



JetBlok Studio

PTE ACADEMIC 2026

The Complete Guide

All 22 question types, how scoring works, the new Australian visa scores and a 90-day plan.

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How to use this guide

PTE Academic changed in a big way in August 2025, and plenty of guides online still teach the old version. If you're sitting the test in 2026, you need to know the 22 question types, how the AI and human scoring fit together, which tasks carry the most weight, and the new Australian visa scores that catch a lot of people out. I've checked the official facts here against Pearson's own score guide and the Home Affairs rules. Where a tip comes from PTE coaches and teachers rather than Pearson, I say so.

What's official and what's coach advice

Official rules come from Pearson. Tips marked **Coach tip** come from PTE teachers and coaches, not Pearson. Percentages labelled as coach estimates are not published by Pearson.

PEARSON RULE

Rules from Pearson's score guide and test format pages.

COACH TIP

Advice from PTE teachers and coaches, not Pearson.

What's in this guide

- **Chapter 1, Speaking:** All 7 speaking tasks, including Summarize Group Discussion and Respond to a Situation (added August 2025).
- **Chapter 2, Writing:** Summarize Written Text and Write Essay, plus where else your Writing score comes from.
- **Chapter 3, Reading:** All 5 reading tasks, with a time plan that fits 23 minutes.
- **Chapter 4, Listening:** All 8 listening tasks, including a full Write from Dictation method.
- **Chapter 5, Your plan:** Score weightings, Australian visa scores, IELTS conversion, a 90-day plan and test day.

Underlined links open the full articles on jetblok.com.au, and everything in the contents is tappable. PTE Complete Guide · Version 1.0 · Last updated 10 October 2026 · jetblok.com.au/guides/pte-complete



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What is PTE Academic?

PTE Academic (Pearson Test of English Academic) is a computer-based English test accepted by universities and governments in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the UK, the USA and many other places. It tests Speaking, Writing, Reading and Listening in one sitting of about **2 hours** at a Pearson test centre (or at home, if you book the PTE Academic Online version and your purpose accepts it). Pearson’s test taker handbook says results are typically ready within 48 hours, but can take up to 5 days. That’s a lot faster than many other tests.

What makes PTE different is that **AI scores every answer**. Pearson’s scoring engine checks pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, spelling and content. On top of that, Pearson’s score guide says humans review the content of seven longer tasks before the score is final. So it’s consistent, and it’s harder to game with memorised scripts.

2026 PTE Test Structure: 3 Parts, 22 Question Types

The test runs for **about 2 hours** and has three parts with **22 question types**, up from 20 before August 2025. The two tasks added for tests taken from 7 August 2025 are Summarize Group Discussion and Respond to a Situation. Pearson says the part timings below don’t add up exactly because each test version is balanced for total length.

Part	Time (Pearson)	Question types	Tasks
Part 1: Speaking & Writing	about 76 to 84 minutes	9 scored types, plus an unscored Personal Introduction	Read Aloud, Repeat Sentence, Describe Image, Retell Lecture, Answer Short Question, Summarize Group Discussion (added Aug 2025), Respond to a Situation (added Aug 2025), Summarize Written Text, Write Essay

Part	Time (Pearson)	Question types	Tasks
Part 2: Reading	about 23 to 30 minutes	5 types	Fill in the Blanks (Dropdown), Multiple Choice Multiple Answers, Reorder Paragraphs, Fill in the Blanks (Drag and Drop), Multiple Choice Single Answer
Part 3: Listening	about 31 to 39 minutes	8 types	Summarize Spoken Text, Multiple Choice Multiple Answers, Fill in the Blanks (Type In), Highlight Correct Summary, Multiple Choice Single Answer, Select Missing Word, Highlight Incorrect Words, Write from Dictation

Pearson’s 2025 update also raised the number of questions: the July 2025 institution score guide says you’ll answer 65 to 75 questions across the 22 types. Coaches often compare this with about 52 before the update.

There are no scheduled breaks. Pearson’s July 2025 test taker handbook says you can ask the test administrator for an unscheduled break, but **the test clock keeps running** while you’re away. So treat the whole test as one continuous block and plan your water and bathroom stop before you start.

What changed in August 2025

PTE Academic changed in a big way in August 2025, and plenty of guides online still teach the old version. These changes apply to tests taken from 7 August 2025.

22 question types

Up from 20. Summarize Group Discussion and Respond to a Situation were added. The test runs for about 2 hours.

65 to 75 questions

Pearson's July 2025 institution score guide. Coaches often compare this with about 52 before the update.

Read Aloud is Speaking only

Since August 2025, Pearson lists Read Aloud as a Speaking task only.

New visa scores

Each skill has its own minimum and must be met separately. You can't average them.

English level	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Skilled visa points
Vocational	33	36	29	24	n/a
Competent	47	48	51	54	0
Proficient	58	59	69	76	10
Superior	69	70	85	88	20

Home Affairs PTE Academic scores for tests taken from 7 August 2025, in Pearson's order. Functional English is an overall 24 with no minimum for each skill. Results from tests taken on or before 6 August 2025 use the old bands, and can be used until 6 August 2028 depending on the visa. Checked October 2026. Confirm current numbers with Home Affairs and Pearson before you book.

The Scoring System: AI First, Humans on Content

This is the part most people get wrong. Here's how it works, using Pearson's own score guide.

How AI scoring works

AI scores **every response**. Depending on the task, it looks at traits like:

- **Pronunciation:** clear sounds, word stress and natural intonation
- **Oral Fluency:** smooth rhythm and phrasing, without long hesitations or restarts
- **Content:** how well you answered the actual prompt
- **Grammar, vocabulary and spelling:** on the written tasks
- **Form:** things like word count and, for Summarize Written Text, writing one sentence

Where humans come in

Pearson's score guide lists **seven tasks** where a trained human also reviews the **content** before the score is final:

- 1 Describe Image
- 2 Retell Lecture
- 3 Respond to a Situation
- 4 Summarize Group Discussion
- 5 Summarize Written Text
- 6 Write Essay (humans also review structure, coherence and language range here)
- 7 Summarize Spoken Text



Humans don't score your accent or pronunciation. That stays with the AI, and it's built to handle a wide range of accents. What matters is being easy to understand.

TEMPLATES WARNING

Pearson's score guide says a response that relies on large amounts of pre-prepared or memorised material can get **zero for content**, and zero content means zero for that answer. Coaches often say the engine "flags rhythmic monotony". Pearson doesn't use that phrase, but the advice behind it holds: use a flexible structure, not a word-for-word script.

Your Overall Score is NOT the Average of Your Four Skills

Most people assume $\text{Overall} = (\text{Speaking} + \text{Writing} + \text{Reading} + \text{Listening}) \div 4$. **It isn't.** Pearson says it directly: the overall score is not an average of the four skill scores.

Pearson works out the overall score from your performance on all the items, and each skill score is calculated on its own from overlapping sets of tasks. One task can feed two skills. Repeat Sentence counts for Listening and Speaking. Write from Dictation counts for Listening and Writing.

So a weak task can pull down more than one skill, and getting good at the high-weight tasks lifts several scores at once.



Partial Credit and Negative Marking: Know the Rules

Most PTE tasks use partial credit, so every correct part earns points even if the whole answer isn't perfect. But Pearson's score guide lists **three tasks with negative marking**, where a wrong pick costs a point (the item can't go below zero):

- Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers (Reading)
- Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers (Listening)
- Highlight Incorrect Words (Listening)

The rule: on these three, **only choose what you're sure of**. A wrong pick cancels out a right one.



CHAPTER 1

Speaking

All 7 speaking tasks, including Summarize Group Discussion and Respond to a Situation (added August 2025).

Speaking is where a lot of people win or lose their PTE. Since August 2025 there are more speaking tasks, humans now check the content of the longer ones, and memorised scripts can get you a zero for content. Part 1 of the test (Speaking & Writing) has **9 scored question types**: 7 speaking tasks plus Summarize Written Text and Write Essay. This chapter covers the 7 speaking tasks. The two writing tasks are in Chapter 2.

How Speaking Is Scored

Before the tasks, know what's being measured. Pearson's score guide uses these traits for most speaking tasks:

- **Content:** did you answer what was asked, and cover the key points?
- **Oral Fluency:** smooth rhythm and phrasing, without long hesitations, repeats or restarts
- **Pronunciation:** clear sounds and natural stress, so a listener understands you easily

AI scores all of it. For Describe Image, Retell Lecture, Respond to a Situation and Summarize Group Discussion, a human also reviews the content before the score is final. You'll see coaches quote a split like "content 40%, fluency 30%, pronunciation 30%". Pearson doesn't publish that, so take it as a rough idea, not a rule.

THE RULE THAT MATTERS MOST

pauses and restarts hurt more than small mistakes. A smooth answer with a slip usually beats a choppy "perfect" one.



Read Aloud (RA)

WHAT IT IS

Read a short text (up to about 60 words) aloud. You get about 30 to 40 seconds to prepare, depending on length. Expect 6 or 7 of these.

SCORE CONTRIBUTION

Since August 2025, Pearson lists Read Aloud as a **Speaking** task only. Coaches put it at about 9% of Speaking.

Strategy: meaning chunks, not word by word

Don't read word by word. Group words into **meaning chunks** of 3 to 5 words that belong together:

EXAMPLE

"The university library / has recently introduced / a new digital system / that lets students / access resources from home."

Pause slightly between chunks, not between words.

COACH TIP

Key tips

- Use the prep time to mark where the chunks break
- Never go back to fix a word. Keep moving
- Keep a steady pace
- Let your voice drop at full stops

Repeat Sentence (RS)

WHAT IT IS

Hear a sentence once and repeat it exactly. Expect 10 to 12 of these.

SCORE CONTRIBUTION

Counts for **Listening and Speaking**. Coaches estimate about 16% of Speaking and 17% of Listening, which makes it one of the highest-value tasks.

Strategy: chunk it

You can't hold 12 to 15 single words. Hold **3 or 4 meaning groups** instead:

EXAMPLE

Sentence: "The professor emphasised that students should complete their assignments before the deadline."

Chunks: [The professor emphasised] [that students should complete] [their assignments] [before the deadline]

COACH TIP

Key tips

- The start and end are easiest to remember
- If you miss a word, put in something close and keep going
- Copy the speaker's rhythm and stress
- Start speaking straight after the tone
- Practise with longer and longer sentences

Describe Image (DI)

WHAT IT IS

Describe a graph, chart, map, process or picture. You get 25 seconds to look and 40 seconds to speak. Expect 5 or 6.

SCORE CONTRIBUTION

Coaches estimate about **15% of your overall score** and about 31% of Speaking, based on a weighting table they quote from Pearson. Either way, it's the big one.

Strategy: relationships, not lists of numbers

Don't read out every number. Describe **trends and relationships**:

- What's the overall trend? (rising, falling, up and down)
- What are the highest and lowest points?
- Is there a pattern or something unusual?
- How do the parts compare?

Pearson's top content score asks you to describe the main features and how they relate, so a comparison or trend is worth more than a single figure.

