BRITISH COUNCIL

ENGLISH LANGUAGE
ASSESSMENT RESEARCH GROUP

Technical Report

Aptis Advanced Technical Supplement

Version 1.0
TR/2020/003

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1. Introduction

1.1 About this Technical Supplement

This Technical Supplement has been produced to complement the Aptis General Technical Manual (O'Sullivan, Dunlea, Spiby, Westbrook, & Dunn, 2020) by providing information specific to the Aptis Advanced test. The main Technical Manual gives a complete overview of the Aptis Test System, within which a number of variants have been developed for different test populations and uses. The Aptis Test System was developed by the British Council, which works directly with organisations to provide tests of English as a Second Language / English as a Foreign Language / English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESL/EFL/ESOL) for a range of assessment needs. The Aptis Test System has been used globally since its launch in 2012 with the first variant within the system, Aptis General. Since that time a number of variants have been developed. Aptis Advanced has been in operational use since 2015. Readers interested in aspects of the Aptis Test System which are common to all variants should consult the main Technical Manual for information on the following areas:

- The theoretical model of test development and validation underpinning the system
- The approach to item writing and content quality assurance
- The training and standardisation of human raters and measures for monitoring live marking
- The approach to pretesting and quality assurance for building live test versions
- The use of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001) in the test design and score reporting
- How technical performance characteristics of tests within the system are evaluated and maintained
- Accommodations available to ensure the test is accessible for a diverse range of test takers
- Research and validation for tests in the Aptis Test System.

The Aptis Advanced Technical Supplement focuses on providing information on the format of each of the five components (Grammar and Vocabulary, Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing) and detailed information on task specifications and rating scales specific to the Aptis Advanced test.

1.2 Aptis Test System

The Aptis Test System integrates test design, development, and delivery aspects within an integrated system to provide flexible English language assessment options to test users. The system combines a coherent theoretical approach to language test development and validation with an operational network for content creation and test delivery. Tests are developed within the Aptis system for various uses by different test users, but according to the same theoretical principles of language test validation and the same operational approach to quality assurance. As noted above, the first variant released in the system was Aptis General, and this remains the baseline, or standard variant within the system. New variants are positioned in relation to Aptis General according to a model of localisation that provides a principled framework for developing variants for different test taker populations and uses (see the main Technical Manual for a description of localisation in the Aptis Test System). Currently the main variants in the system are Aptis General, Aptis for Teachers, Aptis Advanced, and Aptis for Teens.

2. Aptis Advanced

2.1 Aptis Advanced overview

Aptis Advanced is designed to provide assessment options for ESL/EFL/ESOL speakers spanning proficiency ranges from B1 to C2 in terms of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Test takers will be 16 years old or older and may be engaged in education, training, employment or other activities.

As with Aptis General, the description of test-taker variables for Aptis Advanced is generic. It is intended as a ready-to-use product appropriate for use in a broad range of contexts. Potential test users are expected to engage with the Aptis team to evaluate whether Aptis Advanced is the most appropriate variant for the intended test-taker population.

Aptis Advanced is intended for use in determining the ability of test takers at higher proficiency levels (B1-C2) in a range of employment, training and learning needs. Potential target language use (TLU) contexts lie within the educational, occupational, and public domains, for example, where learners are engaged with real-world tasks in higher education and training programmes, as well as learners using English for work-related purposes.

2.2 Aptis Advanced scoring

As with all other variants in the Aptis Test System, for Aptis Advanced the Core (Grammar & Vocabulary), Reading and Listening components are scored automatically within the computer delivery system. Trained human raters mark the Speaking and Writing components, using an online rating system. In terms of score reporting, for each of the four skill components—Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing—a numerical scale score (between 0 and 50) plus a CEFR level are allocated to each test taker. For the Core component a numerical scale score is provided. It is important to note that the numerical score scales (0-50) used for Aptis Advanced are specific to this variant. Thus, the same numerical score on the Aptis Advanced Reading component and the Aptis General Reading component do not mean the same thing in terms of the degree of English proficiency demonstrated by the test taker. To interpret the scores provided by each variant, it is important to understand the range of proficiency covered and types of tasks used in each variant.

The use of the CEFR in score reporting provides a common reference point for making very broad comparisons of proficiency levels targeted by the different variants. As already noted, Aptis Advanced is designed to measure proficiency across the range from B1 to C2. Candidates who complete the four-skills test, comprising all five Aptis components, are additionally awarded an overall numerical scale score (out of a total possible score of 200) and an overall CEFR level. The use of two different types of score feedback—a finer grained score scale and proficiency levels on a criterion-referenced proficiency framework such as the CEFR—is an important feature of the test designed to provide flexibility for test users. The two types of feedback provide different but complementary information suitable to help inform different kinds of decisions.

Numerical Score:

- Provides a detailed comparison of candidate performances for a given skill within a group, including comparisons between students within the same CEFR level at a more fine-grained level.

- Enables tracking of test-taker performance for a given skill over a period of time or following language teaching/learning intervention. This is particularly relevant when the intervention or learning period may not be sufficient to realise improvement over one or more CEFR levels.

CEFR Skill Profile:

- Provides benchmarked CEFR levels of proficiency which can be referenced to descriptions of what a language user can typically do at these levels.

- Differentiates strengths and weaknesses across skills to help provide road maps for learners and teachers to target areas for improvement (referencing the descriptions of what typical language users can do).

- Can be used to show improvement over longer periods of time or more intense interventions based on recognised criteria.

For a detailed description of the scoring system used across variants in the Aptis Test System, including Aptis Advanced, see Dunn (2020).

2.3 Aptis Advanced test structure at the component level

Tables 1-5 present an overview of the structure of the five components which make up the full, four-skills package of Aptis Advanced:

1. Core Grammar and Vocabulary component
2. Listening component
3. Reading component
4. Speaking component
5. Writing component.

The Core, Reading and Listening components utilise selected-response formats. Speaking and Writing components require test takers to provide samples of spoken and written performance. The Speaking test is a semi-direct test in which test takers record responses to pre-recorded prompts.

Table 1: Overview of the structure of the Aptis Advanced Core component

Part	Skill focus	Items / part	Lvl	Items/ level	Task focus	Task description	Response format
1	Grammar	25	A1	5	Syntax and word usage	Sentence completion: select the best word to complete a sentence based on syntactic appropriacy.	3-option multiple choice
			A2	5-7			
			B1	5-7			
			B2	5-7			
2	Vocabulary	25	A1	5	Synonym (vocabulary breadth)	Word matching: match 2 words which have the same or very similar meanings.	5 target words. Select the best match for each from a bank of 10 options.
			A2	5	Meaning in context (vocabulary breadth)	Sentence completion: select the best word to fill a gap in a short sentence. Understanding meaning from context.	5 sentences, each with a 1-word gap. Select the best word to complete each from a bank of 10 options.
			B1	5	Meaning in context (vocabulary breadth)	Sentence completion: select the best word to fill a gap in a short sentence. Understanding meaning from context.	5 sentences, each with a 1-word gap. Select the best word to complete each from a bank of 10 options.
				5	Definition (vocabulary breadth)	Matching words to definitions.	5 definitions. Select the word defined from a bank of 10 options.
			B2	5	Collocation (vocabulary depth)	Word matching; match the word which is most commonly used with a word targeted from the appropriate vocabulary level.	5 target words. Select the best match for each from a bank of 10 options.

Table 2: Overview of the structure of the Aptis Advanced Reading component

Part	Skill focus	Items	Lvl	Task focus	Task description	Response format
1	**Text-level comprehension of short texts**	7	B1	Text-level comprehension of short texts (Global reading, both careful and expeditious)	Matching statements of opinion with people associated with different texts. Selecting the correct person requires text-level comprehension and reading across multiple sentences.	4 short paragraphs. Test takers choose from a drop-down menu which of the four people match 7 statements.
2	**Text-level comprehension of a long text**	7	B2	Text-level comprehension of a longer text (Global reading, both careful and expeditious)	Matching the most appropriate headings to paragraphs. Requires integration of micro- and macro-propositions within and across paragraphs, and comprehension of the discourse structure of more complex and abstract texts.	7 paragraphs forming a long text. Select the most appropriate heading for each paragraph from a bank of 8 options.
3	**Text-level comprehension of a shorter text**	5		Text-level comprehension and cohesion (careful global reading)	Selecting the correct options to complete a cloze text. There are 5 gaps and selecting the correct option can only be deduced from a global understanding of the whole text.	5 gaps and 3 MCQ options for each. Select the correct option to fill in the gap.
4	**Text-level comprehension across two texts**	6	C1	Text-level comprehension across two texts (global reading, both careful and expeditious)	Selecting the correct option to complete two thematically linked cloze texts. Selecting the correct option requires global understanding of both texts.	3 gaps in each text with 3 MCQ-options for each. Select the correct option to fill the gap.

