

**Aptis**  
Advanced

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# Candidate Guide

**June 2020**

This guide is suitable for both Aptis Advanced and Aptis ESOL Advanced.



# Introducing the Aptis test

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Aptis is an innovative global English assessment tool from the British Council taken on a computer. It is a suite of English tests for adults and young adults, which can be used to assess English language ability in all four skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Aptis tests do not test at a single level. Instead, they include a range of questions, which are designed to allow candidates to show their best ability. The test results are reported on a numerical scale (0–50) and as a level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

**There are four variations of Aptis tests.**

## 1. Aptis General

Tests from A1 to C on the CEFR and is suitable for most test-takers.

## 2. Aptis Advanced

Tests English language ability from B1 to C2 on the CEFR and is for higher level test-takers.

## 3. Aptis for Teachers

Tests from A1 to C on the CEFR and is designed for teachers.

## 4. Aptis for Teens

Tests from A1 to C on the CEFR and is for candidates between 13 and 17 years of age.

The purpose of this guide is to help you prepare for the Aptis Advanced tests. An overview of each component is provided followed by detailed descriptions and advice on how to best prepare. You'll also find tips on how to practise for the test and information on how the test is marked. There is also a section at the end for available accommodations that can be made for test takers with special needs.



# Contents

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<b>Introducing the Aptis test</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Test structure</b>	<b>5</b>
Aptis General test structure	6
<b>Aptis Advanced core test (grammar and vocabulary)</b>	<b>8</b>
Sample grammar questions	9
Sample vocabulary questions	10
<b>Aptis Advanced reading test</b>	<b>12</b>
Reading part 1: Opinion matching	13
Reading part 2: Long text comprehension	13
Reading part 3: Reading for global understanding	14
Reading part 4: Reading across two texts	14
<b>Aptis Advanced listening test</b>	<b>15</b>
Listening part 1: Identifying factual information	16
Listening part 2: Identifying opinion and attitude	16
Listening part 3: Understanding an extended spoken text	17
Listening part 4: Understanding an extended story	17
<b>Aptis Advanced writing test</b>	<b>18</b>
Writing part 1: Three written responses to questions	20
Writing part 2: Formal writing	22
Writing part 3: Article for website publication	25
<b>Aptis Advanced speaking test</b>	<b>28</b>
Speaking part 1: Describe, compare and provide reasons and explanations	30
Speaking part 2: Discuss personal experience and opinion in relation to an abstract topic	33
Speaking part 3 and 4: Presentation and question on your presentation	36

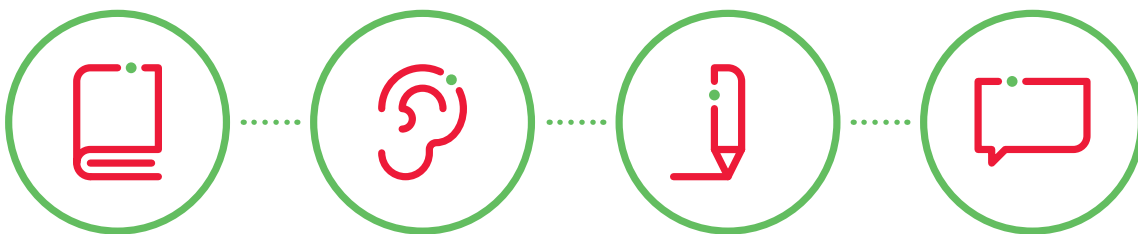
<b>How to take the online test</b>	<b>39</b>
Speaking test voice recording	40
<b>Aptis for all</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Final checklist</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Useful web resources</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>More information</b>	<b>43</b>

# Test structure

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Aptis Advanced consists of five components: core (grammar and vocabulary), reading, listening, writing and speaking.

You may be taking one skill component (for example, listening) or all four skill components (reading, listening, writing and speaking) depending on the requirements by your organisation or institution.



## Aptis Advanced test structure

Test	Test design		Activity	Format
<b>Core</b> 25 minutes	Part 1	Grammar	Sentence completion.	3-option multiple choice
	Part 2	Vocabulary	Word matching (similar meaning).	Sets of 5 target words with 10 options
			Match words to definitions.	
			Sentence completion.	
<b>Reading</b> 60 minutes	Part 1	Opinion matching	Match people's opinions to statements.	7 statements matched to 4 people's opinions
	Part 2	Long text comprehension	Match headings to paragraphs.	7 paragraphs and 8 headings
	Part 3	Reading for global understanding	Select a word or phrase to complete gaps.	5 gaps and 3 options per gap
	Part 4	Reading across two texts	Select word or phrase to complete gaps.	6 gaps and 3 options per gap
<b>Listening</b> 30 minutes	Part 1	Identifying factual information	Listen to a monologues and dialogues to identify the correct information.	4-option multiple choice Listen twice
	Part 2	Identifying opinion and attitude	Listen to a monologue to identify opinion and attitude.	3-option multiple choice 2 items per monologue Listen twice
	Part 3	Understanding an extended spoken text	Listen to a dialogue to identify which speakers express which opinions.	3-options: man/woman/both 6 items per dialogue Listen once
	Part 4	Understanding an extended story	Listen to a monologue to identify information.	3-option multiple choice 4 items per monologue Listen once

Test	Test design		Activity	Format
<b>Writing</b> 45 minutes	Part 1	Three written responses to questions	Respond to written questions on a social network-type website.	30-40 words for each question
	Part 2	Formal writing	Write an email in response to a short email and some notes (provided).	120-150 words
	Part 3	Article for website publication	Write an informative and interesting text on a topic using notes provided.	180 -220 words
<b>Speaking</b> 10 minutes	Part 1	Describe, compare and provide reasons and explanations	Describe two contrasting pictures and answer two additional questions.	45 seconds for each response
	Part 2	Discuss personal experience and opinion in relation to an abstract topic	Answer three questions on an abstract topic.	1 minute to prepare 2 minutes response time
	Part 3	Presentation	Select and develop points from a list of for/against ideas related to a topic.	60 seconds preparation 90 seconds presentation
	Part 4	Question on your presentation	Respond to a follow-up question related to the topic in Part 3.	No preparation time 45 seconds to respond

# Aptis Advanced core test (grammar and vocabulary)

The core in Aptis Advanced consists of two parts. The first part assesses your knowledge of English grammar. The second part assesses your knowledge of English vocabulary.

Part	Description	Preparation
<b>Grammar</b> Part 1	<p>In this part of the test, you will answer 25 questions.</p> <p>All 25 questions are in the format of a 3-option multiple choice.</p> <p>Complete a sentence by choosing the correct word.</p>	<p>To know which parts of grammar are tested, see the British Council / EAQUALS core inventory. This is free and available online at:  <a href="https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/british-council-eaquals-core-inventory-general-english">https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/british-council-eaquals-core-inventory-general-english</a></p> <p>One great way to prepare for the grammar test is to use the British Council's LearnEnglish website:  <a href="http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/grammar">http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/grammar</a></p>
<b>Vocabulary</b> Part 2	<p>There are 25 questions in this part of the test.</p> <p>There are a number of question types:</p> <p><b>Word matching:</b> find a word with a meaning similar to the target word.</p> <p><b>Word definition:</b> match a definition to the correct word.</p> <p><b>Word usage:</b> complete a sentence by choosing the correct word.</p> <p><b>Word pairs or word combinations:</b> select the most common combinations of words.</p>	<p>To help you prepare for this part of the test, the LearnEnglish website has games and activities to help you improve your vocabulary.  <a href="http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/vocabulary">http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/vocabulary</a></p> <p>Another useful tip is to take note of interesting words or word combinations when you read English texts.</p>



## Sample grammar questions

Here are some examples:

He \_\_\_\_\_ me that the machine was broken.