Simple framework (not a rigid template)

EXAMPLE

"This [type of image] shows [topic]. Overall, [main trend]. The highest is [X], while the lowest is [Y]. Interestingly, [one observation]. Overall, it suggests [summary]."

Change the wording each time so it fits the image.

Respond to a Situation (RTS)

ADDED AUG 2025

WHAT IT IS (PEARSON)

You read and hear a short description of an everyday university situation (up to about 60 words), then say what you'd say in it. You get **10 seconds to prepare** and **40 seconds to speak**. The audio plays once and you record once. Expect 2 or 3 of these.

SCORE CONTRIBUTION

It counts for **Speaking only**. Coaches estimate about 13% of Speaking and about 6% of your overall score.

PEARSON RULE

How Pearson scores it

Trait	Scale	What earns the top band (Pearson's score guide)
Content	0 to 6	Handles the situation effectively, achieves the main goal with full attention to the details in the prompt, and goes beyond the prompt's wording with clear, flexible, appropriate language
Pronunciation	0 to 5	Easy for most listeners to understand, with correct sounds and stress
Oral fluency	0 to 5	Smooth, natural pace and phrasing, without hesitations, repeats or false starts

AI scores all three, and a human expert also reviews the content. Two things to know:

- **Zero content means zero for the item.** Pearson's score guide says no points are given when content scores 0, so pronunciation and fluency can't rescue an answer that's off-topic, memorised or too short.

- **Details matter.** Pearson's own example: if the prompt says you need the slides by Friday and you say Sunday, that's a misinterpretation and costs content marks. Echoing the prompt's wording without adding anything also keeps you in the lower bands.

Example scenario

EXAMPLE

"A classmate who's been sick asks to copy your assignment. What do you say?"

Use your 10 seconds: situation, person, goal

Pearson and most coaches suggest pulling three things out of the prompt before you speak:

- 1 **The situation:** what's happening? (You're struggling with an essay.)
- 2 **The person:** who are you talking to? This sets your tone. A professor or library staff member needs a more formal register. A classmate or flatmate can be casual.
- 3 **The goal:** what do you need to achieve? (Ask for a meeting, say no politely, sort out a problem.)

A structure that works

Many coaches (PTE Classes among them) teach a five-step shape. It isn't a script, just an order to follow:

- 1 **Greeting** that fits the person: "Excuse me, Professor..." or "Hey, Sam..."
- 2 **Situation** in a sentence, in your own words
- 3 **Main request or answer, early:** say what you want or what you'll do in the first 10 seconds or so



- 4 Reason and a detail or two:** why, plus something relevant that wasn't in the prompt
- 5 Polite close:** a next step or a question ("Would tomorrow morning work?")

Speak in the first person, as if it's really happening. Aim to use most of the 40 seconds. A one-liner like "Sure, no problem" is relevant but too thin for a good content score.

Useful language

- **Polite requests (formal):** "Would it be possible to..."; "I was wondering if I could..."; "Could I possibly..."
- **Saying no kindly:** "I'd really like to help, but..."; "I'm not comfortable doing that because..."
- **Offering another option:** "What I can do is..."; "How about we..."
- **Apologising:** "I'm really sorry about..."; "I should have let you know earlier..."
- **Closing:** "Would that work for you?"; "Thanks so much for your time."

Sample response

EXAMPLE

"Hey, I'm really sorry you've been sick, that sounds rough. I can't share my assignment though, because if the uni thinks we copied, we could both get into trouble for academic misconduct. What I can do is send you my lecture notes tonight, and if you like, we could meet in the library tomorrow and I'll walk you through how I approached it. Would that help?"

Why it works: it greets the person in a fitting, casual tone, gives a clear answer early, explains why, offers two concrete alternatives that weren't in the prompt, and closes with a question. It's about 35 seconds at a natural pace.

COMMON MISTAKES

RTS mistakes coaches see most

- ✗ Describing the situation ("My classmate is asking me...") instead of speaking inside it
- ✗ Getting a detail wrong (day, time, place, person)
- ✗ The wrong tone, like slang with a professor
- ✗ An all-purpose memorised script that ignores the prompt
- ✗ Stopping after 15 seconds

CHAPTER 1 • SPEAKING • TASK 5

Retell Lecture (RL)

WHAT IT IS

Hear a lecture of up to about 90 seconds, then retell it. You get 10 seconds to prepare and 40 seconds to speak. Expect 2 or 3.

WHAT TO KNOW

A human reviews the content. Pearson's top content score asks you to paraphrase the main ideas in your own words. Repeating isolated words and phrases from the lecture scores low.

Strategy: paraphrase, don't parrot

- Take short notes (keywords only)
- Catch the topic, 2 or 3 key points and the conclusion
- **Say it in your own words**
- Don't try to include everything. Stick to the main ideas



Answer Short Question (ASQ)

WHAT IT IS	Answer a simple question with one word or a short phrase. Expect 5 or 6.
SCORE CONTRIBUTION	Coaches put it at about 4% of Listening and about 2% of the overall score.

Strategy: answer fast

- Answer straight away. No full sentences needed
- Common topics: science, geography, everyday knowledge
- If you're not sure, give your best guess clearly

Summarize Group Discussion (SGD)

ADDED AUG 2025

WHAT IT IS (PEARSON)	Three people discuss an academic topic for up to 3 minutes (most coaches say 2.5 to 3). It plays once, with no transcript, and you can take notes. You then get 10 seconds to prepare and up to 2 minutes to speak . Expect 2 or 3.
SCORE CONTRIBUTION	It counts for Listening and Speaking . Coaches estimate about 9% of your overall score, about 19% of Speaking and about 20% of Listening, which makes it the second biggest task in the test on their numbers.
TYPICAL TOPICS (PEARSON)	students discussing a lecture, a group struggling with an assignment or project, or a professor guiding students who raise concerns.

PEARSON RULE

How Pearson scores it

Trait	Scale	What earns the top band (Pearson's score guide)
Content	0 to 6	Paraphrases the main ideas in your own words, develops each speaker's contribution with specific detail, explores how their views relate and pulls them together, with varied language and a logical, well-connected order
Pronunciation	0 to 5	Easy for most listeners to understand
Oral fluency	0 to 5	Smooth, natural pace, without hesitations, repeats or restarts



AI scores all three, and a human expert also reviews the content. As with RTS, **zero content means zero for the item**, and Pearson says memorised or unoriginal responses get no credit.

Pearson’s test format page sums up what a strong answer does: start with the main topic, then cover the subtopics with details, **including which speaker said what**. Just retelling the discussion without paraphrasing hurts your score. Pearson’s SGD article adds that you need all three speakers’ views for full content marks.

Notes: the 3-column method

Set this up on your erasable noteboard **before** the audio starts:

Topic: _		
Speaker 1	Speaker 2	Speaker 3
view + reason	view + reason	view + reason
feeling?	feeling?	feeling?
Agree / disagree:	Outcome / next step:	

- Speakers won’t take neat turns, so jot each point in the right column as it comes
- Note keywords, not sentences
- Listen for feelings as well as facts ("stressed", "frustrated", "excited"). Pearson asks you to cover what people say, think and feel
- Mark where they agree or clash, and how it ends (a decision, a next step or no agreement)

A structure that works

Coaches (Next Step IELTS, EnglishWise, BandLadder) all teach roughly the same order:

- 1 Topic:** "The three speakers were discussing..."
- 2 Speaker 1:** main view plus a reason or example
- 3 Speaker 2:** main view plus a detail, linked to speaker 1 ("In contrast...", "Building on that...")
- 4 Speaker 3:** main view plus a detail
- 5 Connections:** where they agreed or disagreed
- 6 Outcome:** what they decided, or that no agreement was reached

One coaching timing guide for the 2 minutes: about 10 seconds for the topic, 20 to 25 seconds per speaker, 25 seconds on how their views connect, and 15 to 20 seconds on the outcome. Most coaches suggest using most of the 2 minutes, as long as you aren't padding. Covering everything clearly matters more than filling time.

Useful language

- **Opening:** "The discussion focused on..."; "The speakers debated whether..."
- **Attribution:** "The first speaker argued that..."; "The second speaker was worried about..."; "The third speaker suggested..."
- **Linking views:** "By contrast..."; "Building on this point..."; "Both the first and third speakers agreed that..., although..."
- **Feelings:** "She seemed frustrated by..."; "He was clearly enthusiastic about..."
- **Outcome:** "In the end, they agreed to..."; "They didn't reach a final decision, but..."

Short sample (based on Pearson's time management example)

EXAMPLE

"The three students were talking about how hard it is to manage time at university. The first speaker felt stressed by the workload and said she struggles to keep a consistent routine across different courses. The second speaker agreed, but said his main problem is procrastination, because he focuses on interesting tasks instead of urgent ones, and he compared this with high school, where teachers set the schedule. The third speaker shared the same procrastination issue and added that long-term planning and multitasking are hard for her too. In the end, she suggested they all attend a university seminar on time management, and the others seemed keen."

Why it works: topic first, every speaker covered with a detail, links between their views ("agreed", "shared the same issue"), and the outcome at the end, all in plain language.

COMMON MISTAKES

SGD mistakes coaches see most

- ✗ Leaving out a speaker or getting their view wrong
- ✗ Retelling the speakers one after another with no comparison
- ✗ Running out of time before the outcome
- ✗ Spending too long on one speaker's example
- ✗ Reading out keywords from your notes without joining them up
- ✗ A memorised template that doesn't match what was said

The #1 Rule: Flow Over Perfection

If you remember one thing, make it this: **smooth, steady speech matters more than perfect speech**. A continuous answer with a few small slips usually beats a choppy answer full of restarts, even if the choppy one has fewer mistakes. Pearson's fluency scale rewards smooth phrasing and penalises hesitations, repetitions and false starts.

Coaches who've studied many high-scoring answers say the same thing: people scoring 85+ in Speaking still make small errors, but they don't stop.

The 3-second rule

In speaking tasks, if you go **silent for about 3 seconds, the microphone stops recording**. Anything you planned to say after that isn't captured, and if you haven't started speaking at all, you get nothing for that item. It doesn't wipe what you already said, but it can cost you a lot of content and fluency.

How to avoid it:

- Have a few linking phrases ready: "Also...", "On top of that...", "Another point is..."
- If you lose your place, rephrase what you just said while you think
- Practise speaking for the full time in every session
- Don't stop to think in silence. Think out loud

Microphone Setup: The Two-Finger Rule

Your setup matters more than you'd think:

- Put the mic about **level with your nose or chin, slightly to the side**
- Keep it about **two fingers' width** from your face
- This stops breath bursts on P, B and T sounds
- Do the sound check, and use the Personal Introduction to settle your volume



- Don't stay silent for 3 seconds. The mic stops recording

Practice Resources

Use platforms with AI scoring for feedback, but remember none of them is Pearson's engine:

- **APEUni:** popular for AI-scored speaking practice
- **PTE Tools:** good for Repeat Sentence drills
- **E2Language:** structured courses with feedback
- **Pearson's official practice tests:** scored with Pearson's own engine, good near test day

Mistakes to avoid

From Pearson's score guide and what PTE coaches warn about most.