Table 3: Overview of the structure of the Aptis Advanced Listening component

Part	Skill focus	Item/ Part	Lvl	Format	Task description	Response format
1	**Identifying specific factual information**	5	B1	Monologues & Dialogues	Q&A about listening text. Listen to short monologues and conversations to identify propositions. The information targeted is concrete and of a factual/literal nature. Requires text-level comprehension and listening across sentences/ utterances in order to answer items correctly.	One 4-option multiple choice question. Distractors should have some overlap with information and ideas in the text. Target and distractors (where possible) are paraphrased.
2	**Meaning representation / inference**	6	B2	Monologues & Dialogues	Q&A about listening text. Listen to monologues and conversations to identify a speaker's attitude, opinion or intention. The information targeted will require the integration of propositions across the input text to identify the correct answer.	Two 4-option multiple choice questions. Both target and distractors are (where possible) paraphrased, and distractors refer to important information and concepts in the text that are not possible answers to the question.
3	**Discourse construction, meaning representation and inference**	6	C1	Dialogues	Q&A about listening text. Listen to a dialogue between two speakers and identify which opinions are expressed by which speaker(s). The information targeted will require the integration of abstract ideas and propositions across an extended stretch of interaction.	Identify who expresses each of the six given opinions: the male speaker, the female speaker, or both the male and female speaker.
4	**Discourse construction, meaning representation and inference**	8		Monologues	Q&A about listening text. Listen to a monologue in which the speaker recounts a narrative containing four key elements. The information targeted will require the integration of information and propositions across an extended stretch of interaction.	Select the appropriate response from a bank of 3 MCQ options for each of the four key story elements.

Table 4: Overview of the structure of the Aptis Advanced Speaking component

Part	Skill focus	Lvl	Task description	Channel of input / prompts	Time to plan	Time for response	Rating criteria
1	**Describing, comparing and contrasting, providing reasons and explanations**	**B1**	The candidate responds to 3 questions / prompts and is asked to describe, contrast and compare two photographs on a topic familiar to B1 candidates. The candidate gives opinions and provides reasons and explanations.	1) Questions presented in both written and oral form (pre-recorded). Questions presented in a sequence (e.g. Q2 is presented after the response to Q1). 2) Two photographs showing different aspects of a topic are presented on screen.	No	45 seconds to respond to each question	Separate task-based holistic scales are used for each task. Performance descriptors describe the expected performance at each score band. The following aspects of performance are addressed: *1) grammatical range and accuracy* *2) lexical range and accuracy* *3) pronunciation* *4) fluency* *5) cohesion and coherence.*
2	**Integrating ideas on an abstract topic into a long turn. Giving and justifying opinions, advantages and disadvantages**	**B2**	The candidate plans a longer turn integrating responses to a set of 3 questions related to a more abstract topic. After planning their response, the candidate speaks for two minutes to present a coherent, continuous, long turn.	1) Three questions are presented simultaneously in both written and oral form (pre-recorded). Questions remain on screen throughout the task. 2) One photograph illustrating an element of the topic mentioned in the prompts. The photo is not referred to in the questions.	1 minute	2 minutes for the entire response, integrating the 3 questions into a single long turn	
3	**Integrating ideas regarding an abstract topic into a long turn. Giving opinions, justifying opinions, giving advantages and disadvantages.**	**C1**	The candidate plans a long turn formulating a balanced argument on a topic based on input of for/against bullet points. The candidate speaks for two minutes to present his/her long turn. A subsequent follow-up statement related to the topic is presented to the candidate once the long term has been completed. The candidate is invited to comment on the statement and has 45 seconds for their response, for which there is no preparation time.	Written and aural input (no visuals). The title of the topic is shown on screen above two tables of three 'for' and three 'against' bullet points. The follow up statement (pre-recorded) and prompt appear on screen once the long term has been completed.	1 response of 90 seconds 1 response of 45 seconds	1 minute to prepare for first response, immediate response following second prompt	

Table 5: Overview of the structure of the Aptis Advanced Writing component

Part	Skill focus	Lvl	Task description	Channel of input / prompts	Expected output	Rating criteria
1	**Interactive writing. Responding to a series of written questions with short paragraph-level responses.**	B1	The candidate responds interactively to 3 separate questions. Each response requires a short paragraph-level response. The questions are presented as if the candidate is writing on an internet forum or social network site.	Written. The rubric presents the context (discussion forum, social media, etc.). Each question is displayed in a sequence following the completion of the response to the previous question.	30–40 words in response to each question	Separate task-based holistic scales are used for each task. Performance descriptors describe the expected performance at each score band. The following aspects of performance are addressed (not all aspects are assessed for each task):
2	**Integrated writing task requiring longer paragraph level writing in response to an email and some notes provided. Appropriate use of register.**	B2	The candidate writes an e-mail in response to the task prompt which contains an e-mail from an unknown reader connected to the information in the prompt (management, customer services, etc.) and notes made by the e-mail writer. The candidate will be required to expand these notes into complete sentences framed in an appropriate formal register.	A transactional e-mail message is presented as the starting point. This e-mail is written in a formal impersonal register. The e-mail contains three distinct points of information. The notes that accompany the e-mail are written as bullet points and/or in note form in an informal register. There are three separate notes – one for each distinct point of information in the e-mail. Number annotations indicate which notes apply to which pieces of information. The notes appear in the same sequence as the information in the e-mail.	120-150 words	*1) task completion* *2) grammatical range and accuracy* *3) lexical range and accuracy*
3	**Integrated writing task requiring longer paragraph level writing in response to notes provided on a given subject. Appropriate use of register for intended audience.**	C1	The candidate writes an informational text for an online publication on a topic of general interest.	The candidate is presented with some notes in bullet point format on the topic and a simple grid (three rows, three columns) containing additional information in numerical form. The information in the bullet point notes should focus on abstract concepts. The information in the table should focus on concrete information and should be such that it allows for contrast and comparison and interpretation.	180-220 words	*4) cohesion and coherence* *5) punctuation and spelling.*

3. References

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.*

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dunn, K. (2020). Aptis scoring system. *Aptis technical report* (TR/2020/002). London: British Council. Retrieved from https://www.britishcouncil.org/exam/aptis/research/publications/technical

O'Sullivan, B., Dunlea, J., Spiby, R., Westbrook, C., & Dunn, K. (2020). Aptis General Technical Manual: Version 2.2. *Aptis technical report* (TR/2020/001). London: British Council. Retrieved from https://www.britishcouncil.org/exam/aptis/research/publications/technical

Appendix A: How to read Aptis Advanced task specification tables and list of specification tables in Appendices B - F

Appendix B Grammar and Vocabulary component

1. Multiple choice sentence completion

2. Synonym
3. Meaning in context
4. Definition
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Appendix C Listening component

1. MCQ B1

2. MCQ B2
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4. MCQ C1

Appendix D Reading component

1. Identifying opinions
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Appendix E Speaking component

1. Speaking Task 1
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Appendix F Writing component

1. Writing Task 1
2. Writing Task 2
3. Writing Task 3

Appendix B: Aptis Advanced task specifications for the Grammar and Vocabulary component

Task: Multiple choice sentence completion

Test	Aptis	Component	Grammar	Task	Multiple choice sentence completion

Features of the Task					
Skill focus	Syntax and word usage				
Task level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Task description	Sentence completion. Select the best word(s) to complete a sentence based on syntactic appropriacy.				
Further task focus information	Each item will target a grammatical exponent from a specific level (A1–B2). A sentence (referred to as the stem) will be used to contextualise the targeted exponent. All elements of the stem and options will be constructed according to the categories specified in Features of the Input Text and Features of the Response (see below for details).				
Instructions to candidates	Presently no direct instructions. It is suggested that we add a generic rubric at the beginning of the Grammar part (not necessary to repeat for each item): *There are 25 items in this section. For each item, choose the best word or words to complete the sentence.*				
Response format	3-option multiple choice				
Items per task	1 (there is only one gap to fill in each task, making *task* and *item* functionally equivalent for Grammar)				
Time given for part	25 minutes for the entire grammar and vocabulary test. Individual tasks are not timed.				