- ☐ told
- ☐ spoke
- ☐ said

My boss says that I \_\_\_\_\_ to finish the report by Friday.

- ☐ must
- ☐ have
- ☐ should

My new computer works \_\_\_\_\_ faster than my old one.

- ☐ many
- ☐ more
- ☐ much

I have worked for this company \_\_\_\_\_ I left university.

- ☐ since
- ☐ after
- ☐ from

John: She's French, isn't she?

Ahmed: No, she's \_\_\_\_\_ from Belgium.

- ☐ exactly
- ☐ actually
- ☐ anyway

Zeynep: I really don't feel like going to see that movie tonight.

Peter: Ok. \_\_\_\_\_ we can go next week instead.

- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ However
- ☐ Nevertheless

## Sample vocabulary questions

In the first question type, you need to match words with similar meanings from a list of options. To do this, click on the arrows and choose the similar word.

Here is an example:

Select a word from the list that has the most similar meaning to the word on the left.

Example: big =	large ▼
study =	read ▼
receive =	get ▼
start =	begin ▼
talk =	speak ▲
pick =	choose ▲

For the next question type, you need to match a definition to a word. Click on the arrow and choose the word that matches the definition.

Here is an example:

Complete each definition using a word from the drop down list.

To cover with paper or material is to	wrap ▼
To improve or change is to	adjust ▼
To state or make public is to	announce ▼
To get somewhere is to	arrive ▼
To put something together is to	assemble ▲

The next question type asks you to complete a sentence using a word from a list.

Complete each sentence using a word from the drop down list.

More and more people go  for their holidays these days.

Drivers need to remain  when in charge of a car.

The city has many  and interesting buildings.

She's a highly  person who explains things clearly.

He's a very  person – always getting into fights.

The final question type asks you to identify a word from a list that is commonly used with the given word.

Select a word from the list that is most often used with the word on the left.

Example: big +	<input type="text" value="house"/>
aerobics +	<input type="text" value="classes"/>
agriculture +	<input type="text" value="minister"/>
aisle +	<input type="text" value="seat"/>
apron +	<input type="text" value="strings"/>
atom +	<input type="text" value="bomb"/>

# Aptis Advanced reading test

The test assesses your reading ability. The tasks start at B1 level and become more difficult as the test progresses. You have 60 minutes to complete the four parts.

Part	Description	Preparation
<b>Opinion matching</b> Part 1	<p>In this part, you will match people's opinions to statements. You will read four people's opinions on the same topic. Then you need to read seven statements and decide which person's opinion matches each statement.</p> <p>This part tests your ability to read and understand short texts.</p>	<p>Read all four opinions before trying to answer the questions. Remember, the same person can be used for more than one answer.</p> <p>To prepare, look at the comments section in online media and practise summarizing the main opinions.</p>
<b>Long text comprehension</b> Part 2	<p>In this part, you will read a long text (about 750 words). You will also read eight headings. The task is to match seven of the headings to paragraphs in the text. There is always an extra heading that does not fit with any paragraph.</p>	<p>Read the whole text quickly. Then carefully read the headings. Do all this before starting the task. Look for clues to connect the headings to the paragraphs; these might be similar words, ideas or topics.</p> <p>To prepare, read magazine articles and find the main idea for each paragraph.</p>
<b>Reading for global understanding</b> Part 3	<p>This is a short text of around 300 words with missing gaps. You must choose the right word or phrase from the drop-down to complete the gap.</p>	<p>Make sure you read the whole text before trying to answer. This isn't a grammar test so all the options can fit grammatically into the sentence. You need to understand the whole text to choose the correct one.</p>
<b>Reading across two texts</b> Part 4	<p>You have two short texts on the same topic. You need to fill in the blank with the appropriate phrase.</p>	<p>You need to read both texts before answering as all of the options are grammatically possible, so you can only choose the right one if you have understood both texts.</p>



## Sample reading questions

### Reading part 1: Opinion matching

In this part, you match four people's opinions to seven statements by selecting the correct person from the drop-down list.

Person	Opinion
Muzamel	"I just came home from three months abroad working in a village as a volunteer. I helped to save endangered animals with the funds my colleagues raised back home. I was mainly in the classroom raising awareness about the problem. The kids were super friendly and I found the experience very rewarding so I'll definitely return next summer. It's quite an arduous flight from my home and I miss my family a lot but I got to see so much! This next time I'd like to take on more coordinator responsibilities and also do more focused work directly with the animals."
Paul	"Luckily they have invited me back so I'll be returning next month. I hope to be healthy and be able to take full advantage of the charming place. There are supposed to be wonderful beaches and some of the ancient buildings look fascinating. Last time I had a horrible volunteer experience. I was working but I caught something and almost died. I'm still not sure what caused it but I was in bed for almost the entire time so I didn't manage to see any of the sights or do any work. I was so disappointed."
Sophia	"I volunteer with the elderly in a care home. I do some cleaning and cooking but mostly I just socialise with the residents. They love a good chat. In return, I get a small apartment in the home – close to where I lived before – and free food which is really a bonus as I am a student. The location means I get to see my parents more often. I'm studying to be a doctor so the experience working with the elderly is really useful. I also want to work as mediator: to help bring the older and younger generations together."
Allwyn	"I volunteer with the local hospital foundation. The money donated goes to help ill children at the hospital in my neighbourhood. I spent some time in the hospital when my daughter was sick and they were so kind I wanted to give something back. I now plan all the events to

Statement
Four people were interviewed for a recruitment magazine about their volunteer work. Read the texts and answer the questions below.
Who ...
1. lives near family?
2. will go back the following year?
3. worked as a teacher?
4. was ill?
5. goes to university?
6. volunteers as a fundraiser?
7. wants to sightsee?

### Reading part 2: Long text comprehension

In the second part, you match an appropriate heading to each paragraph of a single text.

Text	Heading
<p><b>The First Weather Man</b></p> <p>On the 1st of August 1861 The Times newspaper of London printed a list of weather data collected from around the British Isles on the previous day. Beneath these figures there was a short phrase – "General weather probably for the next two days" – and a prediction that it was going to be fine. This was the world's first published weather forecast intended for the general public.</p> <p>1. The expression 'weather forecast' was coined by Robert Fitzroy, the man who prepared that first report. As an ex-navy officer he knew the importance of being able to predict weather conditions, especially at sea where sudden storms could sink ships and take lives. Two years before The Times published its first forecast, a ship had been lost in a terrible storm off the Welsh coast, and all four hundred and fifty people on board had drowned. It was this tragedy that prompted Fitzroy to start his work on 'weather forecasting', and he was convinced that this new science of meteorology would help to prevent such disasters in the future.</p> <p>2. Fitzroy's interest in the weather went back to his days in the navy in the 1830s. As a young man of twenty three he became captain of the HMS Beagle, and he gave instructions for the ship to be fitted with the latest equipment for measuring the ship's position. Fitzroy commanded the Beagle on two expeditions to South America, and it was on the second of these voyages that the ship carried Charles Darwin, who would go on to write about the theory of evolution in The Origins of Man. It was on this voyage that Fitzroy first used the Beaufort scale for measuring wind speed, a system that had been invented by his teacher Francis Beaufort.</p>	<p>Read the passage quickly. Choose a heading for each numbered paragraph (1-7) from the drop-down box. There is one more heading than you need.</p> <p>1. <input type="text"/></p> <p>2. <input type="text"/></p> <p>3. <input type="text"/></p> <p>4. <input type="text"/></p> <p>5. <input type="text"/></p> <p>6. <input type="text"/></p> <p>7. <input type="text"/></p>



### Reading part 3: Reading for global understanding

In the third part, you choose the right word or phrase from the drop-down to complete the gap.

