



JetBlok Studio

PTE ACADEMIC 2026

Writing Guide

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

Rav, JetBlok Studio

Instagram @ravified

27 pages · Chapter 2 of the PTE Complete Guide

Version 1.0

Last updated 10 October 2026

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

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

What's inside

How to use this guide	2
The test at a glance	4
What changed in August 2025	6
How scoring works	7
02 Writing	10
Where Your Writing Score Actually Comes From	11
Summarize Written Text (SWT): One Sentence, Big Impact	12
Write Essay: The Words That Matter	15
Human Review: What Changed With the August 2025 Update	19
Grammar: The Foundation	20
A Practice Routine That Works	21
The Writing Score Roadmap	22
Quick Reference: Writing Task Cheat Sheet	22
Mistakes to avoid	23
Quick answers	24
Final Advice	25
Sources and disclaimer	26
Keep going	27



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.

Visa rules, student visa scores and IELTS conversion

[Read the full article](#)

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.

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 the free PTE Listening Guide.



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 the free **PTE Listening Guide**, including the complete Write from Dictation method.

Get the PTE Listening Guide: jetblok.com.au/guides/pte-listening

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](#)



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
- Department of Home Affairs, English language requirements pages

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.

DISCLAIMER

This is an unofficial study guide written by JetBlok Studio. It is not affiliated with, endorsed by or sponsored by Pearson. PTE, PTE Academic and Pearson are trademarks of Pearson Education. Exam rules and visa requirements change. Facts here were checked against Pearson and Australian Government sources on the date shown on the cover. Always confirm current requirements with Pearson and the Department of Home Affairs before you book or apply. This guide is general information, not migration advice.

PTE Writing Guide · Version 1.0 · Last updated 10 October 2026

More free PTE guides

The other guides in this set

[PTE Complete Guide](#)

[PTE Reading Guide](#)

[PTE Speaking Guide](#)

[PTE Listening Guide](#)

Read the full articles

[PTE Academic 2026 complete guide](#)

[PTE Writing guide](#)

[PTE Listening guide](#)

[10 critical PTE mistakes](#)

[PTE Speaking guide](#)

[PTE Reading guide](#)

[Write from Dictation strategy](#)



JetBlok Studio

Made by JetBlok Studio in Gosnells WA. We design websites, guides and social content for small businesses. If this guide was useful, follow us on Instagram [**@jetblok_com_au**](#) and Facebook [**facebook.com/jetblok.com.au**](#)

Follow [@jetblok_com_au**](#)**

[jetblok.com.au**](#)**

PTE Writing Guide · Version 1.0 · Last updated 10 October 2026. Unofficial guide. Not affiliated with or endorsed by Pearson.