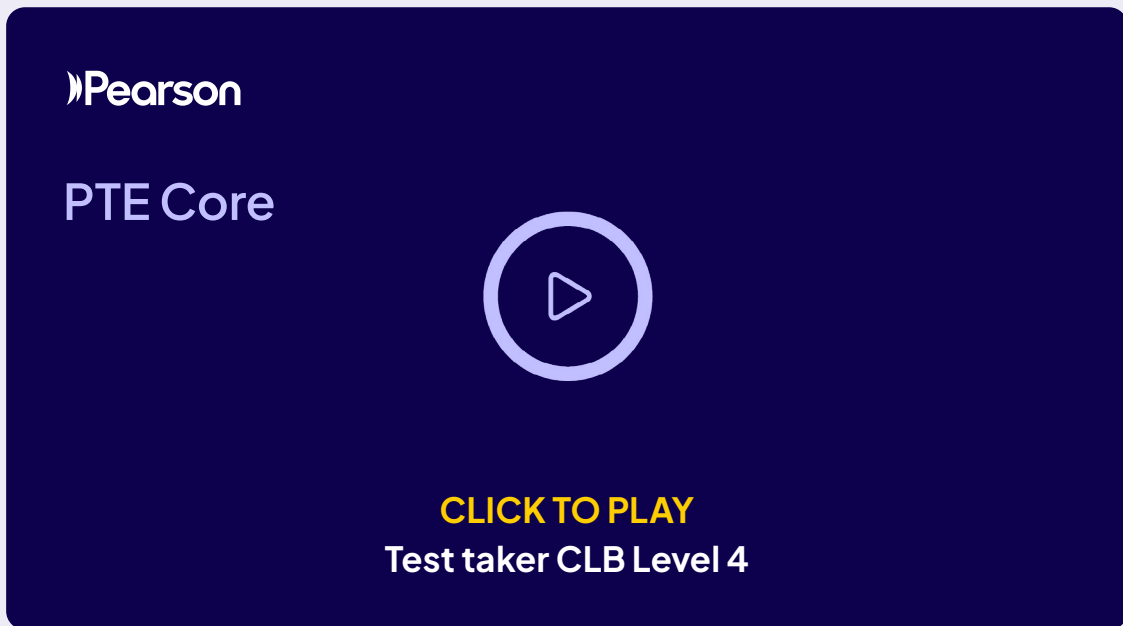
These traits are scored as shown in the table that follows:

Appropriacy	Pronunciation	Fluency
	<p><b>5 Highly proficient:</b></p> <p>All vowels and consonants are produced in a manner that is easily understood by regular speakers of the language. The speaker uses assimilation and deletions appropriate to continuous speech. Stress is placed correctly in all words and sentence-level stress is fully appropriate.</p>	<p><b>5 Highly proficient:</b></p> <p>Speech shows smooth, rhythm and phrasing. There are no hesitations, repetitions, false starts or phonological simplifications.</p>
	<p><b>4 Advanced:</b></p> <p>Vowels and consonants are pronounced clearly and unambiguously. A few minor consonant, vowel or stress distortions do not affect intelligibility. All words are easily understandable. A few consonants or consonant sequences may be distorted. Stress is placed correctly on all common words, and sentence level stress is reasonable.</p>	<p><b>4 Advanced:</b></p> <p>Speech has an acceptable rhythm with appropriate phrasing and word emphasis. There is no more than one hesitation, one repetition or a false start. There are no significant phonological simplifications.</p>
<p><b>3:</b></p> <p>The language function(s) appropriate to the situation are expressed clearly and politely in a formal or informal register appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned.</p>	<p><b>3 Good:</b></p> <p>Most vowels and consonants are pronounced correctly. Some consistent errors might make a few words unclear. A few consonants in certain contexts may be regularly distorted, omitted or mispronounced. Stress-dependent vowel reduction may occur on a few words.</p>	<p><b>3 Good:</b></p> <p>Speech is at an acceptable speed but may be uneven. There may be more than one hesitation, but most words are spoken in continuous phrases. There are few repetitions or false starts. There are no long pauses and speech does not sound staccato.</p>