#### Singapore celebrates its 50th anniversary

Singapore is a small island-nation in Southeast Asia. It lies at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula. The small country gained its independence on 9th August 1965 and is home to a Chinese majority with large minorities of people from Indian, Malaysian and Eurasian backgrounds. To the delight of its residents and tourists alike, the celebrations for the country's 50th anniversary in 2015 began early. In mid-2014, the festivities began by reflecting on their journey over the previous 50 years and people taking pride in their **1)** \_\_\_\_.

To begin the celebrations, the proudly multi-cultural residents honoured the country's founders and the special roles they played throughout their history. Under the leadership of the country's founder Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore became a modern city-state. It has one of the **2)** \_\_\_\_ in the world, and a truly unified sense of national identity.

Over the last 50 years, Singapore has gained a reputation as a leading nation in the region. It currently has one of the highest life expectancies and per capita incomes in the world. It is also home to some of the world's top educational institutions, and is now a **3)** \_\_\_\_\_. Evidence of this can be seen in the fact that the country boasts an important international financial district and is home to the world's second busiest shipping container port. The strength of the small island nation's industries is a source of great pride among Singaporeans.

Current Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong led the anniversary celebrations under the overall theme of 'one people'. The choice of this theme was one that was greatly appreciated by many **4)** \_\_\_\_\_. After the official anniversary day, the focus changed to **5)** \_\_\_\_\_, affirming aspirations and committing to a brighter future. Many feel that it has been these collective

**Read the article on the left. Choose the correct option to fill each of the gaps from the drop down lists below.**

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

### Reading part 4: Reading across two texts

For the final part, you need to fill in the blank with the appropriate phrase.

#### Article 1

The bones of a small human-like skeleton discovered on the island of Flores in 2003 had a major impact on the study of human origins. The Australian researchers who made the find realised that, despite the diminutive size of the skeleton, the teeth were those of an adult. They claimed the remains were from a previously undiscovered species of early human, and dubbed it *Homo floresiensis*: Flores Man. This new species had managed to survive for thousands of years after the closest relative to modern humans, Neanderthals, had died out. The claims, which would potentially add a new member to the human family tree, were **1)** \_\_\_\_\_. The Australian team suggested that *Homo floresiensis* was descended from *Homo erectus*, an ancestor of modern humans much larger than *Homo floresiensis*. According to this view, the species shrunk through evolutionary processes after being stranded on the island. Sceptics, however, presented papers in academic journals to suggest that the fossils were in fact members of the same species as modern humans who were deformed through disease. One interesting aspect of this debate is the way the same objects were used by proponents of **2)** \_\_\_\_\_. The use of the fossil skulls to estimate the brain size of *Homo floresiensis* is a case in point. A growing amount of evidence has been collected. Nonetheless, controversy surrounding *Homo floresiensis* continues, and new theories of their origins continue to emerge. Indeed, debate now extends to the reasons for **3)** \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Article 2

The small people who lived on the island of Flores until approximately 17,000 years ago, dubbed hobbits after the diminutive fantasy characters of the same name in the Lord of the Rings series, were **4)** \_\_\_\_\_. The discovery of the hobbits was a major breakthrough in the study of human evolution. The small size of the hobbits has led some scientists to suggest that they were a new species of human. However, others believe that they were simply a small version of modern humans. The debate over the hobbits is still ongoing, and more research is needed to determine their true identity.

**Read the two newspaper articles on the left about an important archaeological discovery. The articles were written by different authors. Choose the correct option to fill each of the gaps from the drop down lists below. You will need to read both articles to fill all of the gaps.**

**Article 1**

1.
2.
3.

**Article 2**

4.
5.
6.



# Aptis Advanced listening test

The Advanced listening test has four parts. You have **30 minutes** to complete the four parts.

Part	Description	Preparation
<b>Identifying factual information</b> Part 1	In this part, you will listen to five short recordings of monologues or dialogues and answer one question for each recording.	Visit the British Council's LearnEnglish website for lots of very useful activities, tips, apps and podcasts: <a href="http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/">http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/</a>
<b>Identifying opinion and attitude</b> Part 2	In this part, you will listen to three recordings of monologues and you will have to answer two questions for each recording.	Use the fact that you can listen twice to your advantage here. Read through the questions before you listen. Then, on your first listen, select your answers and listen a second time to confirm.
<b>Under-standing an extended spoken text</b> Part 3	In this part, you will hear a discussion between a man and a woman. On the screen you will see a number of opinions. You will need to identify who expresses which opinion: the man, the woman, or both the man and the woman.	You will only hear the recording once and you have 20 seconds to read through the options before it starts.  Make sure you know what information you are listening for.
<b>Under-standing an extended story</b> Part 4	In this part, you will hear two separate monologues. You will need to select the correct answers from a table.	You will only hear each monologue once.  The information in the monologue does not appear in the same order as the table.



## Sample listening questions

Remember that if you'd like to hear a question for a second time, just click on the Play button (▶). The system will not allow you to listen more than twice. For part three and four you will be able to hear the recording just once.

### Listening part 1: Identifying factual information

You listen to a short monologue or dialogue and identify specific information.

▶ 🔊

Listen to a woman introducing a concert. How will the concert end?

The concert will end with \_\_\_\_.

- ☐ 1. a surprise performance
- ☐ 2. the city's favourite group
- ☐ 3. traditional music
- ☐ 4. some special offers

### Listening part 2: Identifying opinion and attitude

You listen to three separate monologues and answer two questions for each recording.

▶ 🔊

Listen to the woman on the radio talking about the experience of moving house and answer the questions.

What difficulties did she face?

- ☐ 1. She didn't know how to do the paperwork.
- ☐ 2. It took months to move house.
- ☐ 3. She couldn't get legal assistance.

What is making her unhappy?

- ☐ 1. The noise made by the builders.
- ☐ 2. Noises from outside the house.
- ☐ 3. The sounds her neighbours make.





### Listening part 3: Understanding an extended spoken text

You listen to short conversations with two speakers to identify the opinions of the speakers.

▶ 🔊 1 of 1 plays remaining

Listen to two people discussing a social issue. Read the opinions below and decide who expresses which opinion, the man, the woman, or both the man and the woman. You now have twenty seconds to read the opinions below. The opinions may not appear in the same order in the discussion. You will hear the discussion only once. Now listen to the discussion.

**Student loans did not use to be common.**

☐ Man ☐ Woman ☐ Both

**Only wealthy people will be able to go to University.**

☐ Man ☐ Woman ☐ Both

**Going to university can teach you to become independent.**

☐ Man ☐ Woman ☐ Both

**Companies that lend money can be aggressive.**

☐ Man ☐ Woman ☐ Both

**Paying for education makes you want to do better.**

☐ Man ☐ Woman ☐ Both

**Being wealthy does not mean you are intelligent.**

☐ Man ☐ Woman ☐ Both

### Listening part 4: Understanding an extended story

You listen to a monologue to identify four key pieces of information.

