

Aptis ESOL
General

Test format overview



Test components



Core 25 minutes

Part 1	Grammar
Part 2	Vocabulary



Reading 35 minutes

Part 1	Sentence comprehension
Part 2	Text cohesion
Part 3	Opinion matching
Part 4	Long text comprehension



Listening 40 minutes

Part 1	Information recognition
Part 2	Information matching
Part 3	Opinion matching
Part 4	Monologue comprehension



Writing 50 minutes

Part 1	Word-level writing
Part 2	Short text writing
Part 3	Three written responses to questions
Part 4	Formal and informal writing



Speaking 12 minutes

Part 1	Personal information
Part 2	Describe, express opinions, and provide reasons and explanations
Part 3	Describe, compare, and provide reasons and explanations
Part 4	Discuss personal experience and give opinions on an abstract topic

Aptis ESOL General core test (grammar and vocabulary)

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

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



Aptis ESOL General Reading test

The test assesses your reading ability. The tasks become more difficult as the test progresses.

Part	Description
Sentence comprehension Part 1	<p>In this part, you need to choose a word (choice of three) to complete a sentence. There are five sentences to complete.</p> <p>You do not need to understand all of the sentences to complete each individual sentence.</p> <p>This part assesses your ability to read a sentence and to complete it with an appropriate word.</p> <p>Preparation tips: <i>Make sure you read each sentence and all of the possible answer words carefully before trying to answer this question.</i></p> <p><i>The best way to become a better reader is to practise. Easy books written especially for English language learners might help.</i></p>
Text cohesion Part 2	<p>In this part, there are two tasks. Both have six sentences that make a whole text. The sentences have been put into the wrong order and you need to put them in the correct order. There is only one correct way to organise the sentences. Your task is to click on each sentence and then move them so each one is in the correct position.</p> <p>This part assesses your knowledge of the cohesion of a text. You need to look for clues in each sentence that show how it links to the sentences around it.</p> <p>Preparation tips: <i>Read all the sentences carefully first. Then, decide on the correct order (the first sentence is identified for you).</i></p>
Opinion matching Part 3	<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>Preparation tips: <i>Read over all four opinions before attempting the questions.</i></p>
Long text comprehension Part 4	<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>Preparation tips: <i>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.</i></p>



Aptis ESOL General Listening test

The Listening test has four task types. You can choose to listen to the text once or twice.

Part	Description
Information recognition Part 1	<p>In this part, you will listen to a short phone message or a short monologue or dialogue, and you need to identify specific information such as a phone number, a time, or a place.</p> <p>Preparation tips: Visit the British Council's LearnEnglish website for lots of very useful activities, tips, apps, and podcasts: www.learnenglish.britishcouncil.org</p> <p>The elementary podcasts are useful preparation for these questions.</p>
Information matching Part 2	<p>In this part, you will listen to four people's monologues and match the person to information. There are six pieces of information to match to the monologues.</p> <p>Preparation tips: There are quite a few useful practice videos and podcasts on the LearnEnglish website, so that's a very good starting point. In addition, try to listen to as much English as possible (e.g. films, television, or radio).</p>
Opinion matching Part 3	<p>In this task, you listen to a dialogue between a man and a woman and then decide who expresses an opinion.</p> <p>There are four questions. Your task is to decide if the man, woman, or both expressed the opinion.</p> <p>Preparation tips: Listening to authentic speech, such as television drama programs or films, is a good way to prepare for this task.</p>
Monologue comprehension Part 4	<p>In these tasks, you listen to a monologue and answer two questions.</p> <p>The focus here is on identifying clues in the speaker's language or tone to help identify their attitude, intention, or opinion.</p> <p>Preparation tips: There are a number of higher-level podcasts on the LearnEnglish website. Also try the BBC World Service radio station.</p>



Aptis ESOL General Writing test

There are four parts to the Writing test. You will interact in a social media-type written conversation and write emails. All writing tasks are marked by an examiner.