Appropriacy	Pronunciation	Fluency
<p><b>2:</b> The language function(s) elicited by the given situation are performed in a mostly appropriate register.</p>	<p><b>2 Intermediate:</b> Some consonants and vowels are consistently mispronounced. At least 2/3 of speech is intelligible, but listeners might need to adjust to the accent. Some consonants are regularly omitted, and consonant sequences may be simplified. Stress may be placed incorrectly on some words or be unclear.</p>	<p><b>2 Intermediate:</b> Speech may be uneven or staccato. Speech (if <math>\geq 6</math> words) has at least one smooth three-word run, and no more than two or three hesitations, repetitions or false starts. There may be one long pause, but not two or more.</p>
<p><b>1:</b> Uses the simplest common expressions and follows basic routines which may be inappropriate in register for the social demands of the given situation.</p>	<p><b>1 Intrusive:</b> Many consonants and vowels are mispronounced, resulting in a strong intrusive foreign accent. Listeners may have difficulty understanding about 1/3 of the words. Many consonants may be distorted or omitted. Consonant sequences may be non-English. Stress is placed in a non-English manner; unstressed words may be reduced or omitted and a few syllables added or missed.</p>	<p><b>1 Limited:</b> Speech has irregular phrasing or sentence rhythm. Poor phrasing, staccato or syllabic timing, and/or multiple hesitations, repetitions, and/or false starts make spoken performance notably uneven or discontinuous. Long utterances may have one or two long pauses and inappropriate sentence-level word emphasis.</p>
<p><b>0:</b> Contains only a few very short isolated, mainly pre-packaged forms that may not relate coherently to the given situation.</p>	<p><b>0 Non-English:</b> Pronunciation seems completely characteristic of another language. Many consonants and vowels are mispronounced, mis-ordered or omitted. Listeners may find more than 1/2 of the speech unintelligible. Stressed and unstressed syllables are realized in a non-English manner. Several words may have the wrong number of syllables.</p>	<p><b>0 Disfluent:</b> Speech is slow and labored with little discernable phrase grouping, multiple hesitations, pauses, false starts, and/or major phonological simplifications. Most words are isolated, and there may be more than one long pause.</p>

## Test taker responses

### Test taker CLB Level 4

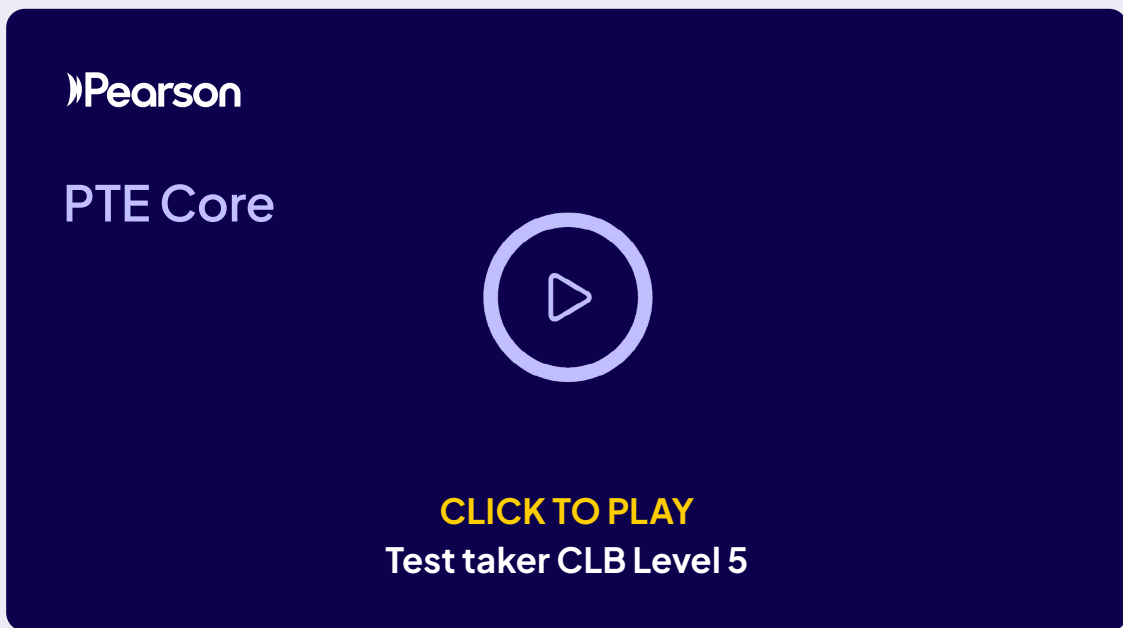


#### **Comment on response**

The test taker demonstrates the ability to produce a simple description using a series of simple phrases. However, they are not yet able to sustain their description in a reasonably fluent way. Word choice errors are noticeable and could hinder a listener's ability to understand what is said; e.g. 'your car is perfect for you', though there is some evidence of the ability to self-correct.

The test taker's response is mostly appropriate in register and demonstrates an understanding of the situation presented in the task. However, many consonant and vowel sounds are consistently mispronounced, and, alongside pronunciation issues, the test taker's speech is uneven and hesitant.