MISTAKE #2

Correcting Yourself While Speaking

THE PROBLEM	Stopping mid-sentence to fix a word or a sound.
WHY IT HURTS	Restarts and hesitations pull down your oral fluency score. Pearson's fluency scale rewards smooth phrasing and marks down hesitations, repeats and false starts.
THE FIX	Keep going. If you say "The student... the students are...", just carry on. A smooth answer with a small slip usually beats a choppy "correct" one.

MISTAKE #3

Going Silent for 3 Seconds

THE PROBLEM	Pausing for 3 seconds or more in a speaking task.
WHY IT HURTS	After about 3 seconds of silence, the microphone stops recording. Whatever you meant to say next isn't captured. If you hadn't started yet, you get nothing for that item. What you already said is still scored, but you've likely lost content and fluency marks.
THE FIX	Have a few linking phrases ready: "Also..."; "On top of that..."; "Another point is...". Keep sound coming, even while you think.

MISTAKE #9

Reading Out Numbers Instead of Trends (Describe Image)

THE PROBLEM	Listing every number: "In 2010 it was 23%, in 2011 it was 24%, in 2012..."
WHY IT HURTS	You burn time on low-value detail and run out before you say anything meaningful. Pearson's top content score asks you to describe the main features and how they relate.
THE FIX	Describe trends and relationships: "There was a steady rise of about 15% over five years, with the biggest jump between 2013 and 2014." More in the PTE Speaking guide .



MISTAKE #10

Bad Microphone Position

THE PROBLEM	The mic is too close to your mouth or at the wrong angle.
WHY IT HURTS	Breath bursts on P, B and T sounds make you harder to understand, and breathing noise can interrupt the flow.
THE FIX	Put the mic about level with your nose or chin, slightly to the side, about two fingers' width from your face.

Quick answers

How many speaking tasks are in PTE Academic now?

Seven speaking tasks: Read Aloud, Repeat Sentence, Describe Image, Retell Lecture, Answer Short Question, Summarize Group Discussion and Respond to a Situation. Together with Summarize Written Text and Write Essay, that's 9 scored question types in Part 1 (Speaking & Writing). There's also an unscored Personal Introduction.

When were Summarize Group Discussion and Respond to a Situation added?

Both apply to tests taken from 7 August 2025. They aren't new in 2026.

How long do I get to speak in Summarize Group Discussion?

Up to 2 minutes, after 10 seconds of prep. The discussion audio is up to 3 minutes and plays once.

What happens if I stop talking for 3 seconds?

The microphone stops recording. You won't lose what you already said, but nothing after that is captured, and if you never started, you score nothing for that item.



How are SGD and RTS scored?

Both are scored on content (0 to 6), pronunciation (0 to 5) and oral fluency (0 to 5). AI scores everything and a human also reviews content. If content scores 0, the whole item scores 0. SGD counts for Listening and Speaking. RTS counts for Speaking only.

Does my accent affect my PTE speaking score?

Not on its own. Pearson scores pronunciation on how easy you are to understand, not on sounding like a native speaker. Clear sounds, natural stress and smooth phrasing matter more than any accent.

Speaking: the full article on jetblok.com.au

[Read the full article](#)



02

CHAPTER 2

Writing

Summarize Written Text and Write Essay, plus where else your Writing score comes from.

Here's something most people don't realise until it's too late: your Writing score isn't only built in the writing tasks. Tasks in the Listening part feed points into Writing too, and if you ignore them you're losing marks before you've even seen an essay prompt. This chapter shows where your Writing score comes from, then gives you the rules, frameworks and practice routine to get every point. Write from Dictation and Summarize Spoken Text are covered in Chapter 4.



Where Your Writing Score Actually Comes From

Pearson's score guide lists four tasks that feed Writing: Write Essay and Summarize Written Text in Part 1, and Write from Dictation and Summarize Spoken Text in Part 3. The percentages below are coach estimates from a weighting table they quote from Pearson. They're averages, not a formula.

Task	Where it is	Approx. share of Writing	Approx. overall weight
Write Essay	Speaking & Writing	31%	7%
Summarize Written Text (SWT)	Speaking & Writing	28%	7%
Write from Dictation (WFD)	Listening	23%	5%
Summarize Spoken Text (SST)	Listening	18%	4%

Look at that table. **Write from Dictation**, a Listening task, is about 23% of Writing. **Summarize Spoken Text** adds about 18%. So, on these estimates, roughly **41% of your Writing mark** comes from Part 3. For WFD in depth, read the [Write from Dictation guide](#), and for SST see the [PTE Listening complete guide](#).

The two writing tasks in Part 1, SWT and the Essay, make up the other 59% or so, and each is about 7% of your overall score. That sounds small, but when 2 or 3 points can separate a 79 from an 82, you can't give them away.

WHERE ELSE YOUR WRITING SCORE COMES FROM

Write from Dictation and Summarize Spoken Text are Listening tasks

Pearson's score guide lists four tasks that feed Writing. Two of them, **Write from Dictation** and **Summarize Spoken Text**, sit in Part 3 (Listening). They're covered in full in Chapter 4, Listening.

[Go to Chapter 4, page 62](#)

Summarize Written Text (SWT): One Sentence, Big Impact

SWT feeds **two** skills: coaches estimate **about 28% of Writing** and **about 23% of Reading**. That makes it one of the most valuable tasks in the test. You get 10 minutes per passage, and usually 2 of them.

PEARSON RULE

The rules you can't break (Pearson)

- Your answer must be **one complete sentence**. No full stop in the middle
- It must be between **5 and 75 words**
- Fewer than 5 words, more than 75, more than one sentence, or all capitals scores **zero for form**, and Pearson says a zero for form means **no points for the answer**

COACH TIP

- Coaches suggest **35 to 55 words**: enough to cover the key ideas, short enough to keep the grammar under control

How SWT is scored

Pearson's score guide scores SWT on:

- 1 Content:** does your sentence capture the main ideas?
- 2 Form:** one sentence, 5 to 75 words
- 3 Grammar:** is it correct?
- 4 Vocabulary:** are your word choices appropriate?

Spelling mistakes still hurt, because they affect grammar and vocabulary and how your answer reads.

Most people get the order wrong here: **correct grammar matters more than fancy vocabulary**. A clean sentence with simple words beats a broken sentence with big words. There's no bonus for complexity, only a cost for errors.

The SWT strategy: 4 steps in 10 minutes

Step 1: Find the core ideas (3 minutes)

Read the passage once. On a second read, flag 3 to 6 key ideas:

- The main topic or claim
- The supporting points or evidence
- Any conclusion or implication

Step 2: Build a skeleton (2 minutes)

Put your ideas in a cause and effect or argument chain. Linking words help:



- "because", "therefore", "as a result"
- "which leads to", "consequently", "while also"
- "although", "despite", "in addition to"

These let you join several ideas into one correct sentence without it feeling forced.

Step 3: Write and rephrase (3 minutes)

Write your one sentence. **Don't copy the passage word for word.** Coaches suggest rephrasing roughly 40 to 50% of the wording. Pearson's top content score asks you to reformulate and synthesise, and copying whole chunks scores lower.

Also skip the tired openers like "The passage discusses...". Lead with the actual subject.

EXAMPLE

Weak opening: "The passage discusses how climate change affects agriculture."

Stronger opening: "Climate change is disrupting farm output by..."

Step 4: Check form and grammar (2 minutes)

Before you submit, check three things:

- Is it really one sentence? (one full stop, at the very end)
- Is it between 5 and 75 words (ideally 35 to 55)?
- Does every verb agree with its subject?

SWT flexible framework

This is a *framework*, not a script. Change it for each passage:

EXAMPLE

"[Main idea], while [supporting detail], which suggests that [conclusion or implication]."

Mix it up. Sometimes lead with the conclusion, sometimes with a concession. You want a safety net, not a memorised line.

COMMON MISTAKES

SWT traps

- ✗ **Two sentences:** any full stop in the middle means zero for form, and so zero for the answer
- ✗ **Trying to include everything:** you're summarising, not copying
- ✗ **Going over 75 words:** clauses add up fast, so count
- ✗ **Words you're unsure of:** a misspelled fancy word hurts more than a correct simple one

Write Essay: The Words That Matter

Coaches estimate the essay is **about 31% of Writing** and about 7% of your overall score. You get a prompt, usually an opinion or discussion topic, and **20 minutes** to write.



PEARSON RULE

The word count rules (Pearson)

- **200 to 300 words:** full marks for form
- **120 to 199 or 301 to 380 words:** part marks for form
- **Under 120 or over 380 words** (or all capitals): zero for form, and Pearson says that means **no points for the essay**

Why 270 to 290? It gives you room for two body paragraphs with examples while staying well inside 200 to 300. 250 is fine. 310 still gets part marks for form, but every extra word is another chance for a mistake with nothing gained.

COACH TIP

- Many coaches suggest a sweet spot of **about 270 to 290 words**

Essay structure that scores

High-scoring essays usually follow a clean, predictable shape. Pearson's essay criteria include development, structure and coherence:

Paragraph 1: Introduction (2 sentences)

- Sentence 1: set up the topic
- Sentence 2: state your view

Paragraph 2: Body 1 (3 or 4 sentences)

- Your main argument
- A specific example
- What it shows

Paragraph 3: Body 2 (3 or 4 sentences)



- A second point on the other side
- A different example
- Link back to your view

Paragraph 4: Conclusion (1 or 2 sentences)

- Sum up your position

Template Safety: Why Rigid Scripts Fail

Pearson's score guide says a response that leans on lots of **pre-prepared or memorised material** can score **zero for content**. Coaches often describe this as the engine spotting "rhythmic monotony", meaning the same sentence patterns, openers and paragraph shapes used by thousands of people. Pearson doesn't use that term, but the risk is real: humans now review essay content, structure and range, and a rehearsed essay that doesn't really answer the prompt gets marked down.

Template safety rules

- **Don't memorise word for word.** Learn the structure, not the sentences
- **Change your sentence patterns.** If you opened with a plain statement last time, try a concession
- **Let vocabulary fit the topic.** Don't force the same "impressive" words into every essay
- **Match the context.** A tech essay should sound different from an education essay
- **Build your own framework** so no one else has the same one

A flexible essay framework

Use this as a *starting point*, then make it yours:

Introduction:



EXAMPLE

"In recent years, [topic] has drawn a lot of attention. In my view, it brings both clear benefits and real challenges."

Body paragraph opening:

EXAMPLE

"One major reason is [argument]. This can be seen when [example]. As a result, [implication]."

Conclusion:

EXAMPLE

"Overall, while [topic] raises some concerns, its benefits can outweigh the drawbacks if it's managed well."

Now the important bit: **don't use it exactly as written**. Swap "In recent years" for "Over the past decade" or "In many countries". Replace "In my view" with "I believe" or just state your view. The framework is the skeleton. You add the rest.

Accuracy over creativity

This surprises people: **simpler essays with clean grammar beat complex essays with errors**. Compare:

EXAMPLE

Complex but flawed: "The multifaceted ramifications of technological ubiquity has permeated every facets of contemporary society."