Cognitive processing Goal setting	Expeditious reading: local (scan/search for specifics)	Careful reading: local (understanding sentence)
	Expeditious reading: global (skim for gist/search for key ideas/detail)	Careful reading: global (comprehend main idea(s)/overall text(s))

Cognitive processing Levels of reading	**Word recognition**
	Lexical access
	Syntactic parsing
	Establishing propositional meaning (cl./sent. level)
	Inferencing
	Building a mental model
	Creating a text level representation (disc. structure)
	Creating an intertextual representation (multi-text)

Features of the Input Text										
Word count	A1 items maximum of 8 words. A2–B2 items maximum of 15 words.									
Content knowledge (A1–B2)	General								Specific	
Cultural specificity (A1–B2)	Neutral								Specific	
Nature of information A1	Only concrete		Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract		Mainly abstract			
Nature of information A2	Only concrete		Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract		Mainly abstract			
Nature of information B1	Only concrete		Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract		Mainly abstract			
Nature of information B2	Only concrete		Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract		Mainly abstract			
Presentation	Verbal				Non-verbal (i.e. graphs)				Both	
Lexical level A1 target	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10
Lexical level A2 target	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10
Lexical level B1 target	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10
Lexical level B2 target	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10
Lexical level: further criteria	All vocabulary used in the stem sentence must come from one level below the targeted grammatical exponent. For A1 and A2 grammatical targets, words in the stem come from K1, for B1 grammatical targets, vocabulary in the stem comes form K1–K2, etc. (See Guidelines on Adhering to Lexical Level).									
Grammatical level	The grammar of the stem sentence used to contextualise the targeted grammatical exponent should be from levels below that of the targeted exponent. For A1 and A2 grammatical targets, the grammar of the surrounding stem should be A1 exponents, for B1 targets, from A2 exponents, etc. (See guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level).									
Topic	Choose from topic list appropriate for the targeted level.									
Functions	Choose from the list of functional exponents for the targeted level.									
Genre	As stand-alone sentences, it is difficult to identify a specific genre. However, the sentences should be plausible extracts from the range of texts likely to be encountered by candidates in the TLU domain for Aptis General. Some elements of spoken grammar will be targeted with dialogues.									

Features of the Response				
Target	Length	1–3 words	Lexical	Same as the level for the stem sentence
Target (grammatical level)	Targets will be chosen from the list of grammatical exponents for the targeted level (e.g. for B2 tasks, choose grammatical exponents from the B2 exponent list). Note that some exponents are marked "not used as targets". These exponents should not be used as the targets for grammar items.			
Distractors	Length	1–3 words	Lexical	Same as the level for the stem sentence
Key information	Within sentence	Across sentences		Across paragraphs
Extra criteria	All of the options must be plausible as stand-alone words outside the stem. It should not be possible to rule out an option without reference to the stem based on spelling or non-existent morphology.			

Presentation	Written	Aural	Illustrations/Graphs	

Task: Synonym

Test		Aptis		Component	Vocabulary	Task		Synonym

Features of the Task

Skill focus	Vocabulary knowledge (breadth). Matching words with the same or similar meanings.

Task level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2

Task description	Word matching. Match two words which have the same or very similar meanings. For each of 5 target words, select the best match from a bank of 10 options.
Instructions to candidates	Select a word from the list that has the same or a very similar meaning to the word on the left. *(This is slightly different to present rubric).*
Response format	Matching from a bank of options. For 5 target words, select the best match for each from a bank of 10 options.
Items per task	5
Time given for part	25 minutes for the entire Grammar and Vocabulary test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.

Cognitive processing Goal setting	**Expeditious reading: local** (scan/search for specifics)	**Careful reading: local (understanding sentence)**
	Expeditious reading: global (skim for gist/search for key ideas/detail)	**Careful reading: global** (comprehend main idea(s)/overall text(s))

Cognitive processing Levels of reading	**Word recognition**
	Lexical access
	Syntactic parsing
	Establishing propositional meaning (cl./sent. level)
	Inferencing
	Building a mental model
	Creating a text level representation (disc. structure)
	Creating an intertextual representation (multi-text)

Features of the Response

Target	Length	1	Lexical	K1	Part of speech	Nouns, verbs, adjectives
Distractors	Length	1	Lexical	K1	Part of speech	Nouns, verbs, adjectives

Key information	Within sentence	Across sentences	Across paragraphs

Extra criteria	1) All 5 targeted words and all of the bank of options must be the same part of speech. 2) All targeted synonym pairs will be generated from a finite list of synonym pairs. 3) The 5 distractors will be selected from the same K1 level and part of speech as the 5 targeted words.

Presentation	Written	Aural	Illustrations/Graphs	

Task: Meaning in context

Test	Aptis	Component	Vocabulary	Task	Meaning in Context

Features of the Task					
Skill focus	Vocabulary knowledge (breadth). Understanding meaning from context.				
Task level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Task description	Sentence completion. For 5 stand-alone sentences (i.e. the sentences do not form a text), select the best option from a bank of 10 to complete each sentence. The correct word will be the most appropriate and plausible lexical choice for the context.				
Further task focus information	The sentence containing the gap should contain enough contextual information to secure the correct answer and provide enough context for a competent speaker to predict the correct answer (or a range of plausible alternatives).				
Instructions to candidates	Complete each sentence using a word from the drop-down list.				
Response format	Matching. Select the best option for each target sentence from a bank of 10.				
Items per task	5				
Time given for part	25 minutes for the entire Grammar and Vocabulary test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.				
Cognitive processing Goal setting	Expeditious reading: local (scan/search for specifics)		Careful reading: local (understanding sentence)		
	Expeditious reading: global (skim for gist/search for key ideas/detail)		Careful reading: global (comprehend main idea(s)/overall text(s))		
Cognitive processing Levels of reading	Word recognition				
	Lexical access				
	Syntactic parsing				
	Establishing propositional meaning (cl./sent. level)				
	Inferencing				
	Building a mental model				
	Creating a text level representation (disc. structure)				
	Creating an intertextual representation (multi-text)				

Features of the Input Text									
Word count	Maximum 15								
Content knowledge	General					Specific			
Cultural specificity	Neutral					Specific			
Nature of information	Only concrete		Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract		Mainly abstract		
Presentation	Written			Aural			Illustrations/graphs		
Lexical level A2	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10
Lexical level B1	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10
Lexical level: Further criteria	(See Guidelines on Adhering to Lexical Level for more information).								
Grammatical level A2	A1 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level).								
Grammatical level B1	A1–A2 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level).								
Topic	Topics from the list of topics for the targeted level.								
Text genre	As stand-alone sentences, it is difficult to identify a specific genre. However, the sentences should be plausible extracts from the range of texts likely to be encountered by candidates in the TLU domain for Aptis General, and relevant to the level (see Genre list for more information).								

Features of the Response					
Target A2	**Length**	1	**Lexical**	K2	**Part of speech**	Nouns, verbs, adjectives
Distractors A2	**Length**	1	**Lexical**	K2	**Part of speech**	Nouns, verbs, adjectives
Target B1	**Length**	1	**Lexical**	K3	**Part of speech**	Nouns, verbs, adjectives
Distractors B1	**Length**	1	**Lexical**	K3	**Part of speech**	Nouns, verbs, adjectives
Key information	Within sentence		Across sentences		Across paragraphs
Extra criteria	1) The target words should not be from the same semantic/lexical fields. 2) The distractors should be relevant to the targets. Each distractor should be relevant to 1 target. The relevance can be in terms of the semantic field/domain of activity of the contextualising sentence or the targeted word				
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations/Graphs

Task: Definition

Test	Aptis	Component	Vocabulary	Task	Definition

Features of the Task					
Skill focus	Vocabulary knowledge (breadth). Matching words to their definitions.				
Task level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Task description	Matching. A list of 5 separate definitions, select the word that each definition applies to from a bank of 10.				
Further task focus information	This task is targeting vocabulary knowledge. B1 is a transitional level, bridging the restricted field of activity open to Basic Users at A1/A2. From B1, learners become more independent, and an important part of that independence is utilizing the target language to acquire knowledge in the target language.				
Instructions to candidates	For each of the 5 definitions below, select the word that matches the definition from the drop-down menu.				
Response format	Matching. Select the appropriate word from a bank of 10 options for each of 5 definitions.				
Items per task	5				
Time given for part	25 minutes for the entire Grammar and Vocabulary test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.				
Cognitive processing Goal setting	Expeditious reading: local (scan/search for specifics)		Careful reading: local (understanding sentence)		
	Expeditious reading: global (skim for gist/search for key ideas/detail)		Careful reading: global (comprehend main idea(s)/overall text(s))		
Cognitive processing Levels of reading	Word recognition				
	Lexical access				
	Syntactic parsing				
	Establishing propositional meaning (cl./sent. level)				
	Inferencing				
	Building a mental model				
	Creating a text level representation (disc. structure)				
	Creating an intertextual representation (multi-text)				

Features of the Input Text (contextualising stem sentence)										
Word count	Maximum of 15 words									
Content knowledge	General				Specific					
Cultural specificity	Neutral				Specific					
Nature of information	Only concrete		Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract		Mainly abstract			
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations/graphs					
Lexical level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10
Lexical level: Further criteria	(See Guidelines on Adhering to Lexical Level for more information).									
Grammatical level	A1–A2 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level).									
Topic	Topics from the list of appropriate topics for B1.									
Text genre	Dictionary									
Extra criteria	Definitions should be taken from one of the appropriate learner dictionaries in the resources section.									