## Test taker CLB Level 5



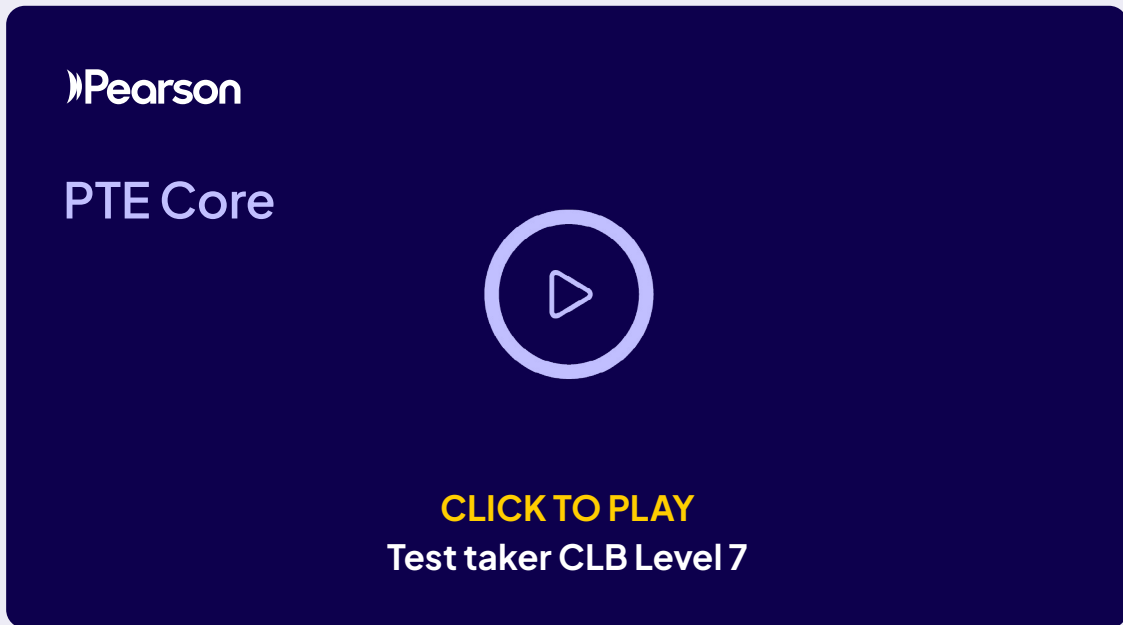
The image shows a dark blue rectangular interface for a Pearson PTE Core audio player. In the top left corner, the Pearson logo is displayed in white. Below it, the text 'PTE Core' is written in white. In the center, there is a white play button icon inside a white circle. At the bottom, the text 'CLICK TO PLAY' is written in yellow, and 'Test taker CLB Level 5' is written in white below it.

### Comment on response

The test taker demonstrates the ability to speak in a reasonably fluent manner, sustaining a straightforward description in a logical way. However, the response lacks detail and the test taker does not demonstrate the ability to expand on basic information with relevant supporting points. There are some word choice errors such as 'I guess you're busy, but you don't answer the phone' but the test taker demonstrates the ability to self-correct.

The test taker's response is entirely on-task but lacks an appropriate level of detail for this situation. For example, she does not suggest a time or confirm that the neighbour knows how to contact her, as would be expected with this type of message. Most words are pronounced in an intelligible way but the test taker's speech is clearly not highly proficient. Her fluency is impacted negatively by frequent hesitations.

## Test taker CLB Level 7



The image shows a dark blue rectangular interface for a Pearson PTE Core audio player. In the top left corner, the Pearson logo is displayed in white. Below it, the text 'PTE Core' is written in white. In the center, there is a large white play button icon consisting of a right-pointing triangle inside a circle. At the bottom, the text 'CLICK TO PLAY' is written in yellow, and 'Test taker CLB Level 7' is written in white below it.

### Comment on response

The test taker demonstrates the ability to produce a clear, systematically developed description, highlighting significant points and providing supporting detail. However, her response does not flow smoothly due to some hesitation, probably indicating that she is thinking about the right words to say.

The test taker's response is entirely appropriate to the situation and contains a sufficient level of detail, demonstrating an awareness of the social norms in this kind of situation. For example, she explains why she is looking for a car and checks whether the neighbour has her number. The speaker's pronunciation is clear and most consonant and vowel sounds are produced unambiguously. However, her fluency, particularly at the start of the response, is uneven and lacking more advanced-level rhythm and stress.

## Test Takers' written samples

Samples of test takers' written responses at levels CLB 4, CLB 5 and CLB 7 are given below as well as comments from the Language Testing division of Pearson.

### Example *Write Email* task

Read a description of a situation. Then write an e-mail about the situation. You will have nine minutes. You should aim to write at least 100 words. Write using complete sentences.

Your manager, Julia, is thinking about letting everyone work from home two days a week instead of going to the office. Write an email to your manager explaining why you think this is a good idea. [100 words]

Your reasons must come from the following three themes:

- email
- transport
- family life

Include all three themes and provide supporting ideas.

### Scoring

The task **Write Email** is scored on 7 different traits:

- ④ Content
- ④ Email Conventions
- ④ Form
- ④ Organization
- ④ Vocabulary
- ④ Grammar
- ④ Spelling

The task is not scored if the test taker's response does not meet the minimum requirements for the traits Content and Form (i.e., when a test taker scores 0 for Content and Form).