Part	Description
Word-level writing Part 1	<p>In the first part you have joined a club, course, or activity and must answer a series of five text messages from other members of the club, course, or activity. There is no extended writing in this part (no sentence writing), just individual words.</p> <p>If you are targeting a high score, you should spend no more than three minutes on this part.</p> <p>Preparation tips: <i>The focus is on communication (this means spelling, capitalisation, and grammar will not be considered by the markers).</i></p>
Short text writing Part 2	<p>You are asked to write 20–30 words. The focus is on writing sentences that are on-topic and have accurate grammar, punctuation, and spelling.</p> <p>If you are targeting a high score, you should spend no more than seven minutes on this part.</p> <p>Preparation tips: <i>A common error is to write more than 30 words and as a result, make a lot of mistakes. Keep to the word limit and focus on accuracy.</i></p>
Three written responses to questions Part 3	<p>In this part you will have a social network-type interaction. You will receive three questions to which you need to respond.</p> <p>If you are targeting a high score, you should spend no more than ten minutes on this part.</p> <p>Preparation tips: <i>Answer all three questions and don't go off-topic. Focus on accurate spelling and punctuation and write sentences that link together and make sense.</i></p> <p><i>Keep to the word count of 30–40 words per answer.</i></p>
Formal and informal writing Part 4	<p>This part requires that you write two emails:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) an informal email to a friend; and 2) a more formal email to an unknown person. <p>Both emails are in reaction to information about a change. You should spend all of your remaining time on this part (around 30 minutes).</p> <p>Preparation tips: <i>Keep to the word count of 40–50 words for the first email and 120–150 words for the second email.</i></p> <p><i>Make sure your emails are written for different people. The first email should clearly be an informal email to a friend or close family member, while the second should clearly be a formal email to a company. You are also assessed on how accurately you write and your flexibility with English language, so check your writing and use a wide range of vocabulary, grammar, and cohesive devices.</i></p>



Aptis ESOL General Speaking test

There are four parts to the Writing test. You will interact in a social media-type written conversation and write emails. All writing tasks are marked by an examiner.

Part	Description
Personal information Part 1	<p>In this part, you are asked to answer three questions on personal topics. You are expected to talk for 30 seconds per question.</p> <p>Preparation tips: <i>It's a good idea to practise introducing yourself and talking about your personal experiences. Think about how you can talk about familiar topics (e.g. holidays, weekend activities, sports) and practise giving general information about those topics.</i></p>
Describe, express opinion, and provide reasons and explanations Part 2	<p>In this part you are asked to describe a photograph and then answer two questions related to the topic illustrated in the photo.</p> <p>The three questions increase in complexity (from description to opinion). You are expected to talk for 45 seconds per question.</p> <p>Preparation tips: <i>You should try to be fluent and spontaneous, showing little sign of effort. Make sure you answer all three questions.</i></p>
Describe, compare, and provide reasons and explanations Part 3	<p>In this part you are asked to compare two pictures and then answer two questions related to the topic. The three questions increase in complexity (from description to speculation). You are expected to talk for 45 seconds for each question.</p> <p>Preparation tips: <i>To prepare for this task, practise comparing two different things (e.g. two cities or two houses). Focus on describing their advantages and disadvantages.</i></p> <p><i>To achieve a high score in this part, it's important to make sure you are using correct grammatical structures when you speculate.</i></p>
Discuss personal experience and give an opinion on an abstract topic Part 4	<p>In the final part, you will see a picture and be asked three questions about an abstract topic.</p> <p>You are given one minute to prepare an answer and in this time, you can take notes. You are expected to talk for two minutes.</p> <p>Preparation tips: <i>A common error is to describe the photo. You will not receive a high score if you describe the photo. The questions are more abstract (e.g. how you feel about something). Another common error is to go off-topic. Focus on answering each question in clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech.</i></p> <p><i>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 ____?). Make sure you practise using your planning time to structure what you are going to say.</i></p>



Your results

Aptis ESOL scores reflect candidates' ability to understand and communicate in English.

How are the results presented?

The results from Aptis ESOL are presented in two ways:

- **Numerical score:** A scale of 0 to 50 for each skill tested and a score for the Grammar and Vocabulary component.
- **CEFR level by skill:** A CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) level is allocated for each skill tested. If the components for all four skills have been completed there will also be an overall CEFR level awarded. Each CEFR band describes the English language competence in a specific skill and is described on the back of the individual report.

Test taker details and session information

Numerical Score:
Note that these scores should NOT be compared across skills. This is because benchmarks between CEFR levels vary according to skill.

The grammar and vocabulary score is only reported as a numerical score. When a candidate's score in a particular skill component falls just below a CEFR level threshold, their performance in grammar and vocabulary is taken into account in assigning the CEFR level.

CEFR Skill Profile:
Provides CEFR levels across the different skills tested. These can be compared.

Overall CEFR level:
Provided when all four skills have been tested.

Scale score

Skill name	Skill score
Listening	12/50
Reading	34/50
Speaking	19/50
Writing	28/50
Final Scale Score	93
Grammar and Vocabulary	27/50

CEFR skill profile

Skill	CEFR grade
Listening	A1
Reading	A2
Speaking	B1
Writing	B2
Overall CEFR grade	C

Professor Barry O'Sullivan OBE
The results report verifies the person named above achieved the stated score under conditions supervised by the British Council.
Please turn over for CEFR skill descriptors.

Centre stamp and date



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