

## Aptis for Tourism Candidate Guide

April 2016



The purpose of this guide is to help “Aptis for Tourism” candidates prepare for the test. There is more information about the test available on the British Council Greece website (<https://www.britishcouncil.gr/en/exam/aptis/tourism-certificate>).

This guide first gives a brief overview of the test, then looks at each of the skills in turn and offers advice on how best to approach the tasks. It then gives a description of how the test is scored.

Aptis for Tourism candidate guide is being updated regularly and you can find all latest updates at <https://www.britishcouncil.gr/en/exam/aptis/tourism-certificate>

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## The British Council

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In line with our Royal Charter, we aim to bring high quality English materials to every learner or teacher who wants them around the world. We work with governments to transform whole education systems to increase opportunity and employability through English. We train teachers by radio, web and broadcast in developing and post conflict countries. We also deliver English teaching and offer a wide range of exams, from English tests to school and business qualifications, in more than 90 countries worldwide.

Go to [www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org) for more information about the British Council.

## Introducing the Aptis for Tourism test

Aptis for Tourism is a new and innovative global English assessment tool from the British Council. It is an English test for adults and young professionals working in or studying for a career in tourism and hospitality. It accurately assesses ability in all four English skills – speaking, listening, reading and writing – in a tourism-related context.

### Level

Aptis for Tourism does not test at a single level. Instead, it includes a range of questions, which are designed to allow the candidate to demonstrate his or her best ability. The test results are reported either on a numerical scale (0–50) or reported as a Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) level.

### Aptis for Tourism test structure

Aptis for Tourism consists of five components a core (grammar and vocabulary) alongside four language skills reading, listening, writing and speaking.

Aptis for Tourism reflects situations that tourism graduates and professionals encounter every day and tests the effective use of the English language in all four skills within their professional setting. There is no pass or fail in Aptis for Tourism.

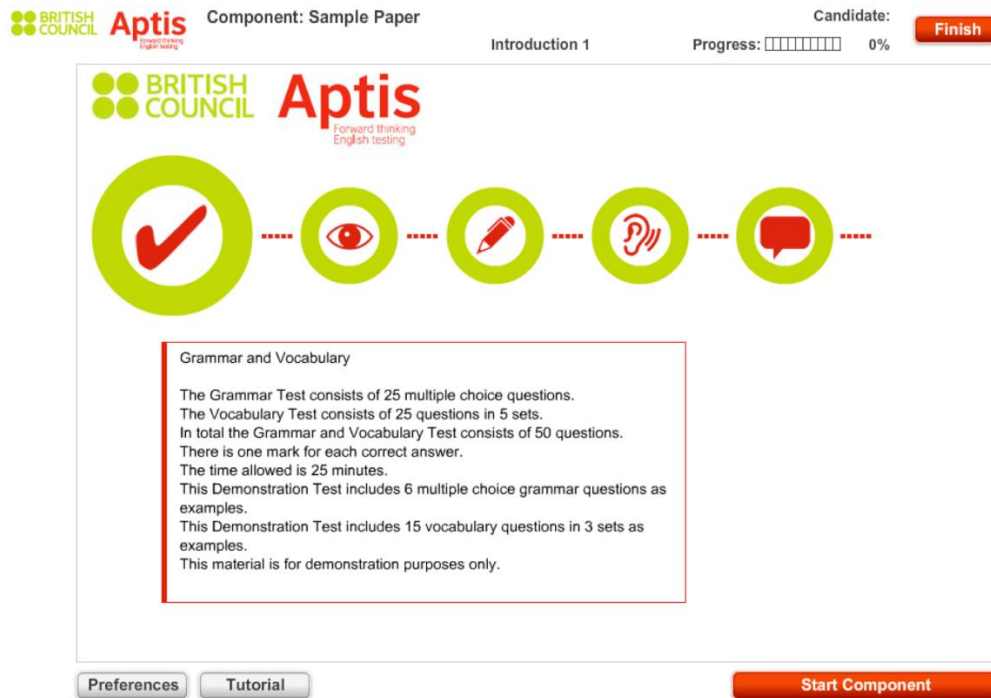
This guide is meant to familiarise you with the structure of the test and offer sample questions for practice. Sample questions will differ from the actual test but will give you examples of question types that you should expect in each section.