The traits are scored as follows:

Content	Email Conventions	Form	Organization
<p><b>3:</b> Addresses the requirements of the tasks sufficiently and appropriately</p>			
<p><b>2:</b> Addresses the task with some success and demonstrates some understanding of the task</p>	<p><b>2:</b> Email conventions are obvious, appropriate, and used correctly in keeping with the format of the task</p>	<p><b>2:</b> Contains 50-120 words</p>	<p><b>2:</b> Organizational structure is clear and easy to follow. Ideas are presented logically and clearly organized. Transitions are used effectively to guide the reader through the email</p>
<p><b>1:</b> Attempts to address the task but is not successful; the task and/or topics may have been misunderstood</p>	<p><b>1:</b> Email conventions are used inconsistently with elements missing and/or used ineffectively</p>	<p><b>1:</b> Contains 30-49 words or 121-140 words</p>	<p><b>1:</b> Organizational structure is generally acceptable and somewhat clear. Themes and their related ideas are organized together but their relationship to the rest of the email may be unclear at points. Transitions are adequate but are mostly basic or simple</p>
<p><b>0:</b> Does not properly deal with the task; the task and/or topics may have been largely misunderstood</p>	<p><b>0:</b> Email conventions are limited or missing</p>	<p><b>0:</b> Contains fewer than 30 words or more than 140 words</p>	<p><b>0:</b> Organizational structure is missing or not appropriate. Some ideas may connect to each other but some or all connections are not made or are unclear. Transitions may be present but may not be helpful to the reader</p>

Vocabulary	Grammar	Spelling
<p><b>2:</b> Good command of lexis appropriate to the context of the given situation</p>	<p><b>2:</b> Generally consistent grammatical control with only occasional errors</p>	<p><b>2:</b> Contains a maximum of two spelling/typing errors</p>
<p><b>1:</b> Limited range of lexis. Some of the lexis is appropriate to the context of the given situation, but lexical shortcomings lead to some imprecision</p>	<p><b>1:</b> Fair degree of grammatical control, errors may be evident but do not cause the reader undue effort</p>	<p><b>1:</b> Contains three or four spelling/typing errors</p>
<p><b>0:</b> Contains mainly basic vocabulary insufficient to deal with the context of the given situation</p>	<p><b>0:</b> Contains mainly simple structures and/or frequent mistakes</p>	<p><b>0:</b> Contains numerous spelling/typing errors that may cause undue effort on the part of the reader</p>

## **Test taker responses**

### **Test taker CLB Level 4**

*The email about letting evryone work from home. You think this is a good idea. At home can send emails and transport is easy. So family life is easy. I want to work from home. Two days a week instead of office. I like working from home, vecause can send emails and make videos call with manager. And other people. My supporting idea is Transport to work take very long time. Not good for stress and I do not like train in morning. Feel relax working from hoime. So, please can work from home two days a week inted of going to the office.*

*(104 words)*

### **Comment on response**

The test taker demonstrates the ability to produce a series of simple phrases and sentences linked together by simple connecting words, such as 'and' and 'so'. They show adequate knowledge of the language for this simple task, but there are some coherence issues due to incorrect word choice (e.g. 'You think...' instead of 'I think...' in the second sentence). The test taker can convey some personal information, and they are able to give their opinion using basic vocabulary. However, they are not yet able to explain their feelings in much detail and their writing does not follow a clear linear sequence.

The test taker addresses most parts of the task but fails to include appropriate supporting ideas. At 104 words, the response is the appropriate length. However, the test taker does not demonstrate an awareness of email conventions. There is no salutation at the beginning and the test taker does not include the manager, Julia's name or their own name.

The response is not well organised. There is no attempt to divide ideas into paragraphs, and there is some unnecessary repetition. The response contains many simple phrases and simple sentence structures, and there are a number of grammatical errors, though these do not impede communication of the test taker's main ideas. The response contains four spelling/typing errors.

## Test taker CLB Level 5

*Hi Julia,*

*How are you? I think you are thinking about letting everyone work from home two days a week instead of going to the office. Right? I think this is a good idea.*

*My reasons are about email and transport and family life.*

*Email is easy at home. So we don't need to come to the office. Right? We can email from our home very easy to stay contact with you.*

*Transport to office expensive. And take a very long time. Too much waste time. .*

*Family life at home. Not office. I love my family. And my daughter.*

*Yours sincerely.*

*Maria*

*(103 words)*

### Comment on response

The test taker demonstrates the ability to produce a straightforward connected text about this topic, linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence. They can compose a basic email and can make their feelings clear with some supporting details. However, they are not yet able to use language with the appropriate level of formality (e.g. 'Right?'), and the response is not particularly detailed.