Features of the Response						
Targets	**Length**	1	**Lexical**	K3	**Part of speech**	Noun, verb, adjective, adverb
Distractors	**Length**	1	**Lexical**	K3	**Part of speech**	Noun, verb, adjective, adverb
Key information	Within sentence		Across sentences		Across paragraphs	
Extra criteria	1) The target words should not be from the same semantic/lexical fields. 2) Each distractor should be designed to be relevant to 1 target, but capable of being ruled out by the definition.					
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations/Graphs	

Task: Collocation

Test	Aptis	Component	Vocabulary	Task	Collocation

Features of the Task

Skill focus	Vocabulary knowledge (depth). For words targeted from the appropriate vocabulary level, understanding how those lexical items operate in context and what other lexical items will likely be used with them.

Task level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2

Task description	Word matching. For a list of 5 target words, select the word which is most commonly used with the target word from a list of 10 options. The collocation pairs would be used in a direct sequence.
Further task focus information	This task targets depth of vocabulary knowledge regarding the word targeted. It is not simply knowledge of the general meaning or semantic field, but in-depth knowledge about how the word is used in context that is required to correctly complete the task. A vocabulary item relevant to the level is being targeted to determine the depth of the test-taker's knowledge regarding that word. The collocation itself is not the target.
Instructions to candidates	Select a word from the list that is most often used with the word on the left.
Response format	Matching. For each of 5 target words, select the best option from a bank of 10.
Items per task	5
Time given for part	25 minutes for the entire reading test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.

Cognitive processing Goal setting	Expeditious reading: local (scan/search for specifics)	Careful reading: local (understanding sentence)
	Expeditious reading: global (skim for gist/search for key ideas/detail)	Careful reading: global (comprehend main idea(s)/overall text(s))

Cognitive processing Levels of reading	**Word recognition**
	Lexical access
	Syntactic parsing
	Establishing propositional meaning (cl./sent. level)
	Inferencing
	Building a mental model
	Creating a text level representation (disc. structure)
	Creating an intertextual representation (multi-text)

Features of the Response

Target	Length	1	Lexical	K4–K5	Part of speech	Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs

Determining collocation appropriacy	1) Consult the BYU–BNC resource for the targeted word. 2) Appropriate collocations should have a frequency of 10 or greater. 3) Appropriate collocations should have an MI of 3 or greater. 4) All other options in the bank should have a collocation frequency of 0 (zero) or 1 (one).

Distractors	Length	1	Lexical	K1-K4	Part of speech	Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs

Key information	Within sentence	Across sentences	Across paragraphs

Extra criteria	1) The bank word selected to collocate with the target (i.e., be used immediately following the target) will be from a lexical level below the target (i.e. if the targeted word on the left is K5, the word to selected from the bank of options would be K4 or lower). 2) See criteria for determining collocation appropriacy above. 3) Set idiomatic phrases and sayings are not used. (.e.g. *apron* + *strings*, for which the most productive and likely usage is associated with the idiomatic expression "tied to your mother's apron strings"). 4) The approach to creating sets of targets and distractors is the same as *meaning from context* (i.e., targets should all come from different lexical fields, distractors should be related to a target in a one-on-one relationship). 5) Subjective, expert quality review will still be necessary to determine collocation appropriacy, and to avoid two possible answers. The collocation search noted above will not take into account cases when two words treated as not a possible pair by the frequency count, may actually collocate with intervening lexical items occurring in between the pair. This will need to be made explicit to item writers and quality reviewers to check.

Presentation	Written	Aural	Illustrations/Graphs	

Task: MCQ B1

Test	Aptis Advanced	Component	Listening	Task	MCQ B1

Features of the Task

Skill focus	Identifying factual information

Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2	**B1**	B2	C1	C2

Task description	Q&A about listening text. Listen to short monologues and conversations to identify factual information.
Instructions to candidates	The rubric will always contain two parts: 1) a short contextualization: *listen to the museum guide. listen to the man and woman planning a meeting*; 2) The second part of the rubric may be either a short question (e.g. *What is special about the painting*? or a short instruction: *Find out where the meeting will be held….)*

Response format	4-option multiple choice		Items per task		1

Time given for part	50 minutes for the entire Listening test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.

Kind of information targeted	**Lexical Recognition**	**Factual information**
	Interpretative meaning at the utterance	**Meaning at discourse level**

Cognitive processing Levels of listening	**Input decoding**
	Lexical search
	Syntactic parsing
	Meaning construction (establishing propositional meaning/inferencing in Reading)
	Discourse construction (building a mental model / creating a text level representation in Reading)

Features of the Input Text

Length	25 -35 seconds	Syllables	115 - 123	speed	3.5 – 4.0 syllables per second (approximate)

Accent	Native speaker of English.

Domain	Public	Occupational	Educational	Personal
Discourse mode	Descriptive	Narrative	Expository	Argumentative	Instructive
Pattern	Monologue		Dialogue		
Content knowledge	General				Specific
Cultural specificity	Neutral				Specific
Nature of information	Only concrete	Mostly concrete	Fairly abstract	Mainly abstract
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations / graphs
Lexical Level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10

Lexical Level: further criteria	The cumulative coverage should reach 95% at the K3 level. No more than 5% of words should be beyond the K3 level. (See Guidelines on Adhering to Lexical Level for more information).
Grammatical level	A1-B1 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)
Topic	From topic list for B1.
Text genre	Monologues: Recorded telephone messages, instructions, lectures/presentations, public announcements, weather forecasts, news programs, short speeches Dialogues: interpersonal conversations (i.e. interaction in educational, occupational, and public domains, e.g. conversation between sales assistant and customer, or conversation between two students about study)
Relationship of participants	Monologues: The speaker may or may not be known to the intended listener Dialogues: participants may be known to each other (friends, colleagues, teacher/student) or unknown (sales assistant/customer, public announcement etc)

Features of the Response

Stem	Length	10 (max) words	Lexical	K1-K2	Grammar	A1-A2 exponents
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations/Graphs	
Options	Length	1-8 words	Lexical	K1-K2	Grammar	A1-A2 exponents
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations/Graphs	
Key information	Within sentence		Across sentences		Across paragraphs	

Extra criteria	1) The targeted information will be paraphrased where appropriate/possible. 2) The distractors will be used in the input text and where appropriate/possible will be paraphrased 3) The targeted information should require integrating information across utterances. The relationship between pieces of information will not be marked as explicitly as at A2 and the cohesion/links between information will utilise referential links, substitution, ellipsis, to indicate the links between propositions 4) If the instructions contain a question, the stem will repeat the same question. If the rubric contains an instruction (e.g. *find out where they will meet*.), the stem will be a short stem sentence: *they will meet…)*

Other features of the recording and task

Other	1) For dialogues, the speakers will always be 1 male and 1 female 2) 3 second pause is inserted after the instructions before the message begins.

Task: MCQ B2

Test	Aptis Advanced		Component	Listening	Task		MCQ B2

Features of the Task

Skill focus	Discourse construction, meaning representation and inference in abstract texts

Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
				B2		

task description	The candidate listens to a monologue to identify two opinions/attitudes which are expressed by the speaker. The information targeted will require the integration of abstract ideas and propositions across an extended stretch of interaction.
Further task focus information	This level targets more abstract information likely to be encountered in educational/public domains and is designed to measure test takers' ability to participate in these aspects of the TLU domain.
Instructions to candidates	Example: *Listen to a woman talking on the radio about New Year's resolutions and answer the questions below.*

Response format	Two subsequent questions with 3 MCQ options for each question.	**Items per task**	2

Time given for part	50 minutes for the entire Listening test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.