## Quick overview of the Aptis for Tourism test

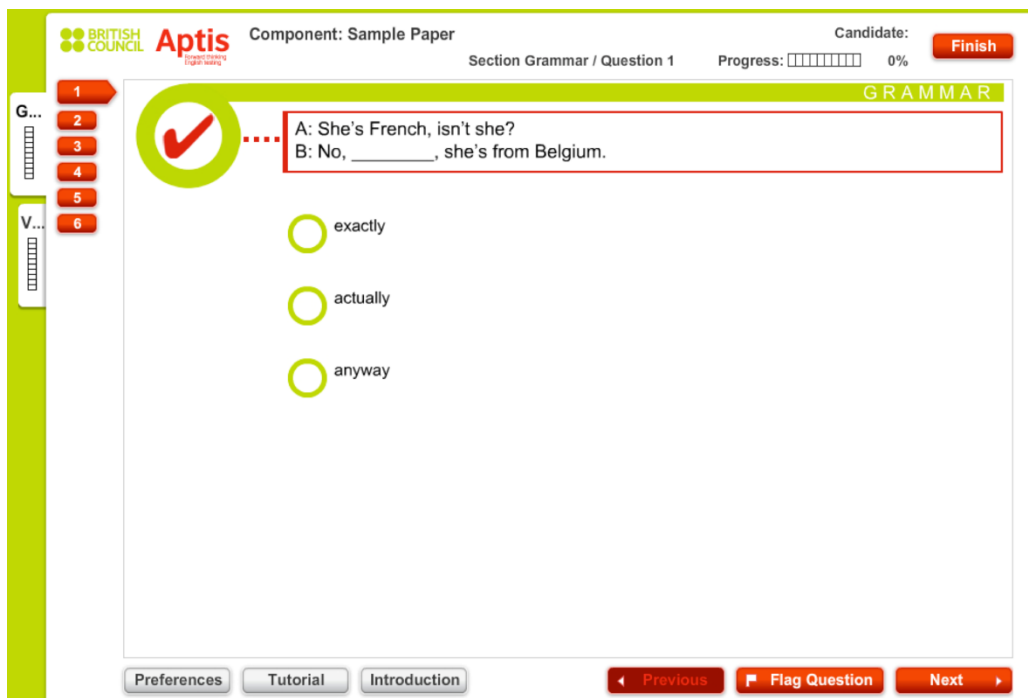
Test	Test design	Activity	Format
<b>Core</b> 25 minutes	Part 1 Grammar	Sentence Completion	3-option multiple choice.
	Part 2 Vocabulary	Word matching (similar meaning). Match words to definitions. Sentence completion. Word pairs or word combinations (words commonly used together).	Sets of 5 target words with 10 options.
<b>Reading</b> 30 minutes	Part 1 Sentence comprehension	Choose words to complete sentences.	3-option multiple choice.
	Part 2 Text cohesion	Put sentences into the correct order to make a story.	7 sentences jumbled up
	Part 3 Short text comprehension	Choose the best word from a list to make a sentence.	10 options and 7 empty spaces.
	Part 4 Long text comprehension	Match headings to paragraphs.	7 paragraphs and 8 headings.
<b>Listening</b> 30 minutes	Part 1 Word and number recognition	Listen to a phone message to identify specific information.	4-option multiple choice.
	Part 2 Identifying specific information	Listen to monologues or conversation and identify specific information.	
	Part 3 Inference	Listen to monologues or conversation and identify the attitude, opinion or intention.	
<b>Writing</b> 50 minutes	Part 1 Word-level writing	Write basic personal information on a form.	Complete a form.
	Part 2 Short text writing	Write personal information.	20–30 words.
	Part 3 Three written responses to written input	Respond to written questions on a social network-type website.	30 -40 words for each question.
	Part 4 Formal and informal writing	Write an informal email to a friend and a formal email to an unknown person.	40-50 words for the informal email. 120-150 words for the formal email.
<b>Speaking</b> 12 minutes	Part 1 Personal information	Respond to three personal information questions.	30 seconds for each response.
	Part 2 Describe, express opinion and provide reasons and explanations	Describe a picture and answer two additional questions of increasing difficulty.	45 seconds for each response.
	Part 3 Describe, compare and provide reasons and explanations	Describe two contrasting pictures and answer two additional questions of increasing difficulty	45 seconds for each response.
	Part 4 Discuss personal experience and opinion on an abstract topic	Answer three questions on an abstract topic.	1-minute preparation time. 2-minutes response time.

## Getting to grips with the online test

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



On screen, the questions will appear like this:



The different parts of the page are explained below:

The image shows a screenshot of the Aptis exam interface with several callout boxes explaining different parts of the page:

- Tab to see the Grammar Part:** Points to the 'G...' tab in the left sidebar.
- Tab to see the Vocabulary Part:** Points to the 'V...' tab in the left sidebar.
- When you answer a question it turns grey and the progress indicator begins to turn red:** Points to the 'G...' tab in the left sidebar, which is highlighted in red.
- Click one of these to answer:** Points to the radio button options for the question: 'exactly', 'actually', and 'anyway'.
- To access the online tutorial at any time:** Points to the 'Tutorial' button in the bottom navigation bar.
- To change to colours of the screen:** Points to the 'Preferences' button in the bottom navigation bar.
- To return to the introduction page at any time:** Points to the 'Introduction' button in the bottom navigation bar.
- If you don't know the answer immediately, click here to flag the question. This is a reminder to return to the question later:** Points to the 'Flag Question' button in the bottom navigation bar.

The interface itself shows the 'BRITISH COUNCIL Aptis' logo, 'Component: Sample Paper', 'Section Grammar / Question 1', 'Candidate:' field, 'Progress: 0%' indicator, and a 'Finish' button. The main content area displays a grammar question: 'A: She's French, isn't she? B: No, \_\_\_\_\_ she's from Belgium.' with three radio button options: 'exactly', 'actually', and 'anyway'. The 'G...' tab is selected in the sidebar, and the 'Flag Question' button is highlighted in red.

### Aptis for Tourism core component

The core part of the test consists of two parts. The first assesses your knowledge of English grammar. The second part assesses your knowledge of English vocabulary. To know what parts of grammar to expect in the test, see the British Council/EAQUALS core inventory. This is free, and is available online at:

[http://clients.squareeye.net/uploads/eaquals2011/documents/EAQUALS\\_British\\_Council\\_Core\\_Curriculum\\_April\\_2011.pdf](http://clients.squareeye.net/uploads/eaquals2011/documents/EAQUALS_British_Council_Core_Curriculum_April_2011.pdf)

Test design	Description	Preparation
Part 1 Grammar	In this part of the test, you will answer 25 questions. 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). All 25 questions are in the format of a 3-option multiple choice. Complete a sentence by choosing the correct word.	To know which parts of grammar are tested, see the British Council / EAQUALS core inventory. This is free and available online at: <a href="http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/sites/ec/files/books-british-council-eaquals-coreinventory.pdf">http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/sites/ec/files/books-british-council-eaquals-coreinventory.pdf</a> One great way to prepare for the grammar test is to use the British Council's LearnEnglish Grammar App: <a href="http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/grammar-and-vocabulary">http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/grammar-and-vocabulary</a>
Part 2 Vocabulary	In this part of the test, you have 25 questions. These are presented in sets of five words (the words we are testing) with ten options from which to choose. There are a number of question types: <b>Word matching:</b> find a word with a meaning similar to the target word. <b>Word definition:</b> match a definition to the correct word. <b>Word usage:</b> complete a sentence by choosing the correct word. <b>Word pairs or word combinations:</b> these are usually the most difficult questions, as you need to know what word (from a list) is most commonly found with the target word (e.g. birthday card is common but blue card is not).	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/en/grammar-and-vocabulary">http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/grammar-and-vocabulary</a> There are also many useful websites, for example: <a href="http://www.englishclub.com">www.englishclub.com</a> Another useful tip is to take note of interesting words or word combinations when you read English texts.