The response addresses all parts of the task, though quite minimally in places. The test taker elaborates on their opinion with some reasons, but only in a simple way. At 103 words, the response is the appropriate length. The test taker demonstrates an awareness of email conventions with an appropriate salutation at the beginning and a sign-off at the end.

The response is organised into paragraphs. It contains mostly simple sentence structures, and there are some grammatical errors, particularly towards the end of the response. However, the test taker's ideas are mostly easy to understand. The response contains three spelling/typing errors.

## Test taker CLB Level 7

*Hello Julia,*

*I heard you are thinking about letting people work from home for two days every week. I hope you don't mind me contacting you about this. I want to tell you the reasons why I like this idea.*

*Nowadays, working from home is becoming easy due to video calls. We can communicate and colbrate together with work people even from our home. We don't need to go to office.*

*Another reason is transport. Travelling to work can waste time. Therefore, I think working from home is more productive. We can get more work done at hjome.*

*Finally, working from home can help support worker's family life. I think a happy worker is productive.*

*Thanks,*

*Maria*

*(118 words)*

### Comment on response

The test taker demonstrates the ability to produce a clear, moderately complex text on a familiar concrete topic. They use an appropriate level of formality for this context (e.g. "I hope you don't mind me contacting you about this") and they can convey their feelings with some clear explanations. However, they cannot yet express themselves with precision and they do not demonstrate a wide range of complex sentence structures.

The response addresses all parts of the task sufficiently and appropriately. The test taker makes an effort to elaborate on some ideas and to include details, though there are mistakes and imprecision (e.g. they have written 'colbrate' which may be an attempt at 'collaborate'). At 118 words, the response is appropriate length. The test taker demonstrates an awareness of email conventions with a suitable salutation at the beginning and a sign-off at the end.

The response is organised into paragraphs, each covering a separate point and containing some explanation. The paragraphs are linked into a cohesive text (e.g. 'Another reason...' 'Finally...'). The response contains three spelling/typing errors.

# 7. Glossary

**Communicative skills** – Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing. These are the scores judged for visa/HEI entry.

**Formal aspects** – The form of a response, e.g., whether it is over or under the word limit for a particular task.

**Lexical** – Relating to the vocabulary of a language, e.g., lexical knowledge.

**Versant technology** – A proprietary speech processing system that is specifically designed to analyze and automatically score speech from a range of linguistic backgrounds.

**Overall score** – Score based on test taker’s performance on all tasks in the test.

**PTE Academic** – Pearson Test of English Academic. PTE Academic is a 2-hour long, computer-based assessment of a person’s English language ability in an academic context. The test assesses an individual’s communicative skills of Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing through tasks using authentically-sourced material.

**PTE Core** – Pearson Test of English Core. PTE Core is a 2-hour long, computer-based assessment of a person’s English language ability in a general context, to be used for migration purposes. The test assesses an individual’s communicative skills of Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing through tasks using authentically-sourced material.

**Traits** – Items measured in PTE Core that contribute to overall scores. These include Content; Oral Fluency; Pronunciation; Form; Development, Structure and Coherence; Grammar; General Linguistic Range; Email Conventions; and Vocabulary.

**Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB)** – These describe 12 levels of ability in each of the four language skills (Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing). The CLB are used in Canada to describe the language ability of people who are learning English.

## 8. Scoring Criteria

**Please note:** The minimum and maximum times shown for each section of the test do not match the total test duration. This is because each test version is designed to be balanced in overall length. No test taker will receive the absolute minimum or maximum times listed. No test will exceed a total of 2 hours.

Part 1 Speaking and Writing (50–65 minutes)						
Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored		
<b>Read Aloud</b>	6–7	Partial credit	Reading and Speaking	<b>Content:</b> Each replacement, omission or insertion of a word counts as one error. Maximum score: depends on the length of the task prompt		
				<b>Pronunciation:</b>		
				5	Highly proficient	(See detailed criteria on <a href="#">page 39</a> )
				4	Advanced	
				3	Good	
				2	Intermediate	
				1	Intrusive	
0	Non-English					

**Part 1 Speaking and Writing (50–65 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored	
<b>Read Aloud</b> (cont.)	6-7	Partial credit	Reading and Speaking	<b>Fluency:</b>	
				<b>5</b> Highly proficient	(See detailed criteria on <a href="#">page 40</a> )
				<b>4</b> Advanced	
				<b>3</b> Good	
				<b>2</b> Intermediate	
				<b>1</b> Limited	
				<b>0</b> Disfluent	
<b>Repeat Sentence</b>	10-12	Partial credit	Listening and Speaking	<b>Content:</b> Errors = replacements, omissions and insertions only Hesitations, filled or unfilled pauses, leading or trailing material are ignored in the scoring of content	
				<b>3</b> All words in the response from the prompt in the correct sequence	
				<b>2</b> At least 50% of words in the response from the prompt in the correct sequence	
				<b>1</b> Less than 50% of words in the response from the prompt in the correct sequence	
				<b>0</b> Almost nothing from the prompt in the response	