▶ 🔊 1 of 1 plays remaining

Listen to a person telling a story about people in his family. Then choose one option for each of the four key elements of the story in the table below. You will hear the recording only once.

Adam	<input type="radio"/> Worked in London	<input type="radio"/> Learnt Welsh
	<input type="radio"/> Worked in Wales	<input type="radio"/> Learnt French
	<input type="radio"/> Worked in Paris	<input type="radio"/> Learnt Afrikaans
Peter	<input type="radio"/> Older than Adam	<input type="radio"/> Lives in London
	<input type="radio"/> Younger than Adam	<input type="radio"/> Lives in Australia
	<input type="radio"/> Don't know	<input type="radio"/> Don't know



# Aptis Advanced writing test

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There are three parts to the writing test. You will interact in a social media-type written conversation, write an email and write a short article for an online publication. All writing tasks are marked by examiners.

Make sure you fully understand the questions. Plan what you are going to write and then edit your writing before clicking to the next question.

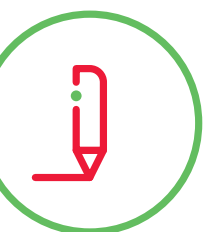
The most common mistakes include:

- not answering the questions (going off-topic)
- writing too much but with poor grammar, spelling and punctuation
- not using a variety of sentence structures
- not writing in sentences or paragraphs.

The total time allowed for the writing test is **45 minutes**.



Part	Description	Preparation
<b>Three written responses to questions</b> Part 1	In this part, you will have a social network-type interaction. You will receive three questions and need to respond.	Make sure you correctly answer all three questions and don't go off-topic. Focus on accurate spelling and punctuation and write text that is cohesive and coherent. Keep to the word count of 30–40 words per answer.
<b>Formal writing</b> Part 1	In this part, you will read an email from an authority. You need to respond to the email in 120–150 words, using the notes provided, expressing how you feel about the situation.	Make sure you are on-topic and that you use the appropriate register for the situation. Avoid text message or social media language, instead focusing on formal writing.
<b>Article for website publication</b> Part 3	In this part, you will write an article for a website that is both informative and interesting. Notes about the topic are provided and you need to use the information to help write the article. The article needs to be between 180–220 words.	Try to make your article informative and interesting and use original text (i.e. don't just copy the notes).



## Sample writing questions

### Writing part 1: Three written responses to questions

You need to write responses to three questions.

You are a member of a history club. You are talking to three other members in the history club chat room. Talk to them using sentences. Use 30 to 40 words per answer. You have 10 minutes in total. Answer all three questions.

#### Aptis History Club Chat

**Sam:** Hi! Welcome to the club. I was interested in history at school and I studied it at university. What about you?

0 words

**Miguel:** Welcome. Can you tell me something about the history of your country?

0 words

**Michelle:** Who is your favourite person from history, and why are you interested in him or her?



Here is the marking scale:

**Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, punctuation, grammatical range & accuracy, vocabulary range & accuracy, cohesion.**

**5. B2 (or above)** Likely to be above A2 level.

**4. B1.2**

Responses to all **three** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Punctuation and spelling mostly accurate. Errors do not impede understanding.
- Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions.
- Uses simple cohesive devices to organize responses as a linear sequence of sentences.

**3. B1.1**

Responses to **two** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Punctuation and spelling mostly accurate. Errors do not impede understanding.
- Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions.
- Uses simple cohesive devices to organize responses as a linear sequence of sentences.

**2. A2.2**

Responses to at least **two** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Uses simple grammatical structures to produce writing at the sentence level. Errors with simple structures common and sometimes impede understanding.
- Punctuation and spelling mistakes are noticeable.
- Vocabulary is not sufficient to respond to the question(s). Inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable and sometimes impede understanding.
- Responses are lists of sentences and not organized as cohesive texts.

**1. A2.1**

Response to **one** question is on topic and shows the following features:

- Uses simple grammatical structures to produce writing at the sentence level. Errors with simple structures common and sometimes impede understanding.
- Punctuation and spelling mistakes are noticeable.
- Vocabulary is not sufficient to respond to the question(s). Inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable and sometimes impede understanding.
- Responses are lists of sentences and not organized as cohesive texts.

**0.**

Performance below A2, or no meaningful language or the responses are completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).



**Writing part 2: Email response**

You need to respond to the email in 120 –150 words, using the notes provided, expressing how you feel about the situation.

Dear Customer

Thank you for shopping at our supermarket. We value your custom and would like to hear about your most recent shopping experience. Firstly, we want to know your opinion of our staff. Were they able to help you in any way?(1) We would also like to know what you think about the organisation of the store. Did you find it easy to find the products you want?(2) Finally, we would like to hear your suggestions for improving the customer shopping experience.(3)

Yours faithfully,  
Customer Services

Your notes:

1. staff seem very young - don't always know about products
2. every month products are moved - difficult to find what you want
3. music plays all the time - very irritating - prefer silence!!

You have received the e-mail on the left from your local supermarket. Read the e-mail and the notes you have made. Write a reply using all the information in your notes, and express how you feel about the situation.

You should write between 120 and 150 words.

0 words



Here is the marking scale:

**Areas assessed: task fulfilment, register, grammatical range & accuracy, vocabulary range & accuracy, punctuation and spelling, cohesion.**

- 6. C2** Response fully on topic and appropriate register used. Response shows the following features:
- Range of complex grammar constructions used accurately. No grammar errors occur.
  - Range of vocabulary used. No awkward or inappropriate lexical choices.
  - No more than two minor punctuation or spelling errors occur.
  - Range of cohesive devices used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.

- 5. C1** Response fully on topic and appropriate register used. Response shows the following features:
- Range of complex grammar constructions used accurately. Minor grammar errors occur.
  - Range of vocabulary used. Some awkward or slightly inappropriate lexical choices.
  - Minor errors in punctuation and spelling occur.
  - Range of cohesive devices used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.

- 4. B2.2** Response fully on topic and appropriate register used. Response shows the following features:
- Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not impede understanding.
  - Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not impede understanding.
  - Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding.
  - Limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.

- 3. B2.1** Response partially on topic and/or appropriate register partially used. Response shows the following features:
- Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not impede understanding.
  - Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not impede understanding.
  - Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding.
  - Limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.



---

**2. B1.2**

Response partially on topic and/or appropriate register partially used. Response shows the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. Errors impede understanding in parts of the text.
- Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding.
- Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.

---

**1. B1.1**

Response not on topic and/or task not fulfilled in terms of appropriateness of register. Response shows the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. Errors impede understanding in parts of the text.
- Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding.
- Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.

---

**0. A1/A2**

Performance below B1, or no meaningful language or the response is completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).

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### Writing part 3: Article for website publication

You will write an article for a website that is both informative and interesting.