## Sample grammar questions

There are two basic question types. The first focuses on formal written English, and the second focuses on the use of English grammar when speaking. Here are some examples:

### 1. Written grammar

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

- told
- spoke
- said

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

- must
- have
- should

### 2. Spoken grammar

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

There are a number of question types. The first focuses on the definition of a word (showing that you know what the word means). In this format, click on each arrow to in the blank spaces and a drop down list of options will be provided. Select the appropriate answer and move on to the next definition.

#### Question 1

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

Example: big = large

bare =	<input type="text"/>		
obscure =	<input type="text"/>	bare =	not real
sore =	<input type="text"/>	obscure =	solid
artificial =	<input type="text"/>	sore =	plain
		artificial =	rough
			painful
			tight
			not clear
			proud

#### Question 2

The next question type tests your ability to identify words with a similar meaning from a list of options.

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

To encourage someone is to

To change something is to

To prepare for something is to

To repair something is to

- urge
- gather
- refuse
- detach
- rehearse
- blame
- convert
- mend

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

Question 3

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

Example: big + house

bare +

obscure +

sore +

artificial +

- hour
- light
- fact
- machine
- circle
- throat
- wall
- diet

There is a final question type that asks you to complete a sentence using a word from a list.

## Sample questions answer keys to above exercises

Grammar sample questions answer key		
Question 1	Correct answers	told have much since
Question 2	Correct answers	actually maybe

Vocabulary sample questions answer key		
Question 1	Correct answers	urge convert rehearse mend
Question 2	Correct answers	plain not clear painful not real
Question 3	Correct answers	wall fact throat light

## Aptis for Tourism reading component

This part is designed to assess your reading ability. The tasks become more difficult as the test progresses.

Test design	Description	Preparation
Part 1 Sentence comprehension	In this part, you need to choose a word (choice of three) to complete the sentence. There are five sentences to complete. Each sentence in the text is free-standing which means that it is not necessary to understand all of the sentences to complete individual sentences. This part assesses your ability to read a sentence and to complete the sentence with an appropriate word.	Make sure you read each sentence fully and the options before trying to answer this question. The best way to become a better reader is to practise. A number of publishers produce graded readers that might be of use. For example, try: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambridge Bookworms Starter / Stage 1</li> <li>• Cambridge Readers – Level 1</li> <li>• Penguin Readers – Level 1</li> <li>• Macmillan Readers – Starter / Beginner</li> <li>• Headway Skills series.</li> </ul>
Part 2 Text cohesion	In this part you will see seven sentences. They belong to a single story that has been jumbled up. There is only one way that the sentences go together to form the story and your task is to click on the sentences and drag them to the correct position in the story. This part assesses your knowledge of the cohesion of a text. You are looking for clues in each sentence that show how it links to other sentences.	Read all of the sentences carefully first. Then, decide on the order (the first sentence is identified for you). Appropriate readers for this level are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambridge Bookworms Stage 1 and 2</li> <li>• Cambridge Readers – Level 2</li> <li>• Penguin Readers – Level 3</li> <li>• Macmillan Readers – Elementary.</li> </ul>
Part 3 Short-text comprehension	In this part you will need to read a text (about 150 words). The task is to complete the text by selecting the appropriate words (from a list) to fill in the gaps. To complete all of the text you need to understand more than just a sentence. This part tests your ability to read and understand short texts.	Read over the whole text before attempting the questions. Appropriate readers for this level are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambridge Bookworms Stage 2 and 3</li> <li>• Cambridge Readers – Level 3, 4 and 5</li> <li>• Penguin Readers – Level 4</li> <li>• Macmillan Readers – Pre Intermediate.</li> </ul>
Part 4 Long-text comprehension	This part consists of a long text (about 750 words) with a series of headings. The task is to match the headings to paragraphs in the text (there are seven to be done). There is always an extra heading that does not fit with any paragraph. This part is designed to test your ability to read and understand a long text. In addition, you need to be able to demonstrate an understanding of how the headings reflect the paragraphs in different ways (sometimes using similar words, sometimes similar ideas, or by sharing a topic).	Read the main text carefully but as quickly as you can. 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. Appropriate readers for this level are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambridge Bookworms Stage 4, 5 and 6</li> <li>• Cambridge Readers – Level 4, 5 and 6</li> <li>• Penguin Readers – Level 5 and 6</li> <li>• Macmillan Readers – Intermediate and Upper Intermediate.</li> </ul>

## Sample reading questions

### Part 1

In this task, you must select the appropriate word from a drop-down list. You should complete this task in about three minutes.

Choose one word from the list for each gap. The first one is done for you.

Dear Morgan,

Thank you for a wonderful weekend. I had a really  time with you and

Becky. Your wife is a good cook and she  a very nice dinner.

I am writing this note in my hotel room and I can  the park from my

window. My plane leaves tomorrow and I will take a taxi to the airport .

breakfast. I hope you and Becky will come and  with me in Rome next

summer. I am feeling a little tired now and I  to have a sleep.