Simple but correct: "Technology has changed many parts of modern life."



The second scores better. The first has two errors ("has" should be "have", and "every facets" should be "every facet").

COMMON MISTAKES

Essay mistakes that cost points

- ✗ **Memorised openers:** "This essay will discuss" screams template
- ✗ **The same connector every time:** starting every sentence with "Furthermore"
- ✗ **Under 200 words:** you're probably missing a paragraph or examples
- ✗ **Long sentences you can't control:** if a 25-word sentence gets messy, split it
- ✗ **Off-topic examples:** if the prompt is about education, don't drift into economics
- ✗ **Over 300 words:** more chances for errors, no extra reward

Human Review: What Changed With the August 2025 Update

Pearson's current score guide says **SWT, the Essay and SST all get a human review of content** on top of AI scoring, and the Essay also gets human review of structure, coherence and language range. Here's what that means in practice:

- **Relevance:** did you answer this prompt, or paste in something pre-prepared?
- **Your own words:** does it show you read and understood the passage or question?
- **Logical flow:** do the ideas connect, or is it a pile of memorised phrases?

Humans use the same rating scales as the AI, so the two don't pull in different directions. But a template-driven answer that might once have slipped through is now much more likely to be caught.



Grammar: The Foundation

Grammar is the part of your Writing score you can control most. It follows rules you can practise. Focus on these five:

1. Subject-verb agreement

The most common PTE writing error, especially when a long phrase sits between subject and verb:

EXAMPLE

Wrong: "The impact of rising temperatures on coastal regions *are* significant."

Right: "The impact of rising temperatures on coastal regions *is* significant."

The subject is "impact" (singular), not "regions".

2. Articles (a, an, the)

The most common slip is dropping them: "Government should invest in education" instead of "The government should invest in education."

3. Prepositions

"depend *on*" not "depend *of*", "result *in*" not "result *to*", "contribute *to*" not "contribute *for*".

4. Punctuation

In SWT, punctuation decides whether you've written one sentence or two. Use commas, semicolons and linking words to join clauses, never a full stop in the middle.



5. Consistent tense

Pick a tense and stick to it within each paragraph. Jumping from past to present to future in three sentences hurts coherence.

A Practice Routine That Works

Writing without feedback won't move your score. You need a routine and a way to measure progress.

Daily SWT practice

- Do **5 SWTs a day**
- Use an AI-scored platform (APEUni, PTE Tools) for quick feedback
- After each one, check word count, sentence count (must be 1) and grammar
- Keep a log of repeat mistakes and target them

Essay practice

- Write **1 full essay every other day**
- Time yourself strictly at 20 minutes
- Find your own grammar errors before you look at the AI feedback
- Practise until 270 to 290 words feels natural

Don't forget the Listening tasks

Since a big chunk of Writing comes from Listening tasks, include:

- Daily **Write from Dictation** practice (10 to 15 sentences)
- Summarize Spoken Text practice (2 or 3 per session, 50 to 70 words)
- Spelling drills on common academic words



The Writing Score Roadmap

If you're aiming for 79+ in Writing, here's where to focus, in order:

- 1 Write from Dictation (about 23% of Writing):** nail phrase mapping. Every correctly spelled word counts, and it's the quickest win.
- 2 Write Essay (about 31% of Writing):** 4 paragraphs, 200 to 300 words (ideally 270 to 290), grammar first.
- 3 Summarize Written Text (about 28% of Writing):** one sentence, 5 to 75 words (ideally 35 to 55). It also feeds Reading.
- 4 Summarize Spoken Text (about 18% of Writing):** 50 to 70 words, main ideas, clean grammar.

See the pattern? **Accuracy beats complexity every time.** Correct spelling in WFD, correct grammar in the Essay and SWT, correct word counts everywhere. People scoring 85+ aren't the ones with the fanciest words. They make the fewest mistakes.

Quick Reference: Writing Task Cheat Sheet

Word count rules are from Pearson's score guide. Targets are coach suggestions.

Task	Full form marks	Zero for form	Target	Key focus
SWT	5 to 75 words, one sentence	under 5, over 75, or more than one sentence	35 to 55 words	One sentence, grammar
Essay	200 to 300 words	under 120 or over 380	270 to 290 words	Structure, accuracy, flow
WFD	Exact sentence	n/a (1 point per correct word)	Every word	Spelling, word order



Task	Full form marks	Zero for form	Target	Key focus
SST	50 to 70 words	under 40 or over 100	55 to 65 words	Main ideas, grammar

Mistakes to avoid

From Pearson’s score guide and what PTE coaches warn about most.

MISTAKE #4

Getting the Essay Word Count Wrong

THE PROBLEM	Writing fewer than 120 or more than 380 words.
WHY IT HURTS	Pearson gives zero for form under 120 or over 380 words, and says a zero for form means no points for the essay , however good the content. Between 120 and 199, or 301 and 380, you only get part of the form marks.
THE FIX	Aim for 200 to 300 words every time (many coaches suggest about 270 to 290). Count words in practice until you can judge length by eye.



MISTAKE #5

Getting SWT Wrong

THE PROBLEM	A Summarize Written Text answer outside 5 to 75 words, or written as more than one sentence.
WHY IT HURTS	Pearson gives zero for form, which means no points for the answer. Coaches suggest 35 to 55 words as the sweet spot.
THE FIX	Aim for about 40 to 50 words. Always write ONE sentence (no full stop in the middle). Join ideas with linking words and "which" or "while" clauses.

Quick answers

What is the word limit for the PTE essay?

Pearson gives full form marks for 200 to 300 words and part marks for 120 to 199 or 301 to 380. Under 120 or over 380 words scores zero for form, which means no points for the essay.

How many words should a Summarize Written Text answer be?

It must be one sentence of 5 to 75 words. Coaches generally suggest 35 to 55 words so you cover the key ideas without losing grammar control.

Do Listening tasks affect my PTE Writing score?

Yes. Pearson's score guide lists Write from Dictation and Summarize Spoken Text as feeding Writing. Coaches estimate they make up about 41% of the Writing score between them.



Can I use a template for the PTE essay?

A loose structure is fine. A memorised essay isn't: Pearson can give zero for content if an answer relies heavily on pre-prepared material, and humans now review essay content.

Is British or American spelling better in PTE?

Both are accepted. Pick one and use it consistently.

Final Advice

PTE Writing rewards discipline, not brilliance. You don't need to be a gifted writer. Follow the rules: hit the word counts, keep your grammar clean, answer the actual prompt and use flexible frameworks instead of scripts. The people who treat Writing as a process rather than a chance to impress are the ones who get above 79.

- Back to the hub: [**PTE Academic 2026 complete guide**](#)
- The biggest Writing win: [**Write from Dictation strategy**](#)
- SST and the rest of Part 3: [**PTE Listening complete guide**](#)
- Traps to avoid: [**10 Critical PTE Mistakes**](#)

Writing: the full article on jetblok.com.au

[**Read the full article**](#)



CHAPTER 3

Reading

All 5 reading tasks, with a time plan that fits 23 minutes.

Here's something that changes how you prepare for PTE Reading: **the Reading score isn't only about the Reading part**. A big slice of it comes from tasks in other parts of the test. Once you see how PTE's integrated scoring works, you can stop wasting time on low-value tasks and put your effort where it moves your score. This chapter covers where the Reading points come from, the strategies for each task and a time plan for hitting 79+ or 90. The official rules (timings, scoring types, negative marking) come from Pearson's score guide. The percentages and many of the tactics come from PTE coaches and teachers, and they're labelled that way.

The Secret: Your Reading Score Starts Outside the Reading Part

This is the biggest insight for PTE Reading, and most people don't know it. Pearson's score guide shows that some tasks in Speaking & Writing and in Listening also feed Reading. Using the weighting table coaches quote from Pearson, here's roughly how much:

- **Summarize Written Text (SWT):** about **23% of Reading**
- **Highlight Incorrect Words (HIW):** about **13% of Reading**
- **Highlight Correct Summary (HCS):** about **3% of Reading**

So, on those estimates, **around 39% of your Reading score is decided outside the Reading part.** If SWT or HIW goes badly, your Reading score suffers however well you do on the Reading tasks themselves.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Reading prep doesn't start in Reading. It starts with SWT in Part 1 and HIW in Listening. If your Reading score is below target, check those two first.

Reading Score Breakdown: Where the Points Come From

Now the tasks inside the Reading part. The item counts and scoring types are from Pearson's score guide. The percentages are coach estimates from the weighting table quoted from Pearson's teacher document. They're averages, not a formula.



Task	Items (Pearson)	Approx. overall weight	Approx. share of Reading
Fill in the Blanks (Dropdown)	5 to 6	7%	25%
Fill in the Blanks (Drag and Drop)	4 to 5	6%	20%
Reorder Paragraphs	2 to 3	3%	9%
Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers	2 to 3	1%	5%
Multiple Choice, Single Answer	2 to 3	under 1%	3%

The two Fill in the Blanks tasks together are about **45% of Reading** on these numbers. Nearly half your Reading result from two task types. Meanwhile Multiple Choice, Single Answer is under 1% of your overall score.

That tells you where to put your prep time, and where to stop wasting it.

Fill in the Blanks: The Core Strategy

Since the FIBs carry so much weight, let's go through both.

Fill in the Blanks (Dropdown): about 25% of Reading

You read a passage with gaps and pick the right word for each from a dropdown. It's the biggest task in the Reading part. In the current test, Pearson's score guide lists it as a Reading task only. (Older guides call it "Reading & Writing Fill in the Blanks" and say it feeds Writing. That's no longer the case.)

STRATEGY

- **Read 2 or 3 words either side of the blank first.** The answer usually connects to what's right next to it. Skim the passage once for the gist, then let the local clues do the work.
- **Read for logic, not synonyms.** Don't hunt for the word that "means the same" as something nearby. Ask: "Which word makes this sentence make sense?"
- **Use grammar clues hard.** Look at the preposition after the blank, the tense of nearby verbs and any article before it. These knock out wrong options faster than trying to understand everything.

EXAMPLE

Example: "The study was _____ by a team of researchers." The blank needs a past participle (conducted, carried out, led). "Was ... by" tells you it's passive, which rules out the other forms straight away.

Fill in the Blanks (Drag and Drop): about 20% of Reading

You drag words from a box into the gaps. There are more words than gaps, so some won't be used.



STRATEGY

- **Do the easy blanks first.** Once a word is placed, it's out of the box, which makes the harder gaps easier.
- **Eliminate, don't guess.** For each gap, rule out words that can't fit the grammar or make no sense. "It can't be a noun, it needs a verb" is faster and more accurate than hunting for the "best" word.
- **Get it down to two.** If you can rule out all but two options, your odds are far better than picking from 6 to 8. FIBs give **partial credit**, so every correct word counts, and a blank costs you nothing to fill.

Grammar Rules for FIBs: Cheat Sheet

These patterns come up again and again. Learn them and you'll fill blanks faster:

Match the tense: Look at the other verbs in the sentence. "The researchers *discovered* that the compound _____ significant results" needs a past tense verb (produced, showed, yielded).