**Part 1 Speaking and Writing (50–65 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored		
<b>Repeat Sentence</b> (cont.)	10-12	Partial credit	Listening and Speaking	<b>Pronunciation:</b>		
				5	Highly proficient	(See detailed criteria on <a href="#">page 39</a> )
				4	Advanced	
				3	Good	
				2	Intermediate	
				1	Intrusive	
				0	Non-English	
				<b>Fluency:</b>		
				5	Highly proficient	(See detailed criteria on <a href="#">page 40</a> )
				4	Advanced	
				3	Good	
				2	Intermediate	
				1	Limited	
				0	Disfluent	

**Part 1 Speaking and Writing (50–65 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored
<b>Describe Image</b>	3-4	Partial credit	Speaking	<b>Content:</b>
				<b>5</b> Describes all elements of the image and their relationships, possible development and conclusion or implications
				<b>4</b> Describes all the key elements of the image and their relations, referring to their implications or conclusions
				<b>3</b> Deals with most key elements of the image and refers to their implications or conclusions
				<b>2</b> Deals with only one key element in the image and refers to an implication or conclusion. Shows basic understanding of several core elements of the image
				<b>1</b> Describes some basic elements of the image, but does not make clear their interrelations or implications
				<b>0</b> Mentions some disjointed elements of the presentation. May not deal properly with the prompt due to significant amounts of pre-prepared/ memorized material

**Part 1 Speaking and Writing (50–65 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored			
<p><b>Describe Image</b> (cont.)</p>	3–4	Partial credit	Speaking	<b>Pronunciation:</b>			
				5	Highly proficient	(See detailed criteria on <a href="#">page 39</a> )	
				4	Advanced		
				3	Good		
				2	Intermediate		
				1	Intrusive		
				0	Non-English		
				<b>Fluency:</b>			
				5	Highly proficient	(See detailed criteria on <a href="#">page 40</a> )	
				4	Advanced		
				3	Good		
				2	Intermediate		
				1	Limited		
				0	Disfluent		

**Part 1 Speaking and Writing (50–65 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored		
<b>Respond to a Situation</b>	2-4	Partial credit	Speaking	<b>Pronunciation:</b>		
				5	Highly proficient	(See detailed criteria on <a href="#">page 39</a> )
				4	Advanced	
				3	Good	
				2	Intermediate	
				1	Intrusive	
				0	Non-English	
				<b>Fluency:</b>		
				5	Highly proficient	(See detailed criteria on <a href="#">page 40</a> )
				4	Advanced	
				3	Good	
				2	Intermediate	
				1	Limited	
				0	Disfluent	

**Part 1 Speaking and Writing (50–65 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored
<b>Respond to a Situation</b> (cont.)	2-4	Partial credit	Speaking	<b>Appropriacy:</b>
				<b>3</b> The language function(s) appropriate to the given situation are expressed clearly and politely in a formal or informal register appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned. The social demands of the given situation are represented in an appropriate level of detail in the response
				<b>2</b> The language function(s) elicited by the given situation are performed in a mostly appropriate register
				<b>1</b> The response uses the simplest common expressions and follows basic routines which may be inappropriate in register for the social demands of the given situation
				<b>0</b> The response contains only a few very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged forms that may not relate coherently to the given situation
<b>Answer Short Question</b>	5-6	Correct/incorrect	Listening and Speaking	<b>Vocabulary:</b>
				<b>1</b> Appropriate word choice in response
				<b>0</b> Inappropriate word choice in response

**Part 1 Speaking and Writing (50–65 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored
<b>Summarize Written Text</b>	1-2	Partial credit	Reading and Writing	<b>Content:</b>
				<b>2</b> Provides a good summary of the text. All relevant aspects are mentioned
				<b>1</b> Provides a fair summary of the text, but misses one or two aspects
				<b>0</b> Omits or misrepresents the main aspect(s) dealt with in the text
				<b>Form:</b>
				<b>2</b> Contains 25–50 words
				<b>1</b> Contains 5–24 words or 51–60 words
				<b>0</b> Contains less than 5 words or more than 60 words. Written in capital letters, contains no punctuation or consists only of bullet points
				<b>Grammar:</b>
				<b>2</b> Has correct grammatical structure
				<b>1</b> Contains grammatical errors but with no hindrance to communication
				<b>0</b> Has defective grammatical structure which could hinder communication
				<b>Vocabulary:</b>
				<b>2</b> Has appropriate choice of words
				<b>1</b> Contains lexical errors but with no hindrances to communication
<b>0</b> Has defective word choice which could hinder communication				