Kind of information targeted	Lexical Recognition	Factual information
	Interpretative meaning at the utterance	Meaning at discourse level

Cognitive processing Levels of listening	Input decoding
	Lexical search
	Syntactic parsing
	Meaning construction (establishing propositional meaning/inferencing)
	Discourse construction (building a mental model / creating a text level representation)

Features of the Input Text

Length	80-100 seconds	**Syllables**	360-450	**speed**	4.5– 5.0 syllables per second (approximate)

Accent	Native speakers of English.

Domain	Public	Occupational	Educational	Personal

Discourse mode	Descriptive	Narrative	Expository	Argumentative	Instructive

Pattern	Monologue	Dialogue

Content knowledge	General				Specific

Cultural specificity	Neutral				Specific

Nature of information	Only concrete	Mostly concrete	Fairly abstract	Mainly abstract

Presentation	Written	Aural	Illustrations / graphs

Lexical Level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	

Lexical Level: further criteria	The cumulative coverage should reach 95% at the K5 level. No more than 5% of words should be beyond the K5 level. (See Guidelines on Adhering to Lexical Level for more information).
Grammatical level	A1-B2 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)
Topic	From topic list for B2.
Text genre	Monologues: lectures, short speeches, short features on broadcast media, reviews on TV and radio, presentations in a work context.
Relationship of participants	The speaker will be addressing an audience (either directly or remotely through broadcast media). The speaker may or may not have a relationship with the intended listener(s).

Features of the Response

Stem	**Length**	12 words max	**Lexical**	K1-K4	**Grammar**	A1-B1 exponents

Presentation	Written	Aural	Illustrations/Graphs	

Options	**Length**	1-10 words	**Lexical**	K1-K4	**Grammar**	A1-B1 exponents

Presentation	Written	Aural	Illustrations/Graphs	

Key information	Within sentence	Across sentences	Across paragraphs

Extra criteria	1) The targeted information will be implied (not stated) by the speaker. 2) At least one distractor per question will be referenced in the input text and will be paraphrased. A maximum of one distractor need not be referenced in the text but must act as a plausible option given the context. 3) The targeted information should not be contained within a single sentence. The listener will be required to identify the targeted information across more than one sentence. 4) The opinions will be phrased as complete stand-alone sentences.

Other features of the recording and task

Other	N/A

Task: Opinions C1

Test	Aptis Advanced		Component	Listening	Task		Opinions C1

Features of the Task

Skill focus	Discourse construction, meaning representation and inference in abstract texts

Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
					C1	

Task description	The candidate listens to a dialogue between two speakers and identifies which opinions are expressed by which speaker(s). The information targeted will require the integration of abstract ideas and propositions across an extended stretch of interaction.
Further task focus information	The candidate listens to the dialogue once. Before listening, the candidate has 20 seconds to review the options, which appear on screen.
Instructions to candidates	Example: *Listen to two people discussing a social issue. Read the opinions below and decide who expresses which opinion, the man, the woman, or both the man and the woman. You now have twenty seconds to read the opinions below. The opinions may not appear in the same order in the discussion. You will hear the discussion only once. Now listen to the discussion.*

Response format	Identify who expresses each of the six given opinions: the male speaker, the female speaker, or both the male and female speaker.	**Items per task**	6

Time given for part	50 minutes for the entire Listening test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.

Kind of information targeted	**Lexical Recognition**	**Factual information**
	Interpretative meaning at the utterance	**Meaning at discourse level**

Cognitive processing Levels of listening	**Input decoding**
	Lexical search
	Syntactic parsing
	Meaning construction (establishing propositional meaning/inferencing)
	Discourse construction (building a mental model / creating a text level representation)

Features of the Input Text

Length	110 – 130 secs	**Syllables**	562-575	**speed**	4.5 – 5.0 syllables per second (approximate)

Accent	Native speakers of English.			
Domain	Public	Occupational	Educational	Personal
Discourse mode	Descriptive	Narrative	Expository	Argumentative	Instructive
Pattern	Monologue		Dialogue	
Content knowledge	General			Specific
Cultural specificity	Neutral			Specific
Nature of information	Only concrete	Mostly concrete	Fairly abstract	Mainly abstract
Presentation	Written	Aural	Illustrations / graphs	
Lexical Level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10
Lexical Level: further criteria	The cumulative coverage should reach 95% - 100% at the K5 level. No more than 5% of words should be beyond the K5 level. (See Guidelines on Adhering to Lexical Level for more information).
Grammatical level	A1-B2 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)
Topic	From topic list for C1.
Text genre	Dialogue.
Relationship of participants	The two speakers expressing opinions will be addressing an audience through broadcast media. The speakers do not have a relationship with the intended listener(s).

Features of the Response

Options	**Length**	4-8 words	**Lexical**	K1-K5	**Grammar**	A1-B2 exponents
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations/Graphs	
Key information	Within sentence		Across sentences		Across paragraphs	
Extra criteria	1) Six opinions will be expressed in the dialogue. 2) The opinions will be expressed by either the male speaker only, or the female speaker only, and by both the male and female speaker. 3) The opinions will be paraphrased. 4) The targeted information should not be contained within a single sentence. The listener will be required to identify the targeted information across more than one sentence.

Other features of the recording and task

Other	1) A 30 second pause is inserted after the second rubric to allow candidate time to read 6 opinions.

Task: MCQ C1

Test	Aptis Advanced	Component	Listening	Task	MCQ C1

	Features of the Task				
Skill focus	Discourse construction, meaning representation and inference in abstract texts				
Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Task description	The candidate listens to a monologue in which the speaker recounts a narrative, which contains four key elements. The information targeted will require the integration of information and propositions across an extended stretch of interaction.				
Further task focus information	The candidate listens to the monologue only once. For each of the four story elements there are three MCQ options to choose from. Details of the narrative are not given in sequential order				
Instructions to candidates	Example; *Listen to a man talking to a friend. Then choose one option for each of the four key elements of the story in the table below. You will hear the recording only once.*				
Response format	Candidate selects appropriate response from 3 option MCQ for each of the four key story elements.		**Items per task**	4	
Time given for part	50 minutes for the entire Listening test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.				
Kind of information targeted	Lexical Recognition		Factual information		
	Interpretative meaning at the utterance		Meaning at discourse level		
Cognitive processing Levels of listening	Input decoding				
	Lexical search				
	Syntactic parsing				
	Meaning construction (establishing propositional meaning/inferencing)				
	Discourse construction (building a mental model / creating a text level representation)				

	Features of the Input Text				
Length	75 - 85 secs	**Syllables**	375-383	**speed**	4.5 – 5.0 syllables per second (approximate)
Accent	Native speakers of English.				
Domain	Public	Occupational		Educational	Personal
Discourse mode	Descriptive	Narrative	Expository	Argumentative	Instructive
Pattern	Monologue		Dialogue		
Content knowledge	General				Specific
Cultural specificity	Neutral				Specific
Nature of information	Only concrete	Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract	Mainly abstract
Presentation	Written		Aural	Illustrations / graphs	
Lexical Level	K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K6 K7 K8 K9 K10				
Lexical Level: further criteria	The cumulative coverage should reach 95% - 100% at the K5 level. No more than 5% of words should be beyond the K5 level. (See Guidelines on Adhering to Lexical Level for more information).				
Grammatical level	A1-C1 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)				
Topic	From topic list for B2/C1.				
Text genre	Monologue.				
Relationship of participants	The speaker is addressing an unidentified third party and may or may not be known to the speaker.				

	Features of the Response				
Options	**Length**	2- 5 words	**Lexical**	K1-K10	**Grammar** A1-B2 exponents
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations/Graphs
Key information	Within sentence		Across sentences		Across paragraphs
Extra criteria	1) Four key elements will be included in the narrative. 2) The key story elements will be paraphrased. 3) The MCQ options will be presented in a table/grid format. 4) The targeted information should not be contained within a single sentence. The listener will be required to identify the targeted information across more than one sentence.				

	Other features of the recording and task				
Other	1) The candidate will see the options on screen and will only hear the recording once.				