Thanks again and see you soon,

James

### Part 2

In the second task, the objective is to sort the sentences into the correct order to make a story. Do this by clicking on a sentence and dragging it to its correct position. In the example below, we are moving the sentence at point 6 up to point 2. When we do this the sentence at point 2 swaps position.

Order the sentences below to make a story. The first one (1) is done for you.

- 1 **Alfred Hitchcock was born in London in 1899.**
- 2 He was soon one of Hollywood's top directors and in 1956 he became an American citizen.
- 3 At the end of his long career he returned to Britain to make a film in London.
- 4 After directing several more popular films, he sailed to America.
- 5 At the start of his career he made silent films in England and Germany.
- 6 He got his first job in a film studio when he was a young man.
- 7 He made a big impact when he directed Blackmail, which was Britain's first sound film and a big success.

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- 7 He made a big impact when he directed Blackmail, which was Britain's first sound film and a big success.

**Part 3**

In the third task, you must select the word from the group at the bottom of the screen (in the green boxes) and drag the appropriate word into each of the seven empty boxes in the text. As you can see, there are 10 word options and only seven spaces. If you change your mind, that's not a problem as you can move a word out of a box if necessary.

.....

**READING**

Read the text and complete each gap with a word from the list at the bottom of the page.

**Warren Buffett**

American billionaire Warren Buffett showed a talent for money and business from a very early age.

When he was only six years old he  six bottles of Coca Cola from his grandfather's shop for twenty five cents each. He then sold them to his friends for thirty cents, which  him a total profit of thirty cents. While other children  were the same age were playing games, Warren was making money.

By the  he left school at the age of 17 he had already earned \$5,000 from a part time job delivering newspapers. Many years  he met the President of Coca Cola and invested in the company. On this  Warren Buffett made a profit of more than a billion dollars. Soon afterwards he  the richest man in America.

Example:

showed	time	started	occasion	gave	opened
	bought	moment	became	who	later

**Part 4**

For the final task, it is necessary to scroll the reading text to see all of it. Do this by clicking on the side bar (as shown) and move the bar up and down. Select the appropriate heading from the drop-down list on the left-hand side.

.....

**READING**

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.

1	<input type="text"/>	
2	<input type="text"/>	<b>Bone Wars</b>
3	<input type="text"/>	<p>In the summer of 1868 a train carrying a group of American scientists made its way through the western frontier state of Wyoming. On board was O.C. Marsh, an expert in geology and the first person in the country to hold the position of professor of palaeontology at the University of Yale. Like his fellow passengers, Marsh was impressed by the enormous landscapes of dry rock, and he knew that the ancient stones must hold evidence of prehistoric life. It was during this journey that he made a decision that was to have a lasting impact not only on his own professional career but on the American scientific community.</p> <p>1. In 1800 the French naturalist Georges Cuvier identified a fossil [old bone] as the remains of a small flying reptile. This was the first recorded example of a species that later became known as the dinosaur. Although these creatures no longer existed, Cuvier showed that they could be studied through an examination of fossil records, buried and preserved in rock. So the science of palaeontology – the study of prehistoric life – began.</p> <p>2. Over the next two decades some spectacular finds were made by English</p>
4	<input type="text"/>	
5	<input type="text"/>	
6	<input type="text"/>	
7	<input type="text"/>	

## Reading test answer key

## Part 1

Dear Morgan,

Thank you for a wonderful weekend. I had a really **great** time with you and

Becky. Your wife is a good cook and she **made** a very nice dinner.

I am writing this note in my hotel room and I can **see** the park from my

window. My plane leaves tomorrow and I will take a taxi to the airport **after**

breakfast. I hope you and Becky will come and **stay** with me in Rome next

summer. I am feeling a little tired now and I **am going** to have a sleep.

Thanks again and see you soon,

James

## Part 2

- 1 **Alfred Hitchcock was born in London in 1899.**
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- 4 He made a big impact when he directed Blackmail, which was Britain's first sound film and a big success.
- 5 After directing several more popular films, he sailed to America.
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- 7 At the end of his long career he returned to Britain to make a film in London.

## Part 3

## Warren Buffett

American billionaire Warren Buffett **showed** a talent for money and business from a very early age.

When he was only six years old he **bought** six bottles of Coca Cola from his grandfather's shop for twenty

five cents each. He then sold them to his friends for thirty cents, which **gave** him a total profit of thirty

cents. While other children **who** were the same age were playing games, Warren was making money.

By the **time** he left school at the age of 17 he had already earned \$5,000 from a part time job

delivering newspapers. Many years **later** he met the President of Coca Cola and invested in the

company. On this **occasion** Warren Buffett made a profit of more than a billion dollars. Soon afterwards he

**became** the richest man in America.

Example:

**showed**

**started**

**moment**

**opened**

**Part 4**

1	The birth of a new science
2	Early developments in palaeontology
3	Ideal conditions for finding fossils
4	The risks of fossil hunting
5	Unscientific methods
6	The dishonest methods of Marsh and Cope
7	The achievements of Marsh and Cope

**Aptis for Tourism listening component**

The listening part has 25 separate questions focusing on different aspects of listening. There are a number of things to remember about the listening test:

1. All 25 questions use the four-option multiple-choice format.
2. Each listening input has a single question.
3. You may listen to the question a second time if you need to.
4. The three types of questions are described below. In the test itself, these types of questions do not appear in the correct sequence.