Singular or plural:

- "One of the _____" → **plural noun** (one of the *reasons*)
- "Another _____" → **singular noun** (another *study*)
- "Each _____" → singular noun (each *participant*)
- "Several _____" → plural noun (several *studies*)

The comma rule (a coaching rule of thumb):

- **Comma before the blank** → often *which* or *while* (a non-defining clause)
- **No comma** → often *that* (a defining clause)

It isn't a grammar law, but it's right often enough to be a useful tiebreaker.



Lean academic: PTE passages come from academic texts. Many coaches say that when two options both seem right, **the more formal or precise word** is usually the better bet:

- *Substantial* over *big*
- *Detrimental* over *bad*
- *Tremendous* over *huge*

Treat that as a tiebreaker, not a rule. Meaning and grammar come first.

Collocations: Academic English uses fixed pairs. Know them and some blanks fill themselves:

- depend **ON** / rely **ON**
- struck **BY** / affected **BY**
- involved **IN** / engaged **IN**
- conduct **research** / carry out **an experiment**
- pose **a threat** / raise **a concern**

Reorder Paragraphs: about 9% of Reading

Reorder Paragraphs can feel overwhelming: 4 or 5 jumbled boxes to put in order. With a method, you can reliably get some pairs right, and Pearson scores each correct **adjacent pair**, so partial answers still earn points.

Step 1: Find the opening sentence

The first sentence usually does **NOT** contain:

- **Pronouns with nothing to refer to:** *it, they, these* point back to something earlier



- **Contrast or linking words:** *but, however, on the other hand* need something before them
- **Back-reference phrases:** *these findings, that approach, such methods*

It usually introduces a **topic, person, place or idea** by its full name, or makes a general statement.

Step 2: Find linked pairs

Don't try to order all 5 at once. Look for pairs that clearly belong together:

- **Name, then pronoun:** "Dr Smith ran a study" then "She found that..."
- **Contrast:** one view, then "However,..."
- **Cause, then effect:** "X happened" then "As a result..."
- **General, then specific:** a broad claim, then the evidence or example

Step 3: Use time and logic markers

For time-based or process texts, words like *initially, first, then, subsequently* and *finally* give the order away.

Good enough is good enough

With 5 sentences there are 4 adjacent pairs. Many coaches say getting **2 of the 4 pairs** right regularly is enough to support a strong Reading score, because Reorder is a small slice. You don't need perfection.

The time cap

Coaches generally suggest capping each Reorder question at **about 90 seconds to 2 minutes**. If you're stuck after finding 1 or 2 clear pairs, make your best order and move on. Your time is worth more on the FIBs.

Multiple Choice: The Time Traps

Multiple Choice questions are the biggest time traps in Reading. People spend 5 to 7 minutes agonising over tasks worth very little. Don't.

Multiple Choice, Single Answer: about 3% of Reading

This is worth so little that the plan is simple:

- Read the question quickly
- Scan the passage for the relevant part
- Pick the most likely answer
- Move on

It's **right or wrong**, no partial credit, and no penalty for a wrong answer. So always answer, but don't overthink it.

Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers: about 5% of Reading

This one is **risky** because Pearson uses **negative marking**: each wrong choice takes off a point (the item can't go below zero).

Safest approach: choose only the option(s) you're sure of. Many coaches tell students to pick just **one** answer they're confident about and move on. You give up a possible extra point, but you avoid losing one.

TIME RULE

Coaches suggest no more than **60 to 90 seconds** on any Multiple Choice question. If you haven't decided by then, make your best call and move on.

The "2 out of 3" Idea for 79+

You don't need to be perfect at everything. A common coaching idea: to reach 79+ in Reading, be **strong in 2 of these 3 groups**:

- 1 Fill in the Blanks (both types)**: about 45% of Reading
- 2 Reorder Paragraphs**: about 9% of Reading
- 3 The outside tasks (SWT and HIW)**: about 36% of Reading

If your FIBs and SWT/HIW are solid, you can be average at Reorder and still get there. If FIBs and Reorder are strong, you have some room for SWT slips. Play to your strengths.

Scoring Types: Why They Change Your Strategy

Pearson's score guide uses different scoring for different tasks, and that should change how you play each one:

Task	Scoring type	What it means for you
FIB (both types)	Partial credit, 1 point per correct blank	Never leave a blank empty
Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers	Partial credit with negative marking	Wrong picks cost points, so pick fewer
Multiple Choice, Single Answer	Right or wrong	Always answer, then move on
Reorder Paragraphs	Partial credit, 1 point per correct adjacent pair	Two correct pairs still earn points

The short version: **partial credit rewards having a go**. Fill every FIB blank even if you're unsure. On Multiple Answers, it's the opposite: holding back protects your score.



Time Plan: Your Reading Blueprint

Time management is the difference between knowing the material and scoring well. Pearson gives the Reading part **about 23 to 30 minutes**, depending on your test version. Here's a coach-style split per question:

Task	Time per question	Priority
Fill in the Blanks (Dropdown)	2 to 2.5 minutes	HIGHEST
Fill in the Blanks (Drag and Drop)	1.5 to 2 minutes	HIGH
Reorder Paragraphs	1.5 to 2 minutes	MEDIUM
Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers	60 to 90 seconds max	LOW
Multiple Choice, Single Answer	whatever time is left	LOWEST

Watch the timer on screen and adjust to how many items you get. **The golden rule:** if time is running out, sacrifice the Multiple Choice questions. A quick guess on Single Answer costs you almost nothing. Running out of time on a FIB costs a lot.

COACH TIP

Pro tip: switch gears fast after the essay

Reading comes straight after the writing tasks in Part 1, and Pearson's handbook confirms there are no scheduled breaks (you can ask for one, but the clock keeps running). Many people lose a few minutes because their head is still in "essay mode" and they read the instructions slowly. You already know what the tasks look like, so you don't need to read every instruction word by word. Those saved minutes can be one more FIB done properly, which can be the difference between 78 and 80.

Your FIB Practice Routine

Since FIBs are such a big chunk of Reading, your practice should reflect that.

Weeks 1 to 2: Build your collocation bank

- Read academic texts and highlight word pairs that sound natural together
- Note preposition patterns: *contribute TO, result IN, lead TO, account FOR*
- Learn adjective and noun pairs: *significant impact, substantial evidence, fundamental principle*
- Practise on a PTE platform with AI scoring, such as APEUni

Weeks 3 to 4: Speed and accuracy

- Set a timer for 2 to 2.5 minutes per question, no extensions
- Practise the "context window": read 2 or 3 words either side of each blank
- After each set, sort your mistakes: vocabulary gap, grammar or a collocation you didn't know?
- Track your accuracy. Aim for 70%+ on Dropdown and 65%+ on Drag and Drop to start

Week 5 onwards: Full section practice

- Use a strict timer of about 25 to 30 minutes
- Follow your time plan exactly
- Practise the switch: write an essay first, then go straight into Reading
- Review your time, not just your answers. Did Multiple Choice eat too much?

Common Mistakes That Kill Reading Scores

These are the patterns I see most often in people who underperform in Reading:

COMMON MISTAKE

Mistake 1: Equal time on every task

Spending 3 minutes on a Single Answer question and 2 on a Dropdown FIB is backwards. Match your time to the value.

COMMON MISTAKE

Mistake 2: Reading every word of the passage before answering FIBs

You need the gist and the local clues, not a full close reading. Reading every word first eats 30 to 60 seconds a question.

COMMON MISTAKE

Mistake 3: Picking lots of answers in Multiple Answers

Negative marking means each wrong pick costs a point. Choosing 3 when you're sure of 1 is a losing game.

COMMON MISTAKE

Mistake 4: Ignoring SWT and HIW

If you only practise Reading-part tasks, you're leaving a big chunk of your Reading score to chance. SWT and HIW need their own practice.



COMMON MISTAKE

Mistake 5: Chasing perfection on Reorder

Getting stuck for 5+ minutes is one of the most common time disasters. Find your pairs, make your best order, move on.

Your Score 90 Action Plan

If you're aiming for 90 in Reading, here's the order:

- 1 Master both FIB types.** Practise collocations, grammar rules and elimination daily. Aim for 80%+ accuracy.
- 2 Nail Summarize Written Text.** It's in Part 1 but feeds Reading. Write one sentence of 5 to 75 words (ideally 35 to 55). See the [PTE Writing guide](#).
- 3 Practise Highlight Incorrect Words.** This Listening task feeds Reading too. Only click words you're sure about. See the [PTE Listening guide](#).
- 4 Build a Reorder system.** Find the opener and linked pairs. Accept "good enough" and protect your time.
- 5 Keep Multiple Choice in its place.** Practise it now and then, but never at the expense of FIBs or SWT.

People who score 90 in Reading aren't always better readers than people scoring 70. They're better strategists. They know where the points are, they guard their time, and they don't get stuck on low-value tasks.



One more mistake to avoid

From Pearson's score guide and what PTE coaches warn about most.

MISTAKE #8

Spending Too Long on Reorder Paragraphs

THE PROBLEM

Burning 5+ minutes trying to get the order perfect.

WHY IT HURTS

Coaches estimate Reorder is only about 9% of Reading, while the two Fill in the Blanks tasks are about 45%. Time lost on Reorder is time stolen from the FIBs.

THE FIX

Coaches suggest a cap of about 90 seconds to 2 minutes. Find one sure pair, make your best guess on the rest and move on. More in the [PTE Reading guide](#).

Quick answers

How long is the PTE Reading section?

Pearson gives about 23 to 30 minutes for Part 2 (Reading), depending on your test version. It has 5 task types.

Which task is worth the most in PTE Reading?

Fill in the Blanks. Coaches estimate the Dropdown version at about 25% of Reading and Drag and Drop at about 20%, so about 45% between them, based on a weighting table they quote from Pearson.



Is there negative marking in PTE Reading?

Yes, on Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers. Each wrong choice loses a point, though the item can't go below zero. Single Answer has no penalty, so always answer it.

Do other tasks affect my PTE Reading score?

Yes. Pearson's score guide shows Summarize Written Text, Highlight Incorrect Words and Highlight Correct Summary also feed Reading. Coaches estimate they make up about 39% of it together.

How long should I spend on Reorder Paragraphs?

Most coaches suggest about 90 seconds to 2 minutes per question. Find the opener and one or two clear pairs, then move on.

Start today. Read the [PTE Academic 2026 complete guide](#) for the full picture, then come back here and build your Reading plan. And check the [10 Critical PTE Mistakes](#) so you don't give points away.

Reading: the full article on jetblok.com.au

[Read the full article](#)



CHAPTER 4

Listening

All 8 listening tasks, including a full Write from Dictation method.

Listening is the last part of PTE Academic, and it's where a lot of people quietly lose points. You're tired after more than 90 minutes of speaking, writing and reading, the audio plays only once, and several tasks feed other skills too. Write from Dictation and Summarize Spoken Text count for Writing. Highlight Incorrect Words and Highlight Correct Summary count for Reading. So a good Listening part lifts more than your Listening score.

