



We believe fair tests should be as *relevant* as possible

Assessments should provide test takers with the confidence to succeed. We believe PTE Academic is the most relevant test of academic English in the world.

How well a test reflects the real life demands of study is an important quality of a test of academic English. Authenticity is an integral part of PTE Academic ensuring that students are able to use their English effectively in academic settings. We do this through the use of genuine academic test content, setting academically relevant tasks, and by measuring skills in an integrated way, for example - assessing the ability to listen to a lecture and then provide an oral summary.

What this means for you and your institution:

- PTE Academic uses genuine academic content so your students will be better prepared to use their English at your institution
- Integrated tasks are those that test more than one language skill, and therefore reflect the combinations of skills students need at university. PTE Academic has more integrated tasks than any other test. Students will therefore be able to cope better with the tasks expected of them at your institution
- The use of international and non-native English makes PTE Academic a more appropriate test for modern global universities of today
- Teaching and testing methodologies are constantly evolving in this modern digital era. It is vitally important that today's tests, like PTE Academic, reflect these changes so you can be sure that your students have the opportunity to thrive

We demonstrate the relevancy and authenticity of PTE Academic in the following ways:

1

Use of integrated tasks

Not all English language tests are the same when it comes to the type and format of the questions. PTE Academic contains 20 different question types¹, 11 of which are what we refer to as ‘integrated’ i.e. questions that contain tasks that address more than one language skill. For example, PTE Academic test takers are asked to listen to a lecture, take notes and then provide an oral or written summary, or they have to read and summarize written information, or understand and repeat what they have heard.

PTE Academic includes these integrated tasks to reflect the real life language skills that students will need to apply in an academic environment. Research² highlights the importance and advantages of using integrated tasks to improve test validity and increase authenticity.

In the table below we are defining integrated tasks as ones that require the use of a combination of skills and then give a score for the different skills used. PTE Academic has by far the largest number of integrated tasks of all major tests of academic English. Indeed, over half the test comprises integrated tasks.

	Number of Integrated Task Types	Number of Integrated Tasks (within one test)
PTE Academic	11	47 to 55

By using more integrated tasks, PTE Academic is more relevant to the actual way in which students use their language skills at academic institutions.

2

Use of genuine academic materials

Another way to increase test authenticity is to ensure the use of authentic content. Content for the questions used in PTE Academic is totally authentic. It is taken from real-life situations which test takers will encounter in an academic environment. Reading texts appropriate for PTE Academic include study texts of academic interest and texts related to all aspects of student life and the lectures are genuine academic lectures, not actors reading scripts. Question writers are required to use actual texts as stimulus material and no question without a source reference is accepted.

Other academic English tests use simulated materials. The use of genuine academic materials in PTE Academic demonstrates our commitment to ensuring students are better prepared to use their English for academic study.

Use of international academic English

PTE Academic delivers real-life measures of test takers' language ability to institutions requiring an agreed standard of proficiency in international academic English. An international flavor is ensured by selecting texts and settings encountered in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Using the main varieties of English ensures that all test takers are on an equal footing. Tests that use only one specific English variety put test takers not familiar with that variety at a clear disadvantage.

3

Furthermore PTE Academic is the only academic English test to include non-native English accents. This reflects the diversity of English that students are likely to experience at any university where English is the medium of instruction, and where students will be taught by professors and teaching assistants who are not native speakers of English.

This use of international varieties of English and non-native accents demonstrates that PTE Academic is highly relevant to today's modern international academic institutions.

References

¹. *PTE Academic Score Guide*

http://www.pearsonpte.com/PTEAcademic/scores/Documents/PTEA_Score_Guide.pdf

². *Feak, C. & Dobson, B. (1996)*. Building on the impromptu: Source-based academic writing assessment. *College ESL*, 6(1), 73–84.

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