Test design	Description	Preparation
Part 1 Word and number recognition	In these questions you listen to a short phone message and you need to identify specific information such as a number (e.g. phone number time) or a word.	Visit the British Council's LearnEnglish website for lots of very useful activities, tips, Apps and podcasts: <a href="http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en">http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en</a> The elementary podcasts are useful preparation for these questions.
Part 2 Identifying specific, factual information	In these questions you listen to short conversations with two speakers or to a monologue and you need to identify specific information. For example, where do they want to go? What do they want to buy?	There are quite a few useful practice videos and podcasts on the LearnEnglish website, so that's a very good starting point. In addition, it may be useful to try to listen to as much English in natural or near-natural settings (e.g. films) as possible. If you have access to the internet, you can easily find materials, for example on the BBC website ( <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldserviceradio">www.bbc.co.uk/worldserviceradio</a> ).
Part 3 Inference	In these questions you again listen to short conversations with two speakers or to a monologue. The focus here is not on understanding the meaning of what the speakers are saying, but on identifying clues in their language or tone to help identify the attitude of the speaker, their intention or mood.	There are a number of higher-level podcasts on the LearnEnglish website. Also try the BBC website or the BBC World Service radio station.  The strategies you need include paying specific attention to intonation and stress when somebody is speaking. Listening to authentic speech such as television soap operas or films is a good way to help you with this.



### Sample listening questions

All of the listening questions look quite similar, though they are often focused on different aspects of listening. 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.

#### Part 1

Listen to the message. What is Alberto's phone number?



- A  8440 3860
- B  8440 3868
- C  8440 3660
- D  8440 3668

#### Part 2

Listen to the message. Why does Heather call Steve?



- A  To say thank you
- B  To say goodbye
- C  To say hello
- D  To say sorry

#### Part 3

Listen to a man talking about somebody. Who is he talking about?

Who is the man talking about ?



- A  Someone at work
- B  A friend
- C  A member of his family
- D  A stranger

### Aptis for Tourism writing component

The writing part is built around a series of interrelated activities. There are four parts, which range from very basic form filling to quite complex email messages. They are explained below. 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 are the following:

- Not answering the questions (going off-topic). Read the question and understand what you are required to do.
- Writing too much but with poor grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Keep to the word count and focus on accuracy.
- Not using a variety of sentence structures.
- Not writing in sentences or paragraphs.
- Not capitalising months, cities, countries and names.
- Using SMS spelling.

The total time allowed for the writing test is 50 minutes. The timings for each section below are recommendations only.

Test design	Description	Preparation
<b>Part 1</b> Word-level writing	In the first part you must complete a form by filling in some basic personal information. There is no extended writing in this part (no sentence writing), just individual words. You should spend no more than three minutes on this part.	Since the emphasis in this part is on the accurate completion of a form, the most important things to focus on are using capital letters, if needed, and spelling. Common errors are to write in all capital letters and to write the month as a number instead of a word. There is an App on the LearnEnglish website which helps you to practise your spelling.
<b>Part 2</b> Short text writing	This part is again about form filling – but this time you need to write in sentences. You should spend no more than seven minutes on this part.	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. A common error is to write more than 30 words and make too many mistakes. Keep to the word limit and focus on accuracy. Another common error is to write in all capital letters.
<b>Part 3</b> Three written parts of text, all of which require responses	In this part you will have a social network-type interaction. You will receive three questions and need to respond. You should spend no more than ten minutes on this part.	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>Part 4</b> Formal and informal text writing	This part requires that you write an informal email to a friend and a more formal email to an unknown person. Both emails are in reaction to information about a change. You should spend no more than 20 minutes on this part.	For this part, make sure you keep to the word count of 40-50 words for the first email and 120-150 words for the second email. Make sure your answers are different. 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 broadly and accurately you can write so use a wide range of vocabulary, grammar and cohesive devices.

## Sample writing tests

### Part 1

This test is marked by a British Council examiner and five pieces of information are awarded points. As this part relates to basic writing skills, it has a small contribution to the overall score. Even if you achieve five points, the maximum number of marks available is three.

#### Example for Part 1:

**Part 2**

This test is marked by an examiner using a specific scale.  
 There may be one or two questions.  
 The weighting for this task is even, so the maximum mark available is five.

5	Likely to be above A2 level
4 [A2.2]	Clearly defined sentences, all on-topic. Mostly accurate grammar with few serious errors of vocabulary usage (appropriateness and spelling). The text organisation is completely appropriate. Attempts at textual cohesion and accurate punctuation.
3 [A2.1]	There are some serious issues with grammar and vocabulary usage. However, the meaning is still clear. Text is written in complete sentences, organised appropriately for the text form and mostly accurate punctuation.
2 [A1.2]	Numerous serious errors of grammar and vocabulary usage, which make the text sometimes difficult to follow. A series of phrases, not sentences. Poor punctuation.
1 [A1.1]	There is too little language or the usage is so poor that the text is almost impossible to follow. There is no clear structure.
0	Little or no meaningful language or the work is off-topic.

**Example for Part 2:**

Keeps to the word count (20–30 words).

- Clear sentences.
- Answers on-topic. Replies fully to the input.
- Accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation. It is acceptable to have grammar and spelling errors and still score 5/5 if the errors are not serious (i.e. the writing can be understood and the errors are not basic).