This chapter covers all 8 Listening tasks: what each one looks like, how Pearson scores it and what to do, followed by a deep dive on Write from Dictation. The official rules (timings, item counts, scoring) come from Pearson's PTE Academic score guide. The percentages and many of the tactics come from PTE coaches and teachers, and they're labelled that way.

The Listening Part at a Glance

Part 3 runs for **about 31 to 39 minutes** depending on your test version. Here's the line-up, with item counts and scoring from Pearson's score guide:

Task	Items	Audio length (Pearson)	Scoring	Skills it feeds
Summarize Spoken Text	1	60 to 90 seconds	Partial credit (content, form, grammar, vocabulary, spelling)	Listening, Writing
Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers	2 to 3	80 to 120 seconds	Partial credit, minus 1 per wrong pick	Listening
Fill in the Blanks (Type In)	2 to 3	30 to 60 seconds	1 point per correctly spelled word	Listening
Highlight Correct Summary	2 to 3	30 to 90 seconds	Right or wrong	Listening, Reading
Multiple Choice, Single Answer	2 to 3	30 to 60 seconds	Right or wrong	Listening
Select Missing Word	1 to 2	20 to 70 seconds	Right or wrong	Listening
Highlight Incorrect Words	2 to 3	15 to 50 seconds	1 point per correct word, minus 1 per wrong click	Listening, Reading
Write from Dictation	3 to 4	3 to 5 seconds	1 point per correctly spelled word	Listening, Writing

Item counts and scoring come from Pearson's score guide. Audio lengths come from Pearson's Listening format page.

Two things to know before you start:

- **Every recording plays once.** No replays. Note-taking matters.

- **You get a few seconds before most clips start** (Pearson: about 7 seconds for Multiple Answers and Fill in the Blanks, 5 for Single Answer, 10 for Highlight Incorrect Words). Use them to read the question or skim the text, every time.
- **Summarize Spoken Text has its own 10-minute timer.** The rest of the part shares one timer, so keep an eye on the clock in the top corner.

Where Your Listening Score Really Comes From

Here's the surprise: a big chunk of your Listening score comes from tasks in **Part 1**. Pearson's score guide lists Repeat Sentence, Retell Lecture, Answer Short Question and Summarize Group Discussion as feeding Listening as well as Speaking.

Using the weighting table coaches quote from Pearson's teacher document, here's roughly how Listening breaks down. These are averages, not a formula.

Task	Where it is	Approx. share of Listening
Summarize Group Discussion	Part 1	20%
Repeat Sentence	Part 1	17%
Retell Lecture	Part 1	13%
Write from Dictation	Part 3	13%
Summarize Spoken Text	Part 3	10%
Highlight Incorrect Words	Part 3	8%
Fill in the Blanks (Type In)	Part 3	8%
Answer Short Question	Part 1	4%
Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers	Part 3	3%
Highlight Correct Summary	Part 3	2%

Task	Where it is	Approx. share of Listening
Multiple Choice, Single Answer	Part 3	2%
Select Missing Word	Part 3	1%

On those numbers, **more than half of your Listening score is decided in Part 1**, before the Listening part even starts. If your Listening score is stuck, practise Repeat Sentence and Summarize Group Discussion first. The [PTE Speaking guide](#) covers both.

CHAPTER 4 • LISTENING • TASK 1

Summarize Spoken Text (SST)

WHAT IT IS	You hear a short lecture (Pearson says about 60 to 90 seconds) and type a summary in 10 minutes . You get one of these.
HOW PEARSON SCORES IT	five traits, all scored by AI, with a human expert also reviewing content.

Trait	Scale	What Pearson looks for
Content	0 to 4	All the key points, without misrepresenting the topic or purpose. Get the topic or purpose wrong and Pearson says you get no points for the whole summary
Form	0 to 2	50 to 70 words = 2. 40 to 49 or 71 to 100 = 1. Under 40, over 100, all capitals, no punctuation or just bullet points = 0, which means no points
Grammar	0 to 2	Correct basic sentence structure. Short, clear sentences beat long, tangled ones
Vocabulary	0 to 2	Words that fit the lecture and an academic setting. Pearson says using words from the lecture appropriately is fine
Spelling	0 to 2	2 for no errors, 1 for one error, 0 for more than one. Every slip counts here

Coaches estimate SST is about 10% of Listening and about 18% of Writing, so it matters for both.

STRATEGY

- 1 Take keyword notes as you listen.** Topic, 2 or 3 main points, and the conclusion or example at the end.
- 2 Use a simple structure.** One sentence for the topic, one or two for the main points, one for the conclusion. Three or four sentences in total.
- 3 Aim for 55 to 65 words.** That leaves a buffer on both sides of 50 to 70.
- 4 Use your own words where you can,** but key terms from the lecture are fine. You can't paraphrase "photosynthesis".
- 5 Save 1 or 2 minutes to check** spelling, subject-verb agreement and the on-screen word count. Pearson itself suggests this.
- 6 Write proper sentences.** Bullet points or no punctuation can zero your form score.

A flexible structure (not a script):

EXAMPLE

"The speaker talked about [topic]. They explained that [main point 1], and that [main point 2]. They also noted [detail or example]. Overall, the speaker suggested that [conclusion]."

Change the wording every time. Pearson's score guide says answers built on memorised material can score zero for content.

Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers

WHAT IT IS	You hear a recording and pick all the correct answers from a list. You get 2 or 3.
HOW PEARSON SCORES IT	1 point per correct pick, minus 1 per wrong pick , and the item can't go below zero. That makes it one of three Listening and Reading tasks with negative marking. The other two are Highlight Incorrect Words and the Reading version of this task.
STRATEGY	■ Read the question and options before the audio starts. You get about 7 seconds. Know what you're listening for. ■ Choose for meaning, not matching words. Pearson warns that several options may use words from the recording without matching what was said. ■ Note keywords against each option as you hear them. ■ Only pick what you're sure of. Many coaches tell students to choose one confident answer and stop. A second answer you're unsure of can wipe out the first. ■ Don't spend long here. Coaches estimate it's only about 3% of Listening.

Fill in the Blanks (Type In)

WHAT IT IS	You see a transcript with gaps. As the audio plays, you type the missing words. You get 2 or 3.
HOW PEARSON SCORES IT	1 point for each correct word, spelled correctly . A misspelled word scores nothing.
STRATEGY	■ Skim the transcript in the 7 seconds before the audio. Pearson suggests ignoring the gaps and getting the gist first, then guessing what kind of word each gap needs (noun, verb, plural). ■ Type as you hear it. If you can't keep up, jot the first few letters and finish after. ■ Check grammar fit: "a number of " <i>needs a plural</i>; "has" needs a past participle. ■ Fix spelling at the end. Check plurals and endings ("-ed", "-s") carefully.

Coaches estimate this is about 8% of Listening, and it's a good place to pick up easy points if your spelling is solid.

Highlight Correct Summary

WHAT IT IS	You hear a recording, then choose the paragraph that best summarises it. You get 2 or 3.
HOW PEARSON SCORES IT	right or wrong, 1 point. It feeds Listening and Reading.
STRATEGY	■ Take quick notes on the main idea, not every detail. ■ Read the options after the audio and rule out any that: ■ add something the speaker never said ■ focus on a minor detail as if it were the main point ■ get the speaker's view backwards ■ Pick the one that covers the whole talk, not just part of it. ■ Don't overthink it. Coaches estimate it's only about 2% of Listening. Give it a minute and move on.

Multiple Choice, Single Answer

WHAT IT IS	You hear a recording and pick the one correct answer. You get 2 or 3.
HOW PEARSON SCORES IT	right or wrong, 1 point, no penalty.
STRATEGY	■ Read the question before the audio ■ Listen for the main idea or the specific detail asked ■ Watch for distractors: options that use the speaker’s exact words but say something different ■ Always answer. There’s no negative marking here



Select Missing Word

WHAT IT IS	A recording plays, and the last word or phrase is replaced by a beep. You choose what comes next. You get 1 or 2.
HOW PEARSON SCORES IT	right or wrong, 1 point.
STRATEGY	■ Read the topic line on screen before the audio starts ■ Follow the argument, not just the words. The missing bit usually finishes the speaker's point ■ Pay attention to the last sentence before the beep. It often signals what comes next ("as a result..."; "on the other hand...") ■ Pick, then move on. It's worth about 1% of Listening by coach estimates

Highlight Incorrect Words (HIW)

WHAT IT IS	You read a transcript while the audio plays. Some words on screen are different from what the speaker says. You click those words. You get 2 or 3.
HOW PEARSON SCORES IT	1 point per correct click, minus 1 per wrong click, minimum zero. It feeds Listening and Reading. Coaches estimate it's about 8% of Listening and about 13% of Reading, which makes it one of the most valuable tasks in this part.
STRATEGY	■ Use the 10 seconds before the audio to skim the content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives). Pearson suggests this so odd words stand out. ■ Put your mouse pointer on the text and follow along word by word. Pearson suggests this too. Move it with the speaker so you never lose your place. ■ Click as soon as you hear a mismatch. Don't wait until the end, you'll forget. ■ Expect swaps that look similar: "increase" for "decrease", "rarely" for "regularly". ■ Only click when you're sure. If you missed a bit, leave it. A wrong click costs as much as a right one earns. ■ Coaches generally say most items have a handful of changed words, so if you've clicked half the paragraph, something's gone wrong.

Write from Dictation (WFD)

WHAT IT IS	You hear a short sentence and type it exactly. You get 3 or 4, at the very end of the test.
HOW PEARSON SCORES IT	1 point for each correct word, spelled correctly. Coaches estimate WFD is about 13% of Listening and about 23% of Writing, so it's one of the most valuable tasks in the whole test.
STRATEGY (PHRASE MAPPING)	1 As you listen, jot the first letter of each word 2 Note 2 or 3 anchor words (long or unusual words) 3 Rebuild straight away while it's still in your head 4 Check spelling, plurals and verb endings before you move on. Sound-alikes (affect/effect, there/their) are a classic trap 5 Capitals and full stops: Pearson scores correctly spelled words and doesn't mention punctuation, but coaches like E2Language and Language Academy still suggest a capital at the start and a full stop at the end, to be safe 6 Extra words: Pearson only takes points off on three tasks, and WFD isn't one of them. So if you're unsure between two words, coaches suggest picking the one that fits the grammar rather than writing both

The full method is in the article: [PTE Write from Dictation strategy](#).

Write from Dictation deep dive

If there's ONE task to master in PTE, it's **Write from Dictation (WFD)**. Pearson's score guide confirms it feeds both Listening and Writing, and coaches estimate it's about **23% of your Writing score** and **13% of your Listening score**, based on a weighting table they quote from Pearson. Get it right and you've locked in a big part of your result.

Why WFD Matters So Much

Do the maths:

- Pearson's score guide says you'll get **3 or 4** WFD sentences
- Each correctly spelled word earns 1 point
- Pearson says each sentence plays for just 3 to 5 seconds, and a typical sentence is about 10 to 14 words
- So there are roughly 35 to 50 points on offer across the test

Very few tasks give you that many chances to pick up points with nothing but listening and spelling.