Task: Identifying opinions

Test	Aptis Advanced		Component		Reading	Task	Identifying opinions
Features of the Task							
Skill focus	Text level reading comprehension. Reading short paragraphs to comprehend the main ideas.						
Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2		B1	B2	C1	C2
task description	Candidates read magazine vox-pop text of 4 short paragraphs giving information about 4 people's opinions on different topics, e.g., travel, the environment, jobs and work etc. Each paragraph centres on one of the four people. Candidates identify which of the four people could say certain statements.						
Further task focus information	Each paragraph is one person's opinion. The paragraphs are linked through a common topic focus and contextual setting.						
Instructions to candidates	The instructions will provide a context for the 4 paragraphs, the topic focus, and a final task instruction. The following is an example only (see the description of genre below for other possible contexts): *Four people were interviewed for City Magazine about travelling to work. Read the texts and then decide which person could say each of the statements below. Choose one person for each statement.*						
Response format	The same 4 people from the drop-down list.						
Items per task	7						
Time given for part	60 minutes for the entire reading test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.						
Cognitive processing Goal setting	**Expeditious reading: local** (scan/search for specifics)				**Careful reading: local (understanding sentence)**		
	Expeditious reading: global (skim for gist/search for key ideas/detail)				**Careful reading: global (comprehend main idea(s)/overall text(s))**		
Cognitive processing Levels of reading	**Word recognition**						
	Lexical access						
	Syntactic parsing						
	Establishing propositional meaning (cl./sent. level)						
	Inferencing						
	Building a mental model						
	Creating a text level representation (disc. structure)						
	Creating an intertextual representation (multi-text)						
Features of the Input Text							
Word count	Total of 400 words. 95-105 words per paragraph.			**Number of sentences**		Not specified	
Avg sentence length	13-15 (This is an average figure. Individual sentences will span a range above and below the average)						
Domain	Public		Occupational		Educational		Personal
Discourse mode	Descriptive		Narrative	Expository		Argumentative	Instructive
Content knowledge	General					Specific	
Cultural specificity	Neutral					Specific	
Nature of information	Only concrete		Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract		Mainly abstract
Presentation	Verbal			Non-verbal (i.e. graphs)		Both	
Lexical Level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	
Lexical Level; further criteria	The cumulative coverage should reach 95% at the K3 level. No more than 5% of words should be beyond the K3 level. (See Guidelines on Adhering to Lexical Level for more information).						
Grammatical level	A1-B1 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)						
Readability	Flesch-kincaid grade level of 6-8						
Topic	From topic list for B1.						
Text genre	Magazines, newspapers or information on noticeboards (e.g. text describing new employees in an office). Although not intended to be authentic, the texts should reflect features of relevant texts from the TLU domain. It should be possible to answer the questions: *where would a reader be likely to see a text like this outside the test?* and *Is the genre relevant to TLU tasks important for test takers at B1 level?*						
Writer/Reader relationship	The relationship is not specified. The texts will be written for a general audience, not a specific reader.						
Features of the Response							
Stem	**Length**	Maximum 8 words	**Lexical**	K1-K2	**Grammar**	A1-A2	
Stem format	Each stem is framed as a Who question: *Who…* followed by a short statement						
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations/Graphs		
Options	**Length**	1-2 words (names)	**Lexical**	NA	**Grammar**	NA	
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations/Graphs		
Key information	Within sentence		Across sentences		Across paragraphs		
Extra criteria	1) The target ideas or opinions will not be expressed directly in the text but will be paraphrased and expressed across sentences by one participant. The ideas and information will be concrete and deal with familiar concepts and ideas relevant to B1 level learners.						

| | 2) Information overlap across paragraphs should be used. For example, an idea could be mentioned in two paragraphs, but in one the main character could agree with it, in the other the main character could disagree. |
| | 3) Of the four people quoted, three of them will express two targeted points of view. |

Task: Matching headings to text

Test	Aptis Advanced	Component	Reading	Task	Matching headings to text
Features of the Task					
Skill focus	Expeditious global reading of longer text, integrating propositions across a longer text into a discourse-level representation.				

Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2

Task description	Matching headings to paragraphs within a longer text. Candidates read through a longer text consisting of 8 paragraphs (numbered 0-7, the zero paragraph being an example with the heading provided), identifying the best heading for paragraphs 1-7 from a bank of 8 options (one option being a distractor).
Further task focus information	The task is designed to elicit expeditious global reading of longer expository and argumentative texts relevant to the TLU domain for B2-level candidates of Aptis General. Test takers are expected to be able to recognize the main idea and macro-propositions of each paragraph and integrate them into a discourse level representation.
Instructions to candidates	Read the passage quickly. Choose the best heading for each numbered paragraph (1-7) from the drop-down box. There is one more heading than you need. The heading for paragraph 0 is given as an example.
Response format	Matching headings to paragraphs in a longer text. Select 7 headings form 8 options.
Items per task	7 (each heading is one item)
Time given for part	60 minutes for the entire reading test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.

Cognitive processing Goal setting	**Expeditious reading: local** (scan/search for specifics)	**Careful reading: local (understanding sentence)**
	Expeditious reading: global (skim for gist/search for key ideas/detail)	**Careful reading: global** (comprehend main idea(s)/overall text(s))

Cognitive processing Levels of reading	**Word recognition**
	Lexical access
	Syntactic parsing
	Establishing propositional meaning (cl./sent. level)
	Inferencing
	Building a mental model
	Creating a text level representation (disc. structure)
	Creating an intertextual representation (multi-text)

Features of the Input Text			
Word count	700-750 words	**Number of sentences**	Not specified
Avg sentence length	18-20 (This is an average figure. Individual sentences will span a range above and below the average)		

Domain	Public		Occupational		Educational		Personal
Discourse mode	Descriptive		Narrative		Expository	Argumentative	Instructive
Content knowledge	General						Specific
Cultural specificity	Neutral						Specific
Nature of information	Only concrete		Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract		Mainly abstract
Presentation	Verbal			Non-verbal (i.e. graphs)			Both

Lexical Level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	

Lexical Level; further criteria	The cumulative coverage should reach 95% at the K5 level. No more than 5% of words should be beyond the K5 level. (See Guidelines on Adhering to Lexical Level for more information).
Grammatical level	A1-B2 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)
Readability	Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level of 9-12
Topic	From topic list for B2.
Text genre	Magazines, newspapers, instructional materials (such as extracts from undergraduate textbooks describing important events, the ideas, or movements, etc). It should be possible to answer the questions: *where would a reader be likely to see a text like this outside the test?* and *Is the genre relevant to TLU tasks important for Aptis General test takers at B2 level?*
Intended Writer/Reader relationship	The relationship is not specified. The texts will typically be written for a general audience, not a specific reader.

Features of the Response					
Targets	Length	4 to 8 words	Lexical	K1-K5	Grammatical	A1-B2
Distractor	Length	4 to 8 words	Lexical	K1-K5	Grammatical	B1-B2

Key information	Within sentence	Across sentences	Across paragraphs

Extra criteria	1) All headings should avoid direct lexical overlap of key words in the paragraph they are intended to match. 2) Some ideas/concepts or key words in a target heading should overlap with ideas and information in more than one paragraph, but only represent <u>the main idea/macro-proposition</u> of one targeted paragraph (this is an ideal, but will be difficult to maintain across all seven target headings). Priority must be given to ensuring there is only one possible correct (best) combination for each heading/paragraph.

	3) The 0 paragraph is an example and should be approx. 50 words. The remaining 7 paragraphs should be around 100 words each. Each paragraph including the 0 paragraph has a heading. In total 8 paragraphs, 7 target headings, 1 example heading and 1 distractor heading. 4) Headings should avoid cultural or idiomatic references.			
Presentation	Written	Aural	Illustrations/Graphs	

Task: Reading cohesion and comprehension

Test	Aptis Advanced		Component	Reading	Task	Reading cohesion and comprehension

Features of the Task						
Skill focus	Reading cohesion and comprehension.					
Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Task description	Candidates read through a short text containing five gaps. For each gap, three MCQ options are provided. Candidates must select the correct option, which can only be deduced from a global understanding of the whole text.					
Further task focus information	The task is designed to elicit expeditious global reading of medium length expository and argumentative texts relevant to the TLU domain for B2-level candidates of Aptis General. Test takers are expected to be able to recognize the key ideas of the text as they are expressed across the text, beyond individual sentence level.					
Instructions to candidates	Read the text below. Choose the correct option to fill each of the gaps from the drop-down lists on the right.					
Response format	Selecting correct MCQ option from a list of three options.					
Items per task	5 (each MCQ is one item)					
Time given for part	60 minutes for the entire reading test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.					
Cognitive processing Goal setting	**Expeditious reading: local** (scan/search for specifics)			**Careful reading: local (understanding sentence)**		
	Expeditious reading: global (skim for gist/search for key ideas/detail)			**Careful reading: global** (comprehend main idea(s)/overall text(s))		
Cognitive processing Levels of reading	**Word recognition**					
	Lexical access					
	Syntactic parsing					
	Establishing propositional meaning (cl./sent. level)					
	Inferencing					
	Building a mental model					
	Creating a text level representation (disc. structure)					
	Creating an intertextual representation (multi-text)					