### Part 3

In part 3, you will answer social media-type questions which will look like the following:

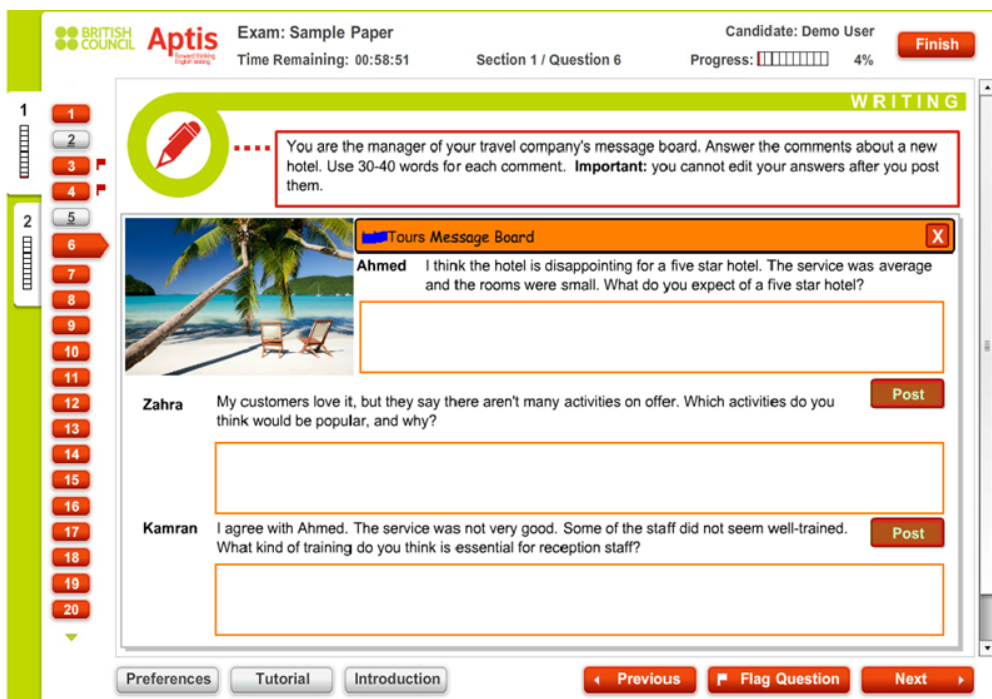
The image shows a sequence of five screenshots of a chat interface for "Aptis Sports Club Chat". Each screenshot displays a question from a user 'J.' and a corresponding answer box. Red callout boxes with arrows point to the "Post" buttons and the final question. The questions are:

- Why did you join?
- How do you feel about the club?
- How do you feel about the club?
- How do you feel about the club?
- What do you think about the swimming pool closing?

5	Likely to be above the B1 level
4 [B1.2]	Replies fully to each piece of input. The grammar is appropriate to B1 and is mostly accurate, while there is a good range of vocabulary on general topics. Some errors, but these don't impede communication. Cohesive and coherent text using an appropriate range of linguistic devices. Few, if any, punctuation or spelling errors.
3 [B1.1]	Replies well to at least two of the input texts. An adequate range of grammar used with no major errors which impact on understanding. There is good control of elementary vocabulary, though evidence of some major errors when expressing unfamiliar or

	complex topics. Cohesive and coherent text using an adequate range of linguistic devices. Spelling and/or punctuation errors do not impede communication.
2 [A2.2]	Replies to at least two of the input texts. Many errors, which make the text sometimes difficult to follow. Narrow lexical repertoire with frequent errors making the message difficult to follow. Some effort to use connecting devices though not always consistent. Errors, including punctuation and spelling, make the text difficult to follow.
1 [A2.1]	Does not reply to more than one input. There is little language with such poor control as to make the text almost impossible to follow without considerable effort. Very basic everyday vocabulary. Lacks cohesion and/or uses linguistic devices inappropriately. Spelling and punctuation errors make the text almost impossible to follow.
0	Little or no meaningful language or the work is off-topic.

**Example for Part 3:**



Keeps to the word count (30–40 words for each answer).

- Replies fully to each piece of input.
- Sentences follow on from one another in a coherent manner.
- Uses a range of grammar and vocabulary.
- Accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling. It is ok to have errors but the writing must be understood.

**Part 4**

The weighting for this task means that the maximum mark available is nine.

5	Likely to be above the B2 level
4 [B1.2]	Task fulfilled in terms of appropriateness of register [i.e. two distinct registers used in the different messages written]. Evidence of a clear, assured and precise use of a broad range of grammatical forms used. A good command of a broad lexicon. Good use of idiomatic expressions and no impeding errors of grammar or lexis. Few if any errors of cohesion or coherence.
3 [B1.1]	Task partially fulfilled in terms of appropriateness of register [i.e. fully appropriate register used in one of the two different messages written]. An adequate range of grammatical forms used, with no impeding errors. A good range of lexis with a high level of accuracy. Errors don't affect the message. Cohesive and coherent text using an adequate range of linguistic devices. Spelling and/or punctuation errors evident but these don't affect the message.
2 [A2.2]	Task not fulfilled in terms of appropriateness of register [i.e. appropriate register not used in either of the two different messages written]. A relatively narrow range of grammatical forms used, with some impeding errors.

	The lexical range adequate for the description of situations relating to him/herself. Some errors which tend to make understanding difficult. Attempts to use linguistic devices not always consistent. Errors, including punctuation and spelling, can make understanding difficult.
1 [A2.1]	Task not fulfilled in terms of appropriateness of register [i.e. no evidence of awareness of register]. A limited range of grammatical forms and vocabulary used and not always with sufficient accuracy. Errors may make the text difficult to follow. Lacks systematic cohesion and/or uses linguistic devices inappropriately. Spelling and punctuation errors can make understanding difficult.
0	Clearly below B level or work is off-topic.

'Register' refers to the concept of adapting one's use of language to conform to standards or traditions in a given professional or social situation. The first part is an intimate or casual register used among family members and close friends. The second part is a formal register used between strangers or in a technical context. There should be language to show the test taker understands the difference. In the second part it is appropriate to address the email more formally.

#### Example for Part 4:

You are a member of a sports club. On your last visit to the club you saw the notice below.