How WFD Is Scored

Pearson's rule is simple, and strict:

- **Each correct word, spelled correctly, = 1 point**
- A misspelled word = 0 for that word
- A missing word = 0 for that word
- Pearson doesn't take points off for extra words, but they earn nothing

- Pearson's scoring counts correctly spelled words. It doesn't mention capitals or punctuation, but many coaches (E2Language, Language Academy) still suggest a capital at the start and a full stop at the end, just to be safe
- Plurals, verb endings and sound-alikes are where most points go: "study" isn't "studies", and "affect" isn't "effect"

The Phrase Mapping Technique

You can't hold 12 words in your head by brute force. **Phrase mapping** uses your short-term memory much better.

Step 1: First-letter capture

As you hear the sentence, jot down the **first letter of each word**:

EXAMPLE

Sentence: "The library will be closed for renovations next month" Notes: T l w b c f r n m

Step 2: Anchor words

While you're doing that, also note 2 or 3 **anchor words**: longer or unusual words that are easy to lose:

EXAMPLE

First letters: T l w b c f r n m Anchors: library, renovations

Step 3: Rebuild straight away

As soon as the audio stops, use your letters and anchors to rebuild the sentence:

- T = The



- l = library
- w = will
- b = be
- c = closed
- f = for
- r = renovations
- n = next
- m = month

Type it while it’s still echoing in your head.

Common Spelling Traps

These words often get misspelled in WFD:

Word	Common mistake	Correct spelling
necessary	neccessary	necessary
government	goverment	government
environment	enviroment	environment
immediately	immediatly	immediately
occurred	occured	occurred
successful	succesful	successful
accommodation	accomodation	accommodation
beginning	begining	beginning
definitely	definately	definitely
professional	proffesional	professional



Sentence Patterns to Recognise

WFD sentences tend to follow familiar academic patterns. Spotting them helps you rebuild:

Pattern 1: Subject + verb + object

EXAMPLE

"Students must submit their assignments before the deadline."

Pattern 2: There is/are + noun

EXAMPLE

"There are several factors that contribute to climate change."

Pattern 3: It is + adjective + to + verb

EXAMPLE

"It is important to maintain a healthy work-life balance."

Pattern 4: The + noun + of + noun

EXAMPLE

"The purpose of this study is to examine student performance."



Practice Strategy

- 1 **Daily dictation:** at least 10 to 15 sentences a day
- 2 **Use an AI-scored platform** such as APEUni or PTE Tools for quick feedback
- 3 **Review your mistakes:** keep a list of words you keep misspelling
- 4 **Type faster:** you only get a short window after the audio ends
- 5 **Train your ear:** academic podcasts, lectures and talks

Test Day Tips

- **Check the volume** before the Listening part starts
- **Don't panic** if you miss a word. Write what you have
- **Check your spelling** before you move on
- **Use American OR British spelling** and stick to one. Both are accepted

The Golden Rule

Every word counts. Getting 8 of 10 words right is far better than giving up because you missed 2. Partial credit adds up across all your WFD sentences.

Keep going:

- All 8 Listening tasks, including WFD: [PTE Listening complete guide](#)
- How WFD fits into your Writing score: [PTE Writing guide](#)
- Back to the hub: [PTE Academic 2026 complete guide](#)
- Traps to avoid: [10 Critical PTE Mistakes](#)

Write from Dictation: the full article on jetblok.com.au

[Read the full article](#)



Note-Taking That Works in Listening

You can't replay anything, so notes are your memory. Keep it simple:

- **Use the erasable notepad** you're given. Practise with one at home
- **Write keywords, not sentences:** nouns, numbers, names and linking words ("but", "because", "so")
- **Use symbols:** ↑ for rise, ↓ for fall, → for leads to, ≠ for disagrees
- **Mark the structure:** many lectures follow topic, point, point, conclusion. Draw a line between each part
- **Listen hardest at the start and end.** The topic usually comes first and the conclusion last

Your Listening Time Plan

The Listening part runs for about 31 to 39 minutes, and by then you've been at it for well over an hour. Here's how to stay sharp:

- **SST (10 minutes, timed separately):** 1 minute to plan, 6 to 7 to write, 2 to check
- **Multiple Choice tasks:** answer soon after the audio ends and move on. Don't let them eat the shared timer
- **FIB, HCS, SMW, HIW:** these move with the audio, so focus is everything
- **Save energy for WFD at the end.** Sit up, breathe, reset before the first sentence

A tip many coaches give: stay alert after SST. People relax after the long writing task and lose focus on the quick tasks that follow.

Common Listening Mistakes

- **Guessing on Multiple Answers or HIW.** Wrong picks cost points
- **Going outside 50 to 70 words in SST.** You lose form marks, and under 40 or over 100 scores nothing
- **Spelling slips in FIB and WFD.** A misspelled word scores zero, every time
- **Losing your place in HIW.** Use the mouse pointer to track the speaker
- **Fading at the end.** WFD is worth a lot and it comes last. Don't coast
- **Ignoring the Part 1 tasks.** Repeat Sentence and SGD are a big part of your Listening score

Mistakes to avoid

From Pearson's score guide and what PTE coaches warn about most.

MISTAKE #6

Miscounting Summarize Spoken Text

THE PROBLEM	Landing just outside 50 to 70 words.
WHY IT HURTS	Pearson gives full form marks for 50 to 70 words. At 40 to 49 or 71 to 100 you drop to part marks for form. Under 40 or over 100 is zero for form, and so no points.
THE FIX	Aim for 55 to 65 words for a safe buffer. Count before you submit.

MISTAKE #7

Guessing on Highlight Incorrect Words

THE PROBLEM	Clicking words you're not sure about.
WHY IT HURTS	Pearson uses negative marking here: each wrong click takes off a point (the item can't go below zero). The same goes for Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers in Reading and Listening.
THE FIX	Only click words you're sure are different. If in doubt, leave it.

A 4-Week Listening Plan

Week 1: Foundations

- Daily: 10 WFD sentences and 10 Repeat Sentences
- 2 SST practice answers, counting words each time
- Start a list of words you misspell

Week 2: Accuracy

- Daily: 15 WFD and 5 HIW
- 3 FIB (Type In) sets, checking spelling carefully
- Practise 3-column notes on SGD-style discussions

Week 3: Speed

- Daily: 15 WFD, 5 HIW, 5 FIB
- Timed SSTs at 10 minutes, aiming for 55 to 65 words



- Mix in Multiple Choice and HCS sets with strict timing

Week 4: Full simulations

- 2 full mock tests, or at least full Listening parts after a long Part 1
- Review every mistake: spelling, wrong picks or lost focus?
- Light review only in the last 2 days

Quick answers

How long is the PTE Listening section?

Pearson gives about 31 to 39 minutes for Part 3 (Listening), depending on your test version. It has 8 task types.

Can I replay the audio in PTE Listening?

No. Every recording plays once, so take notes as you listen.

How is Summarize Spoken Text scored?

On content (0 to 4), form (0 to 2), grammar, vocabulary and spelling (0 to 2 each). AI scores everything and a human also reviews content. Getting the topic wrong, or writing under 40 or over 100 words, means no points.

Which PTE Listening tasks have negative marking?

Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers and Highlight Incorrect Words. Each wrong pick costs a point, but no item goes below zero.

How many words should my Summarize Spoken Text be?

Pearson gives full form marks for 50 to 70 words. Aim for 55 to 65 to stay safe. Under 40 or over 100 words scores zero.



Why is my PTE Listening score low when I did well in the Listening part?

Because a big part of your Listening score comes from Part 1 tasks: Summarize Group Discussion, Repeat Sentence, Retell Lecture and Answer Short Question. Coaches estimate they make up more than half of Listening together.

How many Write from Dictation questions are in PTE?

Pearson's score guide says 3 or 4. They come at the very end of the Listening part.

Does Write from Dictation affect my Writing score?

Yes. Pearson lists it under Listening and Writing. Coaches estimate it's about 23% of Writing and 13% of Listening.

Are capital letters and punctuation marked in WFD?

Pearson scores each correctly spelled word and doesn't mention capitals or punctuation. Many coaches still suggest a capital at the start and a full stop at the end to be safe. Spelling, plurals and word endings definitely count.

Listening: the full article on jetblok.com.au

[Read the full article](#)



CHAPTER 5

Your plan

Score weightings, Australian visa scores, IELTS conversion, a 90-day plan and test day.

Everything that sits across the four skills: where your points come from, the scores Australia asks for, how PTE compares with IELTS, and a plan to get there. Weightings marked as coach estimates are not published by Pearson.

Score Weightings: Where Your Points Come From

Pearson's score guides (including the July 2025 institution edition) tell you which skills each task feeds, but they don't publish percentages. The percentages below come from a weighting table that PTE coaches quote from a separate Pearson document, "Scoring Information for Teachers and Partners". I haven't been able to check that document directly, so I'm treating these as coach-reported numbers. Treat them as **average, indicative weights**, not a formula. Pearson's algorithm also accounts for question difficulty, so you can't work out your score from them. Based on that table, coaches generally estimate these **top 6 tasks** make up about **half your overall score**:

Rank	Task	Approx. overall weight	Approx. skill share
1	Describe Image	15%	31% of Speaking
2	Summarize Group Discussion	9%	20% of Listening, 19% of Speaking
3	Repeat Sentence	7%	17% of Listening, 16% of Speaking
4	Summarize Written Text	7%	23% of Reading, 28% of Writing
5	Write Essay	7%	31% of Writing
6	Fill in the Blanks (Dropdown)	7%	25% of Reading

On these estimates, **Describe Image is about 15% of your overall score**, roughly double any other single task. If you only have two weeks, give Describe Image a big chunk of that time. The newer Summarize Group Discussion already sits second.



The hidden giant: Write from Dictation

Write from Dictation isn't in the top 6 overall (coaches put it at about 5%), but look at the skill level: the same table puts it at about **23% of Writing** and 13% of Listening. If you need a set Writing score for a visa, WFD matters a lot. Read the [Write from Dictation guide](#) for the phrase mapping technique.

How Integrated Scoring Works (Cross-Skill Contributions)

Tasks in one part of the test feed scores in other skills. Pearson's score guide confirms which skills each task feeds. The percentages are the coach estimates from above:

- **Repeat Sentence** feeds Listening (about 17%) and Speaking (about 16%)
- **Write from Dictation** feeds Writing (about 23%) and Listening (about 13%)
- **Summarize Written Text** feeds Reading (about 23%) and Writing (about 28%)
- **Summarize Group Discussion** feeds Listening (about 20%) and Speaking (about 19%)
- **Highlight Incorrect Words** feeds Listening and Reading (coaches put it at about 13% of Reading)

So there's no such thing as "just a Listening task". A weak Repeat Sentence hurts Listening and Speaking at the same time.

Australian Visa Score Requirements (2026)

For tests taken **from 7 August 2025**, Home Affairs uses new PTE Academic scores for each English level. **Each skill has its own minimum and must be met separately.** You can't average them, and missing one skill by a single point means



you don't reach that level. The table follows Pearson's order: Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking.

