

Versant Professional English Test

Choosing the right test level

The Versant Professional English Test (VPET) from Pearson is a 60-minute comprehensive online assessment that measures proficiency in everyday workplace English that is commonly used in internal organizations.

The test can be used for benchmarking and evaluation as part of a business English course or for personnel development and advancement purposes.

VPET is offered at two levels of difficulty to provide Learning & Development managers, teachers and trainers with the most accurate analysis of learners' abilities across different levels of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Level	GSE	CEFR	Ability
Level 1	10 - 58	Pre-A1 to B1+	Beginner to intermediate
Level 2	51 - 90	B1+ to C2	Intermediate to advanced

Choosing the right level

VPET is a Benchmark test that will assist you in monitoring learners' progress. Remember, a learner's progress is affected by a number of factors such as instructions and study time exposure to English, so it's important to leave adequate time between test sessions to ensure that learners have had the chance to progress in their English ability.

To choose the most appropriate level in line with your learner's ability, you can use the following:

- Use results from other recent tests or qualifications
- Use the teacher's evaluation based on performance in class
- If following a specific course such as *Business Partner*, consider how well they're keeping up with the course
- Use results from the Pearson English Level Test, a 20-30 minute online test, to determine their CEFR level
- If in doubt, give a VPET Level 1 test and move up if they receive scores at the top of the range

Measuring progress

It is important to leave sufficient study time between tests if progress is to be measurable. The amount of time required is affected by factors related to the student and the level at which they are studying.

Specific student factors include: their motivation, the learning environment, first language, aptitude, the intensity of study, and exposure to English outside the learning environment.

Pearson's research also shows that the time needed to make progress when learning languages increases as students move up levels, so students may stay within a higher level for longer than a lower one. On average, it takes the following length of time for typical language learners to move from one level to the next.

CEFR level	Length of time (hours)
pre-A1 → A1	240
A1 → A2	150
A2 → B1	400
B1 → B2	800
B2 → C1	1,400

As the Global Scale of English provides a much more granular score than the CEFR, tests can be taken on a regular basis (there is no need to leave 150 hours between tests for an A1 learner). However, the speed at which they are learning and whether they are a beginner, intermediate or advanced learner need to be considered when planning testing.

Understanding scores

The Versant Professional English Test assesses the test taker's performance in Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing to provide a skill score and overall score on the Global Scale of English (GSE).

The Level 1 test provides GSE scores between 10 and 58 (equivalent to pre-A1 to B1+ on the CEFR).

The Level 2 test reports GSE scores between 51 and 90 (B1+ to C2 on the CEFR).

The scores mean the candidate has demonstrated that they can perform certain tasks at this level. The scores are accompanied by performance summaries outlining their abilities and Tips to Improve.

In certain circumstances, a numerical score cannot be given. This is recorded on the report along with an advisory notice.

- **BL - Below level** - A BL notice means the test taker scored below the GSE range of the test, so they have not received a score for that skill. If a test taker receives more than one BL, we recommend you discuss why this may be with them and consider setting a Level 1 test.

- **Not scorable** - A Not scorable notice is given when the test taker's spoken answers cannot be confidently automarked by the scoring engine. Causes can include background noise, mumbled responses, speaking too softly or too loudly, or speaking in a language other than English. Technical problems with the headset can also affect audio quality. Test taker tips provide information on how to avoid these issues.
- **Overall score** - The Overall score is the overall GSE score for the test taker, based on their performance in the test across all four skills. The overall score is withheld when one or more skills are below level or speaking could not be scored.

Tips to improve

The score reports provide Tips to Improve to help teachers align teaching strategies to an individual's particular learning needs. The results can be shared and discussed with the test taker and the recommendations used to set them realistic goals.

If using a Pearson course, instructors can select the title to view suggestions for activities which might help learners fill the gaps. The student could spend more time on these than some of the other activities, to put the recommendations into practice. It is advisable that test takers practice these skills before taking the test again.