

# Burlington VTest Academic English

## Introduction

The Burlington VTest Academic English exam is a comprehensive assessment tool designed to evaluate proficiency in Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing for candidates of all nationalities.

### Who is the exam for?

The exam is designed for people who speak English as a second or foreign language, typically aged 16 and above, seeking to demonstrate their English proficiency in academic contexts.

### What does the exam look like?

The exam is modular and is offered in different combinations of one, two, three, and four skills.

### What device do I need to take the exam?

You can use any computer, laptop, or tablet with a good internet connection.

### What accommodations are available for students with disabilities or special needs?

Making our services accessible and user-friendly is a top priority. The VTest platform integrates accessibility tools, ensuring compliance with global accessibility standards. Students can try our accessibility tools and adjust them to their needs and comfort prior to the exam.

### What levels of English does the exam cover?

The exam covers all levels from Pre-A1 to C2 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

### What do the CEFR levels mean?

The CEFR describes broad divisions of linguistic proficiency using a system of letters and numbers. From lowest to highest, the levels are: Pre-A1, A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2.

Each level describes what a learner should be able to do in the four skills of Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing. This is done with a set of relevant 'can-do' descriptors that state the specific abilities learners should be capable of as practical users of the language.

### How is the exam administered and scored?

The VTest Academic English exam is administered and scored using the VTest online platform. Multiple-choice Listening and Reading tasks are scored automatically, and Speaking and Writing tasks are scored using our automated scoring engine. The exam combines the power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) with human review to deliver accurate and reliable results.

# Overview of Sections

## Listening

- Candidates progress through sets of passages and questions that adapt to their ability. Candidates' performance on the first set determines which set they will see next; each subsequent set is based on candidates' performance on the previous set.
- Candidates hear 7 passages and answer 21 questions in total (3 questions for each listening passage). They have 30 seconds to read the questions before the audio plays, with a countdown timer showing the time. After the audio plays, they have another 30 seconds to answer. When the time is up, candidates auto-advance to the next passage, but if they have finished sooner, they can self-advance using the NEXT button. The exam takes up to 20 minutes to complete, though candidates can finish faster.
- Candidates receive a CEFR level score for the Listening section based on their overall performance.

## Reading

- Candidates progress through sets of passages and questions that adapt to their ability. Candidates' performance on the first set determines which set they will see next; each subsequent set is based on candidates' performance on the previous set.
- Candidates read 7 passages and answer 21 questions in total (3 questions for each reading passage). For each reading passage, they have five minutes to read and answer the questions. A countdown timer shows candidates how much time they have. When the time is up, candidates auto-advance to the next passage, but if they have finished sooner, they can self-advance using the NEXT button. The exam takes up to 35 minutes to complete, though candidates can finish faster.
- Candidates receive a CEFR level score for the Reading section based on their overall performance.



Listening

Reading



Speaking

Writing

## Speaking

- The VTest Academic Speaking section is semi-adaptive and consists of three parts. It takes about 13 minutes to complete, though candidates can finish faster.
  - Part 1 is a pre-speaking task. Candidates read a passage with 12 gaps (a cloze passage); for each gap, they choose the best answer from a drop-down menu with three options. The reading passage is written to resemble a spoken text transcript. Performance on Part 1 determines what candidates will see in Parts 2 and 3.
  - Part 2 is a picture-based task, with candidates answering questions about a provided picture. The task is scored by the VTest automated scoring system.
  - Part 3 is an open-ended task, where candidates respond to two related prompts. The task is scored by the VTest automated scoring system.
- Part 1 scores are used to align candidates with level-appropriate prompts in Parts 2 and 3, and are not included in determining candidates' Speaking levels. Candidates receive a CEFR level score for the Speaking section based on their performance on Parts 2 and 3.

### VTest Academic Speaking Section Overview

Part	Task	Description	Time
Part 1	Grammar & Vocabulary (Pre-Speaking)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 1 cloze passage with 12 multiple-choice items</li><li>● used to determine prompts for Parts 2 and 3</li></ul>	5 min
Part 2	Pictures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 1 picture plus 3 questions</li></ul>	5 min
Part 3	Discuss a Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 1 set of 2 related questions</li></ul>	3 min

## Writing

- The VTest Academic Writing section is semi-adaptive and consists of three parts. It takes about 37 minutes to complete, though candidates can finish much faster.
  - Part 1 is a pre-writing task. Candidates read a set of nine short paragraphs, each with a missing sentence, and choose the most suitable sentence from three options to complete each paragraph. Performance on Part 1 determines what candidates will see in Parts 2 and 3.
  - Part 2 requires candidates to write a personal essay in response to a prompt, which can be in the form of a question or statement. The task is scored by the VTest automated scoring system.
  - Part 3 requires candidates to write an academic essay in response to a prompt, which can be in the form of a question or statement. The task is scored by the VTest automated scoring system.
- Part 1 scores are used to align candidates with level-appropriate prompts in Parts 2 and 3, and are not included in determining candidates' Writing levels. Candidates receive a CEFR level score for the Writing section based on their performance on Parts 2 and 3.

### VTest Academic Writing Section Overview

Part	Task	Description	Time
Part 1	Insert a Sentence (Pre-Writing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 9 multiple-choice items</li><li>● used to determine levels for Parts 2–3</li></ul>	7 min
Part 2	Personal Essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 1 prompt</li><li>● candidates write 80–200 words</li></ul>	15 min
Part 3	Academic Essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 1 prompt</li><li>● candidates write 80–200 words</li></ul>	15 min