Features of the Input Text					
Word count	340 - 350 words		**Number of sentences**	Not specified	
Avg sentence length	18-20 (This is an average figure. Individual sentences will span a range above and below the average)				
Domain	Public	Occupational		Educational	Personal
Discourse mode	Descriptive	Narrative	Expository	Argumentative	Instructive
Content knowledge	General				Specific
Cultural specificity	Neutral				Specific
Nature of information	Only concrete	Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract	Mainly abstract
Presentation	Verbal		Non-verbal (i.e. graphs)		Both
Lexical Level	K1 · K2 · K3 · K4 · K5 · K6 · K7 · K8 · K9 · K10				
Lexical Level; further criteria	The cumulative coverage should reach 95% at the K5 level. No more than 5% of words should be beyond the K5 level. (See Guidelines on Adhering to Lexical Level for more information).				
Grammatical level	A1-B2 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)				
Readability	Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level of 9-12				
Topic	From topic list for B2.				
Text genre	Magazines, newspapers, instructional materials. It should be possible to answer the questions: *where would a reader be likely to see a text like this outside the test?* and *Is the genre relevant to TLU tasks important for Aptis Advanced test takers at B2 level?*				
Intended Writer/Reader relationship	The relationship is not specified. The texts will typically be written for a general audience, not a specific reader.				

Features of the Response						
Targets	**Length**	1-4 words	**Lexical**	K1-K5	**Grammatical**	A1-B2
Distractors	**Length**	1-4 words	**Lexical**	K1-K5	**Grammatical**	B1-B2
Key information	Within sentence		Across sentences		Across paragraphs	
Extra criteria	1) Distractors should be of same/similar length to target. 2) Distractors should be the same form/structure (i.e. noun phrase, relative clause) as the target. 3) Gaps in the text should be spaced across the text and should not occur in consecutive sentences. 4) The candidate's ability to identify the correct target word/phrase must depend on their being able to read across sentences or paragraphs. It should not be possible for a candidate to select the correct option from a knowledge of grammar or lexical collocation.					
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations/Graphs	

Task: Reading comprehension across texts

Test	Aptis Advanced		Component	Reading	Task	Reading comprehension across texts

Features of the Task						
Skill focus	Reading across extended sections of two related text in order to create an integrated discourse representation of the macro-propositions across both texts and the relationship between the texts.					
Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Task description	Candidates read two short texts on the same topic. Each text has three gaps. For each gap, three MCQ options are provided. Candidates must select the correct option, which can only be deduced from a global understanding of the both texts.					
Further task focus information	The gaps target the integration of micro-propositions and will involve textual inference to draw on and understand the relationships expressed, sometimes implicitly between propositions. All gaps require reading across extended sections of the texts in order to identify the correct answer. The texts and the propositions targeted will be mainly abstract and conceptual rather than concrete. While no specialized knowledge should be required to comprehend the texts, it should be remembered that the task is aimed at C1. C1-level learners are able to read flexibly, comprehending complex detail in abstract texts on unfamiliar topics.					
Instructions to candidates	Example: *Read the two newspaper articles below about global warming. The articles were written by different authors. Choose the correct option to fill each of the gaps from the drop-down lists on the left. You will need to read both articles to fill all of the gaps.*					
Response format	Selecting correct MCQ option from a list of three options.					
Items per task	6 (each MCQ is one item)					
Time given for part	60 minutes for the entire reading test (all tasks). Individual tasks are not timed.					
Cognitive processing Goal setting	**Expeditious reading: local** (scan/search for specifics)			**Careful reading: local (understanding sentence)**		
	Expeditious reading: global (skim for gist/search for key ideas/detail)			**Careful reading: global (comprehend main idea(s)/overall text(s))**		
Cognitive processing Levels of reading	**Word recognition**					
	Lexical access					
	Syntactic parsing					
	Establishing propositional meaning (cl./sent. level)					
	Inferencing					
	Building a mental model					
	Creating a text level representation (disc. structure)					
	Creating an intertextual representation (multi-text)					

Features of the Input Text										
Word count	225 - 250 words per text			**Number of sentences**		Not specified				
Avg sentence length	15-25 (This is an average figure. Individual sentences will span a range above and below the average)									
Domain	Public		Occupational		Educational			Personal		
Discourse mode	Descriptive		Narrative		Expository		Argumentative		Instructive	
Content knowledge	General								Specific	
Cultural specificity	Neutral		*Note that while no background cultural knowledge should be assumed, at the C1 level readers are expected to be able to comprehend complex information on unfamiliar topics, including cultural information provided it is explained within the text.*							
Nature of information	Only concrete		Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract			Mainly abstract		
Presentation	Verbal			Non-verbal (i.e. graphs)				Both		
Lexical Level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10
Lexical Level; further criteria	The cumulative coverage should reach 95% at the K5-K6 level. No more than 5% of words should be beyond the K6 level. (See Guidelines on Adhering to Lexical Level for more information).									
Grammatical level	A1-C1 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)									
Readability	Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level of 9-12									
Topic	From topic list for B2/C1. Abstract topics which target information which is of relevance to an understanding of the wider world. The topics and the treatment of topics are relevant for C1 learners. C1 learners are expected to be able to deal with English for obtaining information for educational and occupational purposes from a range of sources. Such sources would include news and journalistic sources as well as introductory level texts aimed at tertiary education, but which do not yet presume a specialized understanding of the topic.									
Text genre	Magazines, newspapers, instructional materials. It should be possible to answer the questions: *where would a reader be likely to see a text like this outside the test?* and *Is the genre relevant to TLU tasks important for Aptis Advanced test takers at C1 level?*									
Extra criteria	The two texts will present two different perspectives of the same information.									
Intended Writer/Reader relationship	The relationship is not specified. The texts will typically be written for a general audience, not a specific reader.									

Features of the Response										

Targets	Length	1-4 words	Lexical	K1-K5	Grammatical	A1-B2
Distractors	Length	1-4 words	Lexical	K1-K5	Grammatical	A1-B2
Key information	Within sentence		Across sentences		Across paragraphs	Across texts
Extra criteria	1) Distractors should be of same/similar length to target. 2) Distractors should be the same form/structure (i.e. noun phrase, relative clause, linking device) as the target. 3) Gaps in the text should be spaced across the texts and should not occur in consecutive sentences. 4) The candidate's ability to identify the correct target word/phrase must depend on their being able to read across texts. It should not be possible for a candidate to select the correct option from a knowledge of grammar or lexical collocation.					
Presentation	Written		Aural		Illustrations/Graphs	

Speaking Task 1

Test	Aptis Advanced		Component		Speaking	Task		B1
Features of the Task								
Skill focus	Describing, comparing and contrasting, providing reasons and explanations to spoken questions							
Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2		B1	B2		C1	C2
Task description	The candidate responds to 3 spoken questions about two photographs on a related theme (e.g. transport). The candidate is asked to contrast and compare aspects of the photographs, give opinions related to the theme of the photographs and provide reasons and explanations for their opinions.							
Task description: extra information	The questions gradually increase in difficulty by expanding the focus from a description of two photographs to a comparison of aspects of the photographs, and finally providing his/her opinion and preferences with reasons and justifications.							
Instructions to candidates	*In this part, I'm going to ask you to compare two pictures and I will ask you two questions about them. You will have 45 seconds for each response. Begin speaking when you hear this sound (beep).*							
Presentation of rubric	Aural			Written			Visual non-verbal (e.g. photo)	
Response format	Q&A			Short turn			Long turn	
Planning time	None							
Delivery	Face to face		Telephone		Computer		Other	
Nature of input	Real time (face to face)		Real time (remote)		Pre-recorded input		No aural input	
	Unscripted		guided		Semi-scripted		Scripted	N/A
Nature of interaction	Interlocutor-Candidate (I-C)				Candidate-Candidate (C-C)			
	Candidate only (C)				Interlocutor-Candidate-Candidate			
Functions targeted	**Informational Functions**		**Interactional Functions**			**Managing Interaction**		
	Providing personal information		Agreeing					
	Explaining opinions/preferences		Disagreeing			Initiating		
	Elaborating		Modifying/ commenting			Changing topics		
	Justifying opinions		Asking for opinions			Reciprocating		
	Comparing		Persuading			Deciding		
	Speculating		Asking for information					
	Staging		Conversational repair					
	Describing		Negotiation of meaning					
	Summarizing							
	Suggesting							
	Expressing preferences							
Features of the Input / Prompt								
Description	Two photographs of scenes and/or activities which provide the basis for contrast and comparison on a topic/aspect familiar to B1-level candidates. The recorded prompt asks 3 short questions related to the photographs: 1) A description of both pictures; 2) To contrast and compare some aspect of the pictures; 3) to provide an opinion and/or express a preference in relation to the topic.							
Length of questions	Maximum of 15 words per questions							
Lexical Level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	
Grammatical level	A1-B1 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)							
Content knowledge	General						Specific	
Cultural specificity	Neutral						Specific	
Nature of information	Only concrete		Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract		Mainly abstract	
Relevant Domain	Public		Occupational		Educational		Personal	
Topic	From topic list for B1. The photographs will show activities/and or scenes which can be compared and contrasted and will be familiar to a typical B1-level candidate. The first question asks the test-taker to describe the photos. The second question will focus on some aspect of the activities/scenes open to contrast and comparison, and the 3rd question will extend the task by asking the candidate to express an opinion and/or preference in relation to some aspect of the photos.							
Features of the Expected Response								
Description	Short responses to 3 questions. Candidate must provide sufficient content in response to at least 2 questions to achieve a rating of 3 (out of 5) for the task.							
Length of response	Up to 45 seconds per question. Adequate responses will be beyond the single clause/sentence level.							
Rating scale for task	A task-specific holistic rating scale is used for the task. The rating scale is a 6-point scale from 0-5. A B1-level performance is required to achieve score bands 3-4. A score of 5 is awarded for performances beyond B1 level.							
Timing of rating	Real time				After test event			
Rater	Interlocutor		Rater present at test		Rater not present at test event			