Dear Members,

We are sorry to tell you that from next month membership fees will go up by a minimum of 15%. Also, due to maintenance the club will close from 4pm on Wednesdays for the next four weeks. Please feel free to email us at [kjmm@goodhealth.com](mailto:kjmm@goodhealth.com)

Write an email to a friend. Write your feelings about the notice and suggest possible alternatives. Write 50 words. You have 10 minutes.

Hey Olga, what do you think about the fee increase at the sports club? I can't believe they are increasing the fees and closing early. If you ask me the gym should offer a discount if they plan to close early. I just signed up and already a fee increase! Not happy!! Maria

Also write an email to the Customer Service Team, explaining your feelings about the notice and suggesting possible alternatives. Write 120-150 words. You have 20 minutes.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to complain about the fee increase to take effect from next month and your plan to close early on Wednesdays.

I have been a member for only three months and feel it is unacceptable to increase the fee so soon after signing up while also closing early on Wednesdays, which is one of the days when I like to go to the sports club and meet my personal trainer.

I think you should rethink the fee increase if you are withdrawing services. One alternative is to implement the fee increase after you have completed the maintenance. Another alternative is to complete the maintenance after the gym is closed at 10pm.

I look forward to hearing back from you if my recommendations are acceptable. If not, I will look to another sports club for my membership.

Regards,  
Maria

- Understands the difference in writing to a friend as opposed to writing to an authority. The first text is casual and the second text is formal.
- Answers the input in a coherent manner. The text makes sense.
- Writing is clear, assured and precise using a range of cohesive devices to make the writing flow.
- Grammar and vocabulary is broad and accurate.

### Aptis for Tourism speaking component

Each question has a maximum response time but candidates can choose to end the recording before the allotted time by clicking on a stop button. Note that if you finish early, you may not have given enough of a range to score at the highest levels.

The most common issues that cause candidates to lose marks are the following:

- not doing a proper sound check
- 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.

Test design	Description	Preparation
Part 1 Personal Information	In this task, the candidate is asked to respond to three questions on personal topics. You are expected to talk for 30 seconds per question.	To prepare for this task it is a good idea to practise introducing yourself and talking about your personal experiences. Think about familiar topics (e.g. holidays, weekend activities, sports) and practise giving general information.  At the highest levels, try not to talk in lists but instead use connecting devices, complex sentences and a wide range of grammar.
Part 2 Describe, express opinion and provide reasons and explanations	In this task the candidate you are asked to describe a photograph and then answer two questions related to the topic illustrated in the photo. The three questions increase in complexity (from description to opinion). You are expected to talk for 45 seconds per question.	You should try to be fluent and spontaneous, showing little sign of effort. Make sure to answer all three questions.
Part 3 Describe, compare and provide reasons and explanations	In this task 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 per question.	To prepare for this task, 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. With speculation, it is important to make sure you are using the correct grammatical structures.
Part 4 Discuss personal experience and opinion on an abstract topic	In the final task you will see a picture and be asked three questions about an abstract topic.  You are given one minute to prepare an answer and can take notes. You are expected to talk for two minutes.	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 do you feel about something).  Another common error is to go off-topic. Focus on answering each question in a clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech. To prepare for this task it is a good idea to practise speaking for two minutes on a abstract topic (e.g. How do you feel about ____?).  Make sure you practise using your planning time wisely to structure what you are going to say.

### Sound recording

When you click to start the speaking test, screen A appears. This allows you to check the sound recording system on your computer. When you have recorded a sample of speech, screen B opens. Replay the sound. If you can hear it properly click on Yes (take me to the exam), if not click on No (let me try recording 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.

**Sound Recording Test**

Part of your exam requires you to use your microphone.

Before you start, we need to make sure your microphone and speakers/earphones are working correctly.

If your computer does not have a microphone or speakers/earphones please seek assistance.

**Step 1:** Click the **Record** button and speak into the microphone.

When you select the **Record** button you may see a security message. You must select the **Allow** button to use your microphone.

**Step 2:** Click the **Play** button to listen back to the recording.

●

▶

00.0 / 00.0 Secs

**Sound Recording Test**

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**Step 2:** Click the **Play** button to listen back to the recording.

●

▶

00.0 / 05.0 Secs

**Can you hear your recording ok?**

**No**

Let me try recording again

**No**

Close this window and ask for help

**Yes**

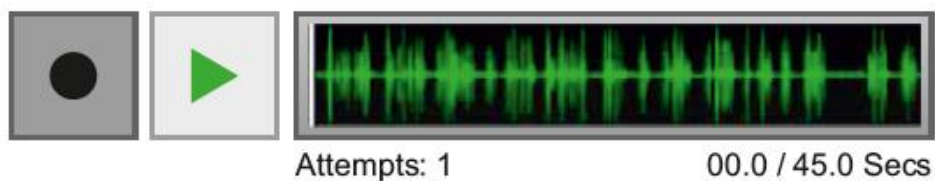
Take me to the exam

**Click to record**

**Click to replay**

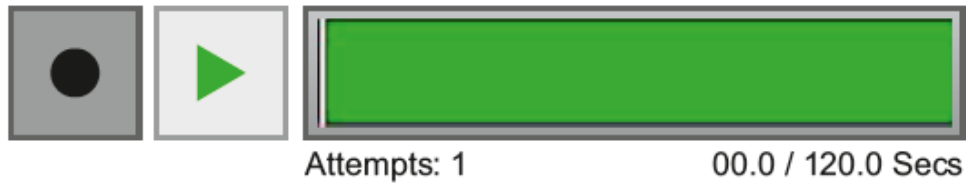
**Then follow the instructions here**

The recording bar should look like this:



If the line takes up all the space, then there is a loud noise (usually a technical issue) and we are not able to hear the recording. You should alert the invigilator if the recording bar looks like this:





If the recording is a flat line then the recording is not loud enough. The microphone may be too far from the mouth. A complete flat line means there is no recording, which is usually a technical issue. You should alert the invigilator if the recording looks like this:



### Part 1

In this task you first hear (and see) the question. Only box A appears on the screen. When this is finished you hear (and see) the first question (box B). When the time to record comes, the recording box appears immediately below the question box. This tells you the amount of time you have been recording for (in this case just over four seconds) and the total time for the task (in this case 30 seconds). As each new question appears, the same procedure is followed (boxes C and D)

Part One. In this part I'm going to ask you three short questions about yourself and your interests. You will have 30 seconds to reply to each question. Begin speaking when you hear this sound.