**Notes on Public Surveillance Systems**

- CCTV cameras used in public areas (streets, shops, banks)
- Increasing number of private homes installing CCTV
- Benefits: allows monitoring of public safety / can provide evidence in criminal cases
- Drawbacks: threat to individual liberty / intrusion into individual privacy

**Numbers of Public CCTV Cameras**

City	Country	No. of CCTV cameras	Urban Populatio
London	United Kingdom	7,500	8 Million
San Francisco	USA	1,100	830,000
Stockholm	Sweden	1,500	850,000

*Things You Should Know* is a website that accepts short articles from members of the public on subjects of popular interest. You have been asked to contribute an article on the subject of Public Surveillance Systems. You have already done some research on the subject in note and diagram form. Use information from your research notes on the left which would help you write an article that is both informative and interesting.

Write between 180 and 220 words.

0 words



Here is the marking scale:

**Areas assessed: task fulfilment, grammatical range & accuracy, vocabulary range & accuracy, coherence and cohesion.**

<b>6. C2</b>	<p>Response is informative and interesting. Clever use of the input with mostly original text. Response shows the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of complex grammar constructions used accurately. Minor errors occur.</li> <li>• Range of vocabulary used accurately. No awkward or inappropriate lexical choices.</li> <li>• Minor errors in punctuation and spelling occur.</li> <li>• Range of cohesive devices used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.</li> </ul>
<b>5. C1</b>	<p>Response is not interesting. Correct use of the input with mostly original text. Response shows the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of complex grammar constructions used accurately. Minor errors occur.</li> <li>• Range of vocabulary used. Some awkward or slightly inappropriate lexical choices.</li> <li>• Minor errors in punctuation and spelling occur.</li> <li>• Range of cohesive devices used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.</li> </ul>
<b>4. B2.2</b>	<p>Response is not interesting. Correct use of the input with mostly original text. Response shows the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not impede understanding.</li> <li>• Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topic required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not impede understanding.</li> <li>• Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding.</li> <li>• Limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.</li> </ul>
<b>3. B2.1</b>	<p>Response is not interesting or informative. Key parts of the input are missing with mostly original text. Response shows the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not impede understanding.</li> <li>• Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not impede understanding.</li> <li>• Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding.</li> <li>• Limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.</li> </ul>



**2. B1.2**

Response is not interesting or informative. Key parts of the input are missing with mostly original text. Response shows the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. Errors impede understanding in parts of the text.
- Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding.
- Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.

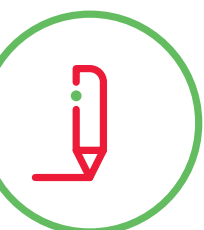
**1. B1.1**

Response is not interesting or information. Input is not used correctly or text is mostly copied from the input. Response shows the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. Errors impede understanding in most of the text.
- Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding.
- Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.

**0. A1/A2**

Performance below B1, or no meaningful language or the responses are completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).



# Aptis Advanced speaking test

The Advanced speaking test has three parts.

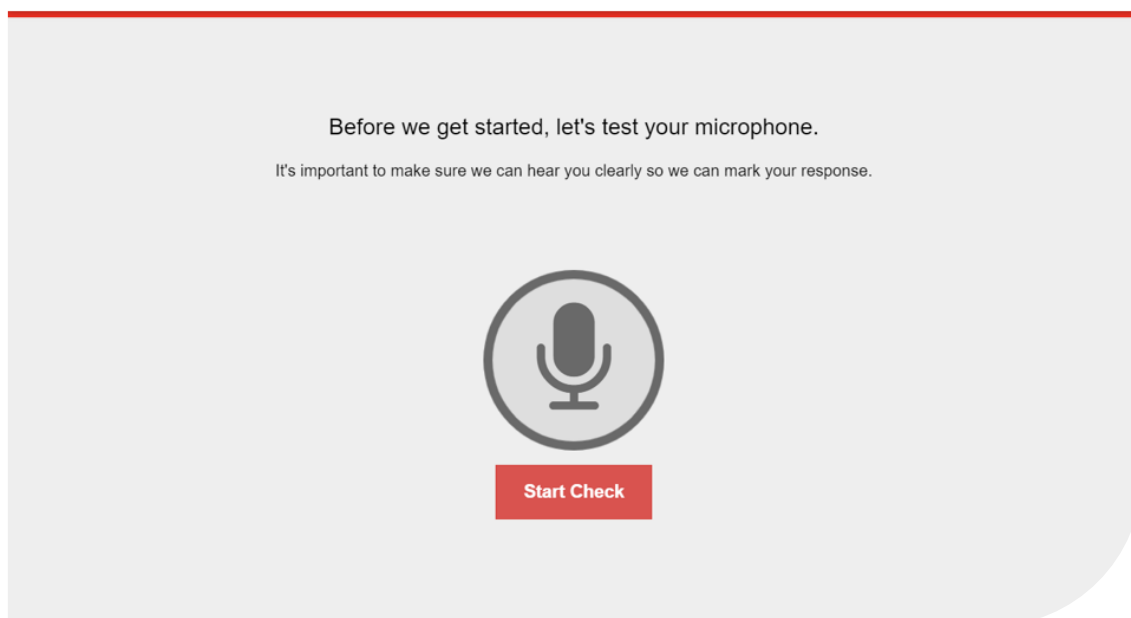
The duration of the Aptis Advanced speaking test is **10 minutes**.

For each question, you are given a maximum amount of time to speak, but you can end the recording early by clicking on a stop button. Please make sure you fully respond to the question before you stop the recording.

The most common reasons people receive lower scores than they expect include :

- not doing a proper sound check (details on how to do this are shown below)
- not speaking clearly
- not answering the questions
- giving under-length answers – not using the full amount of time to speak
- overusing words such as 'and' and 'so'
- speaking in simple sentence lists
- not using a variety of sentence structures.

Before the Speaking test begins, you'll be asked to check your microphone.



Part	Description	Preparation
<b>Describe, compare and provide reasons and explanations</b> Part 1	<p>In this part, you are asked to compare two pictures and then answer two questions related to the topic.</p> <p>The three questions increase in complexity (from description to speculation).</p> <p>You are expected to talk for 45 seconds for each question.</p>	<p>To prepare for this part, it is a good idea to practise comparing two different things (e.g. two cities or two houses). Focus on describing their advantages and disadvantages.</p> <p>With speculation, it is important to make sure you are using the correct grammatical structures.</p>
<b>Discuss personal experience and opinion in relation to an abstract topic</b> Part 2	<p>In this part, you will be asked three questions about an abstract topic. You are given one minute to prepare an answer and can take notes.</p> <p>You are expected to talk for two minutes.</p>	<p>A common error is to go off topic. Focus on answering each question in a clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech.</p> <p>To prepare for this part it is a good idea to practise speaking for two minutes on an abstract topic (e.g. How do you feel about _____?).</p>
<b>Presentation and Question on your presentation</b> Part 3 and 4	<p>In this part, you need to speak on a topic for one and a half minutes. You will have one minute to prepare.</p> <p>After your presentation, you will be asked an additional question about the topic and asked to speak for 45 seconds.</p> <p>There is no preparation time for this additional question.</p>	<p>Structure your presentation and make sure you provide both sides of the argument.</p> <p>Try to act like you are speaking to an audience or a group.</p>





### Speaking part 1: Describe, compare and provide reasons and explanations


In this part, you will see two photos and answer three questions.

Each part of the test will appear automatically. You can stop recording your response before the timer runs out by tapping on the stop button, but we recommend that you try to speak for the full time available to maximise your score.




**Part One.** In this part I'm going to ask you to compare two pictures and I will then ask you two questions about them. You will have 45 seconds for each response. Begin speaking when you hear this sound.