English level	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Skilled visa points
Functional	overall 24 (no minimum for each skill)				n/a
Vocational	33	36	29	24	n/a
Competent	47	48	51	54	0
Proficient	58	59	69	76	10
Superior	69	70	85	88	20

A few things people miss:

- **Watch the column order.** Writing and Speaking need the highest scores, and Speaking is last in this table. Read across carefully.
- **Results from tests taken on or before 6 August 2025** use the old bands: overall 30 for Functional, 36 in each skill for Vocational, 50 for Competent, 65 for Proficient and 79 for Superior. Home Affairs says those older results can be used until 6 August 2028, depending on the visa (for Functional English the cut-off was 6 August 2026, so older results no longer count there).
- **Student visa (subclass 500):** for tests from 7 August 2025, the student visa English instrument (LIN 25/090) sets an **overall score of 47**. It drops to 39 if you're also doing at least 10 weeks of ELICOS, or a foundation or eligible pathway program, and to 31 with at least 20 weeks of ELICOS. The test must have been taken in the 2 years before you apply. Your university may ask for more.
- I've checked every number above against the Home Affairs pages for each English level and the student visa instrument (October 2026). Still check the current numbers with [Home Affairs](#), the [student visa instrument](#) and [Pearson](#) before you book. Rules can change.

The jump from Proficient to Superior isn't the same for every skill:

- **Listening:** +11 (58 to 69)
- **Reading:** +11 (59 to 70)
- **Writing:** +16 (69 to 85), the biggest jump
- **Speaking:** +12 (76 to 88)

Writing needs the biggest jump for Superior. On the coach estimates above, Write from Dictation (about 23% of Writing), Summarize Written Text (about 28%) and Write Essay (about 31%) are where those 20 points are won or lost.

PTE to IELTS Score Conversion (Pearson, July 2025)

Many people need to compare PTE and IELTS. This table comes from Pearson's **July 2025 concordance study**, which for the first time gives separate ranges for each skill. Pearson stresses that these are estimates, not exact conversions.

IELTS band	PTE Overall	PTE Listening	PTE Reading	PTE Speaking	PTE Writing
6.0	47 to 54	47 to 52	48 to 53	54 to 65	51 to 59
6.5	55 to 62	53 to 57	54 to 58	66 to 75	60 to 68
7.0	63 to 70	58 to 63	59 to 64	76 to 82	69 to 76
7.5	71 to 78	64 to 68	65 to 69	83 to 87	77 to 84
8.0	79 to 85	69 to 74	70 to 74	88 to 89	85 to 89
8.5	86 to 89	75 to 80	75 to 80	90	90
9.0	90	81 to 90	81 to 90	n/a	n/a

WORTH KNOWING

For IELTS 7.0, Pearson's table puts PTE Speaking at **76 to 82**, well above the 63 to 70 overall range. If you need an IELTS 7.0 equivalent in every skill, plan for a Speaking score in the high 70s, not the mid 60s.

Study Priority Plan Based on Task Weight

If your time is limited, spend it where the points are. Here's the order coaches generally recommend:

Tier 1: Biggest impact (master these)

- 1 Describe Image (about 15% of overall, coach estimate):** your biggest lever. Practise graphs, charts, maps, diagrams and processes. Describe trends and relationships, not every number. Use a loose structure: type, main trend, highest and lowest, one observation, conclusion.
- 2 Summarize Group Discussion (about 9%):** practise listening to panel discussions and saying who said what.

Tier 2: High impact (about 7% each)

- 1 Repeat Sentence:** counts for Listening and Speaking. Practise with longer and longer sentences. Remember 3 or 4 meaning groups, not 12 single words.
- 2 Summarize Written Text:** counts for Reading and Writing. Write one correct sentence between 5 and 75 words. Coaches suggest aiming for about 35 to 55 words.
- 3 Write Essay:** about 31% of Writing. Pearson's top form score is for 200 to 300 words. Use a 4-paragraph structure but vary your language.



- 4 Fill in the Blanks (Dropdown):** about 25% of Reading. Build collocations: words that go together, like "conduct research", "pose a threat" and "draw conclusions".

Tier 3: Strategic impact

- **Write from Dictation (about 5% of overall, but about 23% of Writing):** key if you need a set Writing score. See the [WFD strategy guide](#).
- **Retell Lecture:** paraphrase, don't parrot. Humans review the content.
- **Read Aloud:** about 9% of Speaking. Since the August 2025 update, Pearson's score guide lists it as a Speaking task only.

Tier 4: Protect your score

- **Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers:** don't guess. Wrong picks cost points.
- **Reorder Paragraphs:** coaches suggest capping it at about 90 seconds to 2 minutes. Find one sure pair and build from there.
- **Highlight Incorrect Words:** only click words you're sure about.

Templates in 2026: What Still Works

Templates aren't dead, but word-for-word scripts are risky. What works:

- **Flexible frameworks:** know the structure (intro, body, conclusion) but change your words each time
- **Opening and closing lines:** having 3 or 4 different ways to start a Describe Image or essay is fine
- **Linking phrases:** learn 8 to 10 and rotate them naturally

What doesn't work:

- Pasting the same 50-word introduction thousands of others use
- Reading out a flat, robotic answer



- Using the same template for every Describe Image, whatever the image

90-Day Study Plan

Weeks 1 to 2: Foundations and diagnosis

- Take a full practice test to find your weakest skills
- Learn how scoring works and which tasks weigh most (this article)
- Set a daily routine: 1 hour Speaking, 30 minutes Reading, 30 minutes Listening
- Start WFD now (10 sentences a day)

Weeks 3 to 6: Build the skills that count

- Spend about 40% of practice time on Describe Image
- Practise Summarize Group Discussion with podcast panel discussions
- Work on Repeat Sentence with longer sentences
- Write 2 timed essays a week
- Build collocations for the Fill in the Blanks tasks
- Read the guides on [Speaking](#), [Writing](#), [Reading](#) and [Listening](#)

Weeks 7 to 10: Practice tests

- Take a practice test every 5 days
- Review every scored answer and look for patterns in your mistakes
- Practise under exam conditions: no pausing, strict timing
- Focus on smooth delivery, not perfection

Weeks 11 to 12: Final polish

- Take 2 full practice tests a week
- Review your spelling traps



- Practise your mic setup and how you sit
- Rest for the last 2 days. Cramming doesn't help a skills test

Practice Platforms

- **APEUni:** popular AI-scored practice. Many coaches rate its scoring as a fair guide, but it isn't Pearson's engine.
- **PTE Tools:** good for drilling Repeat Sentence and Write from Dictation.
- **E2Language:** structured courses with feedback, good for beginners.
- **Pearson's official practice tests (PTE Study):** scored with Pearson's own engine. They cost money but are worth it near the end.

Test Day Checklist

- Arrive at least 30 minutes early. Late arrivals can be turned away
- Bring your valid passport (check the ID rules for your country when you book)
- Do the mic check carefully
- In Speaking, keep sound flowing. Never let it go quiet for 3 seconds
- In Reading, give most of your time to the Fill in the Blanks tasks
- In Listening, save your sharpest focus for Write from Dictation at the end
- Use American OR British spelling and stick with it



Mistakes to avoid

From Pearson’s score guide and what PTE coaches warn about most.

MISTAKE #1

Leaning on Templates

THE PROBLEM	Using rigid, widely shared templates for Speaking and Writing.
WHY IT HURTS	Pearson’s score guide says an answer that relies heavily on pre-prepared or memorised material can get zero for content , and zero content means zero for the answer. Humans now review the content of the longer speaking and writing tasks too. Coaches often say the engine "flags rhythmic monotony". Pearson doesn’t use that phrase, but the risk is real.
THE FIX	Learn <i>frameworks</i> , not scripts. Know the structure (introduction, body, conclusion) and change the words each time. Practise saying the same idea several ways.



BONUS

The Mindset Mistake

THE PROBLEM	Perfectionism and panic.
WHY IT HURTS	People chasing perfection freeze, correct themselves or sink too long into hard questions. People who panic after one mistake let it spill into the next tasks.
THE FIX	Go for "good enough". A smooth 85 beats a 90 you never reach because you kept stopping. Move on, stay calm and trust your practice.

Quick Reference: Score-Killing Thresholds

From Pearson’s score guide:

Task	What goes wrong
Speaking tasks	About 3 seconds of silence: the mic stops recording
Essay	Under 120 or over 380 words: no points
SWT	Under 5 or over 75 words, or more than one sentence: no points
SST	Under 40 or over 100 words: no points. 40 to 49 or 71 to 100: part form marks only
HIW and Multiple Answers	Each wrong pick: minus 1 point



Quick answers

Is there a break in PTE Academic?

No scheduled break. Pearson's handbook says you can ask for an unscheduled break, but the test clock keeps running, so most people go straight through.

How long is the PTE Academic test in 2026?

About 2 hours. Pearson gives these part timings: Speaking and Writing about 76 to 84 minutes, Reading about 23 to 30 minutes and Listening about 31 to 39 minutes. They don't add up exactly because each test version is balanced for total length.

What changed in PTE Academic in August 2025?

For tests taken from 7 August 2025, Pearson added two speaking tasks (Summarize Group Discussion and Respond to a Situation), and raised the number of questions to 65 to 75. Pearson's current score guide also lists human content review on seven tasks. At the same time, Home Affairs brought in new PTE scores for Australian visas.

Is the PTE overall score the average of the four skills?

No. Pearson works out the overall score from all your answers, and says it is not an average of your Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing scores.

What PTE score do I need for Proficient or Superior English in Australia?

For tests from 7 August 2025, Proficient needs Listening 58, Reading 59, Writing 69 and Speaking 76. Superior needs Listening 69, Reading 70, Writing 85 and Speaking 88. Each skill must be met on its own. Results from tests taken on or before 6 August 2025 use 65 (Proficient) and 79 (Superior) in each skill.



Can I still use templates in PTE?

A loose structure is fine. Memorised, word-for-word answers are risky: Pearson's score guide says responses with lots of pre-prepared material can get zero for content.

The complete guide: the full article on jetblok.com.au

[Read the full article](#)



Sources

Official rules in this guide come from these Pearson and Australian Government sources, checked 10 October 2026:

- Pearson, PTE Academic Test Taker Score Guide (current edition)
- Pearson, PTE Academic Institution Score Guide (July 2025)
- Pearson, Test Taker Handbook, PTE Academic (July 2025)
- Pearson, PTE Academic updates 2025 (pearsonpte.com/pte-updates-2025)
- Pearson, Speaking and Writing test format page
- Pearson articles: Respond to a Situation; Summarize Group Discussion; New DHA visa requirements
- Pearson, PTE and IELTS concordance study (July 2025)
- Department of Home Affairs, English language requirements pages
- Student visa English instrument LIN 25/090 ([legislation.gov.au F2025L00906](https://legislation.gov.au/F2025L00906))

Tips labelled **Coach tip** and percentages labelled **coach estimate** come from PTE teachers and coaching sites, not Pearson. Pearson does not publish task percentages in its score guides.

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