Please tell me about your family.



What do you like doing in your free time?

**C**



What's the weather like today?

**D**



When your response to the final question has been recorded, the test automatically moves on to the next task. You do not need to click on any button to make this happen.

**Note:** all Aptis speaking questions follow this set of procedures. In the following screenshots we have not included the recording boxes, but they will appear in each case when the question has been read.

The areas assessed are task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range and accuracy, vocabulary range and accuracy, pronunciation and fluency. Here is the marking scale.

<b>5</b> <b>B1 (or above)</b>	Likely to be above A2 level.
<b>4</b> <b>A2.2</b>	Responses to all three questions are on-topic and show the following features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some simple grammatical structures used correctly but basic mistakes systematically occur.</li> <li>• Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions, although inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable.</li> <li>• Mispronunciations are noticeable and frequently place a strain on the listener.</li> <li>• Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations but meaning is still clear.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> <b>A2.1</b>	Responses to two questions are on-topic and show the following features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some simple grammatical structures used correctly but basic mistakes systematically occur.</li> <li>• Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions, although inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable.</li> <li>• Mispronunciations are noticeable and frequently place a strain on the listener.</li> <li>• Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations but meaning is still clear.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b> <b>A1.1</b>	Responses to at least two questions are on-topic and show the following features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammatical structure is limited to words and phrases. Errors in basic patterns and simple grammar structures impede understanding.</li> <li>• Vocabulary is limited to very basic words related to personal information.</li> <li>• Pronunciation is mostly unintelligible except for isolated words.</li> <li>• Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations impede understanding.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b> <b>A1.1</b>	Response to one question is on-topic and shows the following features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammatical structure is limited to words and phrases. Errors in basic patterns and simple grammar structures impede understanding.</li> <li>• Vocabulary is limited to very basic words related to personal information.</li> <li>• Pronunciation is mostly unintelligible except for isolated words.</li> <li>• Frequent pausing, false starts and reformulations impede understanding.</li> </ul>
<b>0</b> <b>A0</b>	No meaningful language or all responses are completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).

## Part 2

In this task you first hear the contents of the top box – telling you about the task. When this has been heard, the first of the three questions appears. When this question has been heard the recording box appears and you should begin speaking. You will have up to 45 seconds for your answer.

When that question has been recorded, the next question automatically appears. Again, as soon as it has been heard, the recording box appears and the recording begins. This question also allows for a response up to 45 seconds. When the recording time for the second question is done, the final question appears.

When you have heard the question, the recording box appears and you again have 45 seconds to respond.

Part 2. In this part I'm going to ask you to describe a picture. Then I will ask you two questions about it. You will have 45 seconds for each response. Begin speaking when you hear this sound.

Describe this picture.

Why is it important to celebrate special occasions with family or friends?

Tell me about a celebration in your country.



The areas assessed are task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range and accuracy, vocabulary range and accuracy, pronunciation, fluency and cohesion. Here is the marking scale.

When your response to the third question has been recorded, the test automatically moves on to the next task. You do not need to click on any button to make this happen.

### Part 3

In this task you will again hear the contents of the top box. When this has been heard, the first of the three questions appears. When this question has been heard, the recording box appears and you should begin speaking.

You will have up to 45 seconds for your answer. When that question has been recorded, the next question automatically appears. Again, as soon as it has been heard, the recording box appears and the recording begins. This question also allows for a response up to 45 seconds. When the recording time for the second question is done, the final question appears. When you have heard the question, the recording box appears and you again have 45 seconds to respond.

Part Three. 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.

Which of these two places would it be better to bring children up in?



What would it be like to live in these two places?



When your response to the third question has been recorded, the test automatically moves on to the next task. You do not need to click on any button to make this happen.

#### Part 4

In this task you will yet again hear the contents of the top box. When this has been heard, you will be read (and can see) the three questions. When the questions have been heard, the voice tells you that you have one minute to prepare your responses. You will also be told that you may take notes. It is important to take notes, as it will help you in organising and remembering your responses. Rather than writing out exactly what you want to say, make brief notes and use these to help structure your speech.

There is a minute's silence as you prepare. A progress bar on the screen will indicate how long you have left. When this time has passed, the message at the bottom ('You now have two minutes to talk') appears, as will the recording box. You may speak until the recording automatically stops.

Part Four. In this part I'm going to show you a picture and ask you three questions. You will have one minute to think about your answers before you start speaking. You will have two minutes to answer all three questions. Begin speaking when you hear this sound. Look at the photograph.

Tell me about a personal achievement or award you have received.  
How did you feel about this achievement?  
Do awards encourage people to do their best?

**THIS MESSAGE IS  
SPOKEN ONLY**

**You now have a minute  
to prepare your answer.  
You may take notes.**



You now have two minutes to talk

### Special needs

The British Council cares about candidates with special needs and fairness to all candidates regardless of first language, gender, ethnicity, nationality or lifestyle. British Council has experience in delivering tests to candidates with special needs so that English language ability can be assessed objectively, regardless of any disability. If you require a modified version of a test, contact us at least four weeks before your test so we can discuss your needs and make suitable arrangements.