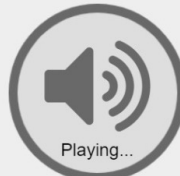
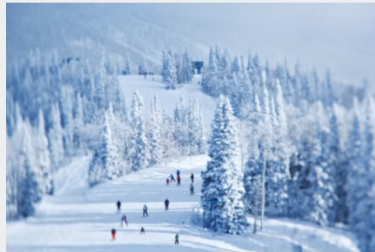

Tell me what you see in the two pictures.



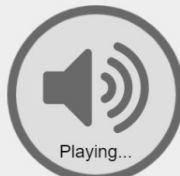
Click to Finish Answering Early

Which of these two places would you prefer to go on holiday to? Why?

Which of these two places do you think children would prefer? Why?




The areas assessed in part 1 of the Speaking test are how completely and relevantly you responded to the question, grammatical range and accuracy, vocabulary range and accuracy, pronunciation, fluency and cohesion.

**Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range and accuracy, vocabulary range and accuracy, pronunciation, fluency and cohesion.**

**5. B2 (or above)** Likely to be above the B1 level.

**4. B1.2**

Responses to all **three** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Sufficient range and control of vocabulary for the task. Errors occur when expressing complex thoughts.
- Pronunciation is intelligible but inappropriate mispronunciations put an occasional strain on the listener.
- Some pausing, false starts and reformulations.
- Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.

**3. B1.1**

Responses to **two** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Sufficient range and control of vocabulary for the task. Errors occur when expressing complex thoughts.
- Pronunciation is intelligible but inappropriate mispronunciations put an occasional strain on the listener.
- Some pausing, false starts and reformulations.
- Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.

**2. A1.2**

Responses to at least **two** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Uses some simple grammatical structures correctly but systematically makes basic mistakes.
- Vocabulary will be limited to concrete topics and descriptions. Inappropriate lexical choices for the task are noticeable.
- Mispronunciations are noticeable and put a strain on the listener.
- Noticeable pausing, false starts and reformulations.
- Cohesion between ideas is limited. Responses tend to be a list of points.



---

**1. A2.1**

Response to **one** question is on topic and shows the following features:

- Uses some simple grammatical structures correctly but systematically makes basic mistakes.
- Vocabulary will be limited to concrete topics and descriptions. Inappropriate lexical choices for the task are noticeable.
- Mispronunciations are noticeable and put a strain on the listener.
- Noticeable pausing, false starts and reformulations.
- Cohesion between ideas is limited. Responses tend to be a list of points.

---

**0.**

Performance below A2, or no meaningful language or the responses are completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).

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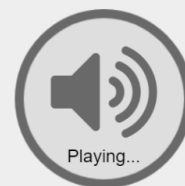




**Speaking part 2: Discuss personal experience and opinion on an abstract topic**

In this part you will answer three questions on an abstract topic.

How important is it to you that you save money regularly?  
What advice would you give to someone about managing their personal finances?  
Why do people think wealth brings happiness?



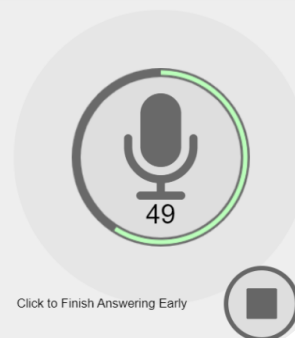
V67

How important is it to you that you save money regularly?  
What advice would you give to someone about managing their personal finances?  
Why do people think wealth brings happiness?  
**You now have one minute to think about your answers.**  
**You can make notes if you wish.**



V67

How important is it to you that you save money regularly?  
What advice would you give to someone about managing their personal finances?  
Why do people think wealth brings happiness?  
**You now have two minutes to talk.**



Click to Finish Answering Early



V67



During the preparation time, it is important to take notes, as these will help you organise and remember what you want to speak about. Rather than writing out exactly what you want to say, make brief notes and use these to structure your speech.

Here is the marking scale:

**Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range and accuracy, vocabulary range and accuracy, pronunciation, fluency and cohesion.**

<b>6. C2</b>	Likely to be above C1 level.
<b>5. C1</b>	<p>Response addresses all <b>three</b> questions and is well-structured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses a range of complex grammar constructions accurately. Some minor errors occur but do not impede understanding.</li> <li>• Uses a range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Some awkward usage or slightly inappropriate lexical choices.</li> <li>• Pronunciation is clearly intelligible.</li> <li>• Backtracking and reformulations do not fully interrupt the flow of speech.</li> <li>• A range of cohesive devices are used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.</li> </ul>
<b>4. B2.2</b>	<p>Responses to all <b>three</b> questions are on topic and show the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not lead to misunderstanding.</li> <li>• Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not lead to misunderstanding.</li> <li>• Pronunciation is intelligible. Mispronunciations do not put a strain on the listener or lead to misunderstanding.</li> <li>• Some pausing while searching for vocabulary but this does not put a strain on the listener.</li> <li>• A limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.</li> </ul>
<b>3. B2.1</b>	<p>Responses to <b>two</b> questions are on topic and show the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not lead to misunderstanding.</li> <li>• Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not lead to misunderstanding.</li> <li>• Pronunciation is intelligible. Mispronunciations do not put a strain on the listener or lead to misunderstanding.</li> <li>• Some pausing while searching for vocabulary but this does not put a strain on the listener.</li> <li>• A limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.</li> </ul>



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**2. B1.2**

Responses to at least **two** questions are on topic and show the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task.
- Pronunciation is intelligible but occasional mispronunciations put an occasional strain on the listener.
- Noticeable pausing, false starts, reformulations and repetition.
- Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.

---

**1. B1.1**

Response not on topic and task not fulfilled in terms of appropriateness of register. No evidence of awareness of register. Response shows the following features:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Punctuation and spelling is mostly accurate. Errors do not impede understanding.
- Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. Errors impede understanding in most of the text.
- Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.

---

**0. A1/A2**

Performance below B1, or no meaningful language or the responses are completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).

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### Speaking part 3 and 4: Presentation and question on your presentation

In these two sections you will have to select and develop points from a list of for or against ideas related to a topic and respond to a follow-up question related to the topic.

**Part Three.** You are going to speak on a topic for one and half minutes. You can see the topic on the screen and two lists of points - for and against - related to the topic. Choose two items from each list and give a balanced argument to represent both sides of the topic. You have one minute to prepare your argument. You will then have one and half minutes to speak. Begin speaking when you hear this sound. After you finish speaking you will be asked an additional question about the topic and asked to speak for 45 seconds.

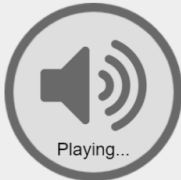
**Topic: Higher Education Should Be Available For Everybody**

**FOR**

- Society benefits from a well educated population
- Qualifications help people find jobs
- Education is a basic human right

**AGAINST**

- If widely available, qualifications lose their value
- Universities are already overcrowded
- Potential negative impact on the job market



Playing...

Educational standards today are lower than they were 50 years ago.

What is your response to this statement?



43



Here is the marking scale:

**The areas assessed are task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range and accuracy, vocabulary range and accuracy, pronunciation, fluency and cohesion.**

#### 6. C2

- Presentation is convincingly presented and well-structured, highlighting and expanding on points from each section.
- The follow-up question response is well-structured. There is a clear and coherent response.
- Uses a range of complex grammar constructions accurately. Some very minor errors occur but do not impede understanding.
- Uses a range of vocabulary to discuss the topic required by the task. No awkward usage or inappropriate lexical choices.
- Pronunciation is clearly intelligible.
- Backtracking and reformulations do not interrupt the flow of speech.
- A range of cohesive devices are used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.