**Part 1 Speaking and Writing (50–65 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored
<b>Write Email</b>	2-3	Partial credit	Writing	<b>Content:</b>
				<b>3</b> Addresses the requirements of the task sufficiently and appropriately
				<b>2</b> Addresses the task with some success, and demonstrates some understanding of the task
				<b>1</b> Attempts to address the task but is not successful; the task and/or topics may have been misunderstood
				<b>0</b> Does not properly deal with the task; the task and/or topics may have been largely misunderstood. May not deal properly with the prompt due to significant amounts of pre-prepared/memorized material
				<b>Email conventions:</b>
				<b>2</b> Email conventions are obvious, appropriate and used correctly in keeping with the format of the prompt
				<b>1</b> Email conventions are used inconsistently with elements missing and/or used ineffectively (too brief or inappropriate register)
				<b>0</b> Email conventions are limited or missing
				<b>Form:</b>
				<b>2</b> Contains 50–120 words
				<b>1</b> Contains 30–49 words or 121–140 words
				<b>0</b> Contains fewer than 30 words, or more than 140 words. The response is written in capital letters, and/or contains no punctuation

**Part 1 Speaking and Writing (50–65 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored
<b>Write Email</b> (cont.)	2-3	Partial credit	Writing	<b>Organization:</b>
				<b>2</b> Organizational structure is clear and easy to follow. Ideas are presented logically and clearly organized. Transitions are used effectively to guide the reader through the email
				<b>1</b> Organizational structure is generally acceptable and somewhat clear. Themes and their related ideas are organized together but their relationship to the rest of the email may be unclear at points. Transitions are adequate but are mostly basic or simple
				<b>0</b> Organizational structure is missing or not appropriate. Some ideas may connect to each other but some or all connections are not made or are unclear. Transitions may be present but may not be helpful to the reader
				<b>Vocabulary:</b>
				<b>2</b> Good command of lexis appropriate to the context of the given situation
				<b>1</b> Limited range of lexis. Some of the lexis is appropriate to the context of the given situation, but lexical shortcomings lead to some imprecision
				<b>0</b> Contains mainly basic vocabulary insufficient to deal with the context of the given situation

**Part 1 Speaking and Writing (50–65 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored
<b>Write Email</b> (cont.)	2-3	Partial credit	Writing	<b>Grammar:</b>
				<b>2</b> Generally consistent grammatical control with only occasional errors
				<b>1</b> Fair degree of grammatical control, errors may be evident but do not cause the reader undue effort
				<b>0</b> Contains mainly simple structures and/or frequent mistakes
				<b>Spelling:</b>
				<b>2</b> Contains a maximum of two spelling/typing errors
				<b>1</b> Contains three or four spelling/typing errors
				<b>0</b> Contains numerous spelling/typing errors that may cause undue effort on the part of the reader

**Part 2 Reading (27–37 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored
<b>Reading and Writing: Fill in the Blanks</b>	5–6	Partial credit (for each correctly completed blank)	<b>Reading and Writing:</b> 1 Each correctly completed blank 0 Minimum score	Not applicable
<b>Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers</b>	1–2	Partial credit (for each correct response. Points deducted for incorrect options chosen)	<b>Reading:</b> 1 Each correct response – 1 Each incorrect response 0 Minimum score	Not applicable
<b>Reorder Paragraph</b>	2–3	Partial credit (for each correctly ordered, adjacent pair)	<b>Reading:</b> 1 Each pair of correct adjacent textboxes 0 Minimum score	Not applicable
<b>Fill in the Blanks</b>	4–5	Partial credit (for each correctly completed blank)	<b>Reading:</b> 1 Each correctly completed blank 0 Minimum score	Not applicable
<b>Multiple Choice, Single Answer</b>	1–2	Correct/incorrect	<b>Reading:</b> 1 Each correctly completed blank 0 Minimum score	Not applicable

**Part 3 Listening (22-37 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored
<b>Summarize Spoken Text</b>	1-2	Partial credit	Listening and Writing	<b>Content:</b>
				<b>2</b> Provides a good summary of the text. All relevant aspects are mentioned
				<b>1</b> Provides a fair summary of the text, but one or two aspects are missing
				<b>0</b> Omits or misrepresents the main aspects
				<b>Form:</b>
				<b>2</b> The response contains 20-30 words
				<b>1</b> The response contains 5-19 words or 31-40 words
				<b>0</b> The response contains less than 5 words or more than 40 words. Summary is written in capital letters, contains no punctuation, or consists only of bullet points or very short sentence
				<b>Grammar:</b>
				<b>2</b> Correct grammatical structures
				<b>1</b> Contains grammatical errors with no hindrance to communication
				<b>0</b> Defective grammatical structure which could hinder communication

**Part 3 Listening (22–37 minutes)**

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored
<b>Summarize Spoken Text</b> (cont.)	1-2	Partial credit	Listening and Writing	<b>Vocabulary:</b>
				<b>2</b> Appropriate choice of words
				<b>1</b> Some lexical errors but with no hindrance to communication
				<b>0</b> Defective word choice which could hinder communication
				<b>Spelling:</b>
				<b>2</b> One spelling/typing error
				<b>1</b> Two or three spelling/typing errors
				<b>0</b> More than three spelling/typing errors