#### 5. C1

- Presentation is clear, highlighting points from each section. Gives reasons in support of or against particular points of view.
- The follow-up question response is coherent.
- Uses a range of complex grammar constructions accurately. Some minor errors occur but do not impede understanding.
- Uses a range of vocabulary to discuss the topic in the poster in his/her own words. Some awkward usage or slightly inappropriate lexical choices.
- Pronunciation is clearly intelligible.
- Backtracking and reformulations do not fully interrupt the flow of speech.
- A range of cohesive devices are used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.

#### 4. B2.2

Response fully on topic and appropriate register used. Response shows the following features:

- Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not impede understanding.
- Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not impede understanding.
- Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding.
- Limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.

Response addresses points from each section, the follow-up question is on-topic and the response shows the features associated with B2 spoken production



**3. B2.1**

Response does not address points from both sections, the follow-up question is on-topic and the response shows the features associated with B2 spoken production.

Features associated with B2 spoken production:

- Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not lead to misunderstanding.
- Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not lead to misunderstanding.
- Pronunciation is intelligible. Mispronunciations do not put a strain on the listener or lead to misunderstanding.
- Some pausing while searching for vocabulary, but this does not put a strain on the listener.
- A limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.

**2. B1.2**

The candidate is unable to construct a coherent and sustained response, is heavily dependent on the input prompts and is not able to address the follow-up question. The response shows the features associated with B1 spoken production.

**1. B1.1**

The candidate is unable to construct a coherent and sustained response, reads directly from the prompts and is not able to address the follow-up question. The response shows the features associated with B1 spoken production.

Features associated with B1 spoken production:

- Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures.
- Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task.
- Pronunciation is intelligible but occasional mispronunciations put an occasional strain on the listener.
- Noticeable pausing, false starts, reformulations and repetition.
- Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.

**0. A1/A2**

Performance not sufficient for B1, or no meaningful language, or the responses are completely off-topic (memorised or guessing).



# How to take the online test

When you start every Aptis General test, the introductory screen looks like this:

Welcome to the Aptis Grammar and Vocabulary Test.

The test consists of two sections:

Grammar: 25 questions

Vocabulary: 25 questions

Total Time: 25 minutes

When you click on the start button, the test will begin.

On screen, the questions will appear like this:

In those days, my father \_\_\_\_ never eat dinner after eight o'clock.

☐

will

☐

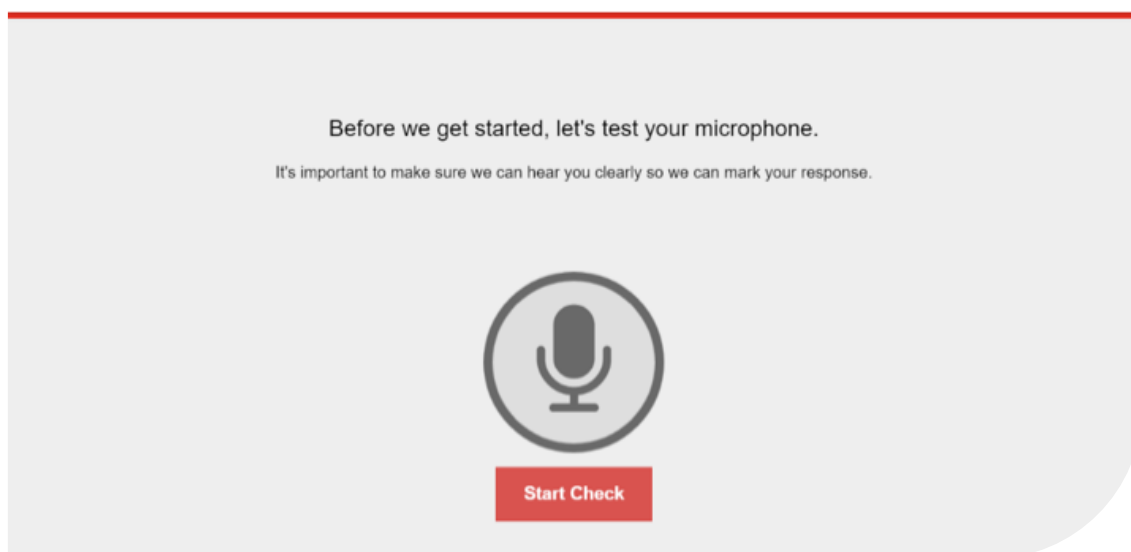
used to

☐

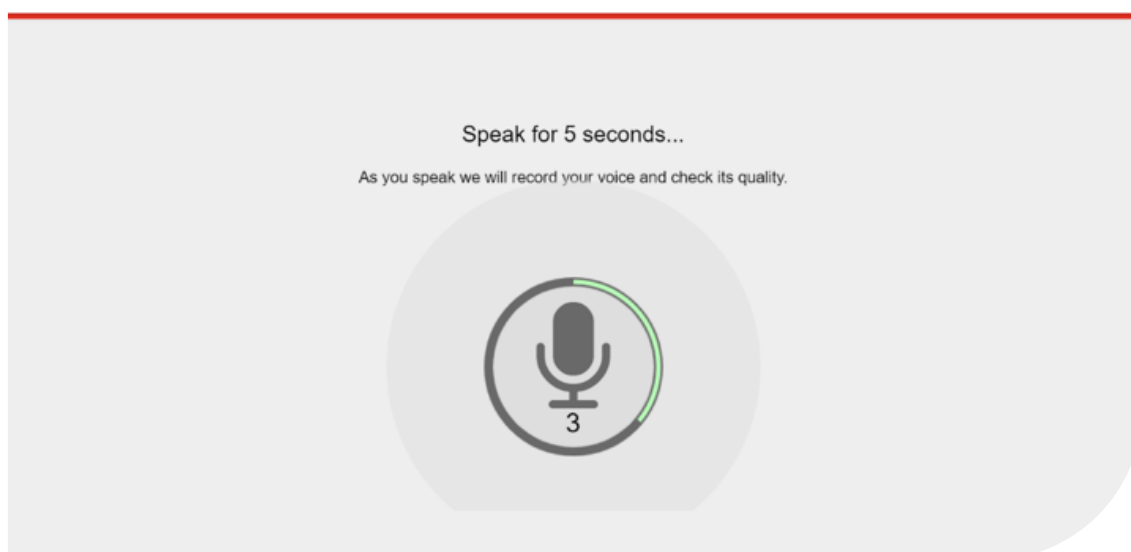
would

### Speaking test voice recording

Make sure your test is taken in a quiet room. The following screen will appear. This allows you to check the sound recording system on your computer.