### Part 3 Listening (22–37 minutes)

Question type	No. of questions	Scoring	Communicative skills scored	Traits scored
<b>Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers</b>	1-2	Partial credit (for each correct response; points deducted for incorrect options chosen)	<b>Listening:</b> <b>1</b> Each correct response <b>- 1</b> Each incorrect response <b>0</b> Minimum score	Not applicable
<b>Fill in the Blanks</b>	2-3	Partial credit (for each word spelled correctly)	<b>Listening and Writing:</b> <b>1</b> Each correct word spelled correctly <b>0</b> Minimum score	Not applicable
<b>Multiple Choice, Single Answer</b>	1-2	Correct/incorrect	<b>Listening:</b> <b>1</b> Correct response <b>0</b> Incorrect response	Not applicable
<b>Select Missing Word</b>	1-2	Correct/incorrect	<b>Listening:</b> <b>1</b> Correct response <b>0</b> Incorrect response	Not applicable
<b>Highlight Incorrect Words</b>	1-2	Partial credit (for each word; points deducted for incorrect options chosen)	<b>Listening and Reading:</b> <b>1</b> Each correct word <b>- 1</b> Each incorrect word <b>0</b> Minimum score	Not applicable
<b>Write from Dictation</b>	3-4	Partial credit (for each word spelled correctly)	<b>Listening and Writing:</b> <b>1</b> Each correct word spelled correctly <b>0</b> Each incorrect or misspelled word	Not applicable

## Scoring criteria: Pronunciation and Fluency

The following scoring criteria apply to the speaking tasks that are scored on pronunciation and fluency in PTE Core.

Pronunciation	
<b>5 Highly proficient</b>	All vowels and consonants are produced in a manner that is easily understood by regular speakers of the language. The speaker uses assimilation and deletions appropriate to continuous speech. Stress is placed correctly in all words and sentence-level stress is fully appropriate.
<b>4 Advanced</b>	Vowels and consonants are pronounced clearly and unambiguously. A few minor consonant, vowel or stress distortions do not affect intelligibility. All words are easily understandable. A few consonants or consonant sequences may be distorted. Stress is placed correctly on all common words, and sentence level stress is reasonable.
<b>3 Good</b>	Most vowels and consonants are pronounced correctly. Some consistent errors might make a few words unclear. A few consonants in certain contexts may be regularly distorted, omitted or mispronounced. Stress-dependent vowel reduction may occur on a few words.
<b>2 Intermediate</b>	Some consonants and vowels are consistently mispronounced. At least 2/3 of speech is intelligible, but listeners might need to adjust to the accent. Some consonants are regularly omitted, and consonant sequences may be simplified. Stress may be placed incorrectly on some words or be unclear.
<b>1 Intrusive</b>	Many consonants and vowels are mispronounced, resulting in a strong intrusive foreign accent. Listeners may have difficulty understanding about 1/3 of the words. Many consonants may be distorted or omitted. Consonant sequences may be non-English. Stress is placed in a non-English manner; unstressed words may be reduced or omitted, and a few syllables added or missed.
<b>0 Non-English</b>	Pronunciation seems completely characteristic of another language. Many consonants and vowels are mispronounced, mis-ordered or omitted. Listeners may find more than 1/2 of the speech unintelligible. Stressed and unstressed syllables are realized in a non-English manner. Several words may have the wrong number of syllables.

<b>Fluency</b>	
<b>5 Highly proficient</b>	Speech shows smooth rhythm and phrasing. There are no hesitations, repetitions, false starts or phonological simplifications.
<b>4 Advanced</b>	Speech has an acceptable rhythm with appropriate phrasing and word emphasis. There is no more than one hesitation, one repetition or a false start. There are no significant phonological simplifications.
<b>3 Good</b>	Speech is at an acceptable speed but may be uneven. There may be more than one hesitation, but most words are spoken in continuous phrases. There are few repetitions or false starts. There are no long pauses and speech does not sound staccato.
<b>2 Intermediate</b>	Speech may be uneven or staccato. Speech (if $\geq 6$ words) has at least one smooth three-word run, and no more than two or three hesitations, repetitions or false starts. There may be one long pause, but not two or more.
<b>1 Limited</b>	Speech has irregular phrasing or sentence rhythm. Poor phrasing, staccato or syllabic timing, and/or multiple hesitations, repetitions, and/or false starts make spoken performance notably uneven or discontinuous. Long utterances may have one or two long pauses and inappropriate sentence-level word emphasis.
<b>0 Disfluent</b>	Speech is slow and labored with little discernable phrase grouping, multiple hesitations, pauses, false starts, and/or major phonological simplifications. Most words are isolated, and there may be more than one long pause.