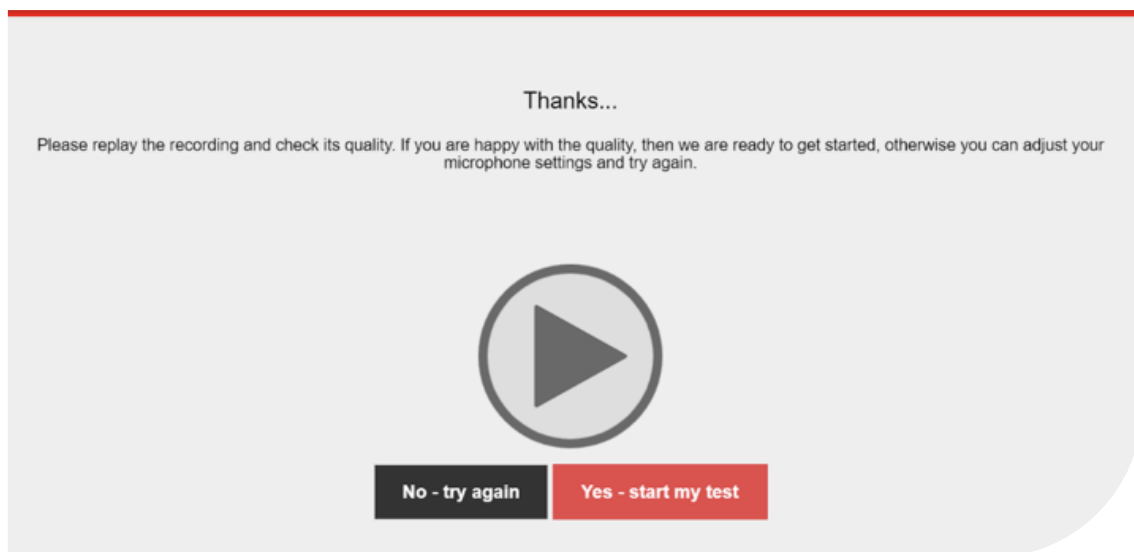


Once you click **Start Check**, the screen below appears. You will now need to record a sample of speech.





When you have finished your recording, the following screen appears. You can replay the recorded sound. If you can hear it properly, click on **Yes** (start my test), if not click on **No** (try again).



During the microphone check, make sure you say a whole sentence and not just one or two words. Assessing the quality of the microphone needs more than a few words.

# Aptis for all

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The British Council is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in English language testing. We believe that the Aptis tests should be accessible to anyone who wants to take them. We also believe that each person should have the opportunity to perform to the best of his or her ability on the Aptis tests.

If you have a disability and believe that Aptis is not accessible to you, or believe that the form of the test will not allow you to show your true level of English, please contact your local British Council centre to talk about the ways in which the test can be modified for your needs. We can make adjustments such as providing pen and paper tests, face-to-face tests, Braille and large font tests, adjusting timing, and a range of other modifications.

Please discuss it with us to ensure that we can support you with a test which is both fair to you and maintains the high standards and reliability of Aptis.



## Final checklist

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We hope these notes will help you prepare for your Aptis test. Here's a checklist to make sure you're fully prepared.

- **Review the different grammar parts:**  
<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/british-council-equals-core-inventory-general-english>
- **Visit the LearnEnglish website to prepare for the grammar and vocabulary test:**  
<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en>
- **Practise your English skills at every opportunity:**  
 Listen to English radio, watch English-language television and films and read the graded readers (e.g. Cambridge, Penguin, Macmillan and Headway).
- **Read the tips in this booklet on how to prepare for each test.**

## Useful web resources

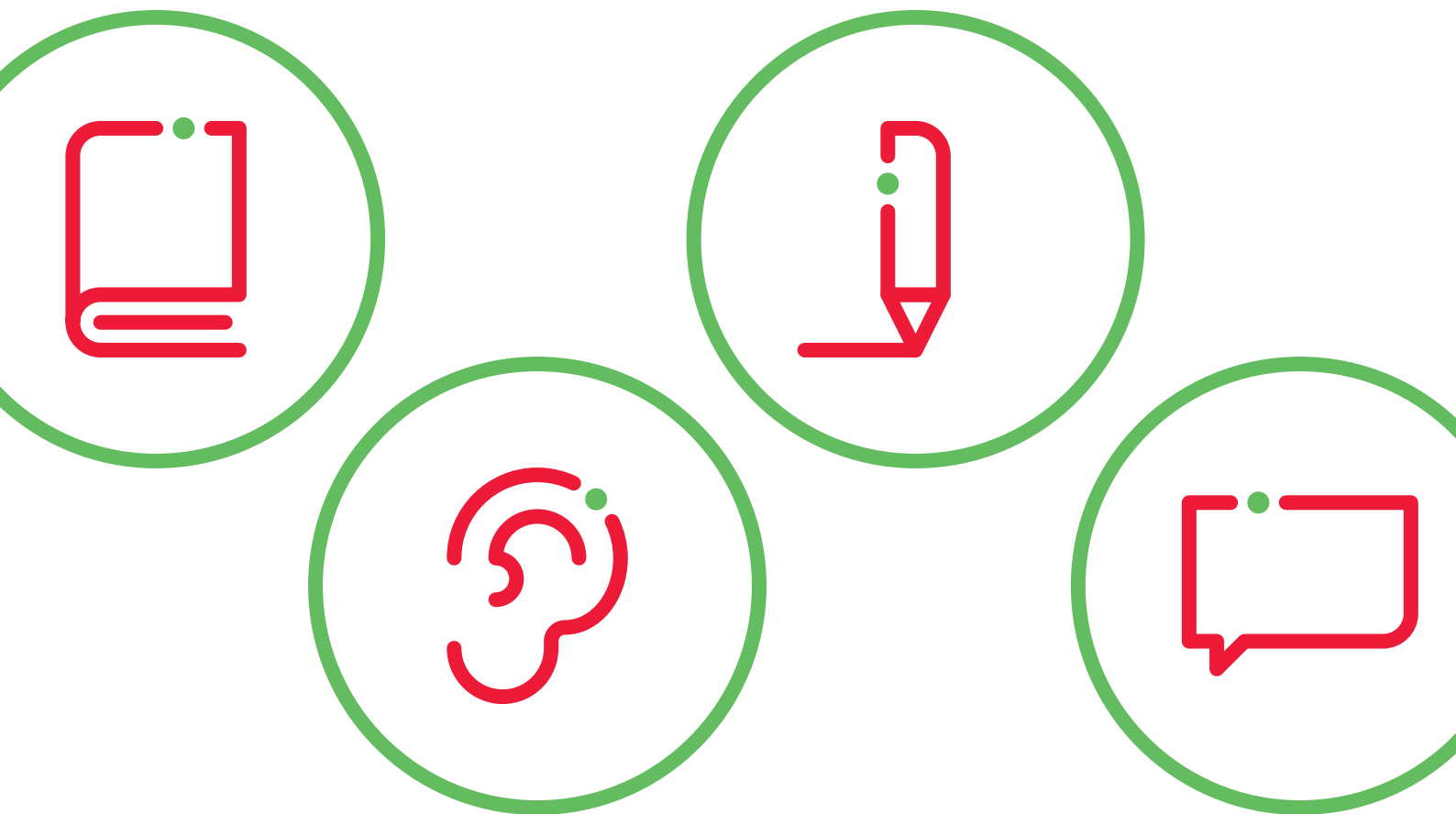
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- **British Council | EAQUALS Core Inventory for General English:**  
<http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/continuing-professional-development/cpd-teachers-trainers/british-council-equals-core-inventory-general-english>
- **LearnEnglish Grammar:**  
<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/grammar>
- **LearnEnglish Vocabulary:**  
<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/vocabulary>

## More information

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- [www.britishcouncil.org/aptis](http://www.britishcouncil.org/aptis)



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