Speaking Task 2

Test	Aptis General		Component	Speaking	Task	B2
Features of the Task						
Skill focus	Integrating ideas regarding an abstract topic into a long turn. Giving opinions, justifying opinions, giving advantages and disadvantages					
Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	**B2**	C1	C2
task description	The candidate plans a long turn integrating responses to a set of 3 questions related to a more abstract topic. The candidate speaks for two minutes to present his/her long-turn. The 3 questions expand in focus and cognitive demand.					
Task description: extra information	The task requires a long turn response in relation to an abstract topic. The illustration is only for additional contextualization of the topic and is not referred to directly in any of the questions.					
Instructions to candidates	*In this part I'm going to 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. (beep)*					
Presentation of rubric	Aural		Written		Visual non-verbal (e.g. photo)	
Response format	Q&A		Short turn		Long turn	
Planning time	1 minute					
Delivery	Face to face		Telephone	Computer	Other	
Nature of input	Real time (face to face)		Real time (remote)	Pre-recorded input	No aural input	
	Unscripted	guided	Semi-scripted	Scripted	N/A	
Nature of interaction	Interlocutor-Candidate (I-C)			Candidate-Candidate (C-C)		
	Candidate only (C)			Interlocutor-Candidate-Candidate		

Functions targeted	**Informational Functions**	**Interactional Functions**	**Managing Interaction**
	Providing personal information	Agreeing	
	Explaining opinions/preferences	Disagreeing	Initiating
	Elaborating	Modifying/ commenting	Changing topics
	Justifying opinions	Asking for opinions	Reciprocating
	Comparing	Persuading	Deciding
	Speculating	Asking for information	
	Staging	Conversational repair	
	Describing	Negotiation of meaning	
	Summarizing		
	Suggesting		
	Expressing preferences		

Features of the Input / Prompt	
Description	Three questions: 1) asks for a description of personal experience in relation to an abstract topic; 2) asks for elaboration on the candidate's impression/opinion in relation to the topic; 3) asks for a more objective discussion of the topic from the perspective of wider relevance to society/people in general.
Length of questions	Maximum of 20 words per question

Lexical Level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	
Grammatical level	A1-B1 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)										
Content knowledge	General									Specific	
Cultural specificity	Neutral									Specific	
Nature of information	Only concrete		Mostly concrete		Fairly abstract		Mainly abstract				
Relevant Domain	Public		Occupational		Educational		Personal				
Topic	From topic list for B2.										

Features of the Expected Response		
Description	A long turn of 2 minutes. Candidate must provide a coherent and cohesive long turn which deals with at least 2 questions to achieve a rating of 3 (out of 5) for the task.	
Length of response	Up to 2 minutes for the entire long turn. Adequate length for B2-level performance will generally require the candidate to speak for the full two minutes or most of the full two minutes.	
Rating scale for task	A task-specific holistic rating scale is used for the task. The rating scale is a 6-point scale from 0-5. A B2-level performance is required to achieve score bands 3-4. A score of 5 is awarded for performances beyond B2 level.	
Timing of rating	Real time	After test event
Rater	Interlocutor	Rater present at test	Rater not present at test event

Speaking Task 3

Test	Aptis General	Component	Speaking	Task	C1

Features of the Task	
Skill focus	Integrating ideas regarding an abstract topic into a long turn. Giving opinions, justifying opinions, giving advantages and disadvantages

Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2

task description	The candidate plans a long turn formulating a balanced argument on a topic based on input of for/against bullet points. The candidate speaks for one and a half minutes to present his/her long-turn. A subsequent follow-up statement related to the topic is presented to the candidate once the long term has been completed. The candidate in invited to comment on the statement and has 45 seconds for their response, for which there is no preparation time.
Task description: extra information	The task requires a long turn response in relation to abstract topics.
Instructions to candidates	*You are going to speak on a topic for one and a half minutes. You can see the topic on the screen and two lists of points - for and against - related to the topic. Choose two items from each list and give a balanced argument to represent both sides of the topic. You have one minute to prepare your argument. You will then have one and half minutes to speak. Begin speaking when you hear this sound (beep). After you finish speaking you will be asked an additional question about the topic and asked to speak for 45 seconds.*

Presentation of rubric	Aural		Written		Visual non-verbal (e.g. photo)
Response format	Q&A		Short turn		Long turn
Planning time	1 minute				
Delivery	Face to face	Telephone	Computer		Other
Nature of input	Real time (face to face)	Real time (remote)	Pre-recorded input		No aural input
	Unscripted	guided	Semi-scripted	Scripted	N/A

Nature of interaction	Interlocutor-Candidate (I-C)	Candidate-Candidate (C-C)
	Candidate only (C)	Interlocutor-Candidate-Candidate

Functions targeted	**Informational Functions**	**Interactional Functions**	**Managing Interaction**
	Providing personal information	Agreeing	
	Explaining opinions/preferences	Disagreeing	Initiating
	Elaborating	Modifying/ commenting	Changing topics
	Justifying opinions	Asking for opinions	Reciprocating
	Comparing	Persuading	Deciding
	Speculating	Asking for information	
	Staging	Conversational repair	
	Describing	Negotiation of meaning	
	Summarizing		
	Suggesting		
	Expressing preferences		

Features of the Input / Prompt	
Description	The title of the topic (e.g. *Higher Education Should Be Available For Everybody*) is shown on screen above two tables of three 'for' and three 'against' bullet points. The follow up statement and prompt (e.g. *Educational standards today are lower than they were fifty years ago. What is your response to this statement?*) appears on screen once the long term has been completed.
Length of questions	Topic Heading: 5-10 words. Individual bullet points: 4-8 words. Follow-up question: 15-20 words

Lexical Level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	

Grammatical level	A1-B2 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)			
Content knowledge	General			Specific
Cultural specificity	Neutral			Specific
Nature of information	Only concrete	Mostly concrete	Fairly abstract	Mainly abstract
Relevant Domain	Public	Occupational	Educational	Personal
Topic	From topic list for B2/C1.			

Features of the Expected Response	
Description	A long turn of one and a half minutes. Candidate must provide a coherent and cohesive long turn, employing and expanding upon at least two points from each list of bullet points. A secondary statement/question of 45 seconds.
Length of response	Up to one and a half minutes for the long turn. 45 seconds for the follow-up question. Adequate length for C1 level performance will generally require the candidate to speak for all or most of the one and a half minutes for the long turn, and for all or most of the 45 seconds for the follow-up question.

Rating scale for task	A task-specific holistic rating scale is used for the task. The rating scale is a 7-point scale from 0-6. A score of 5 is awarded for a C1 performance and a 6 for a C2 performance.

Timing of rating	Real time	After test event
Rater	Interlocutor	Rater present at test	Rater not present at test event

Appendix F: Aptis Advanced task specifications for the Writing component

Writing Task 1

Test	Aptis Advanced	Component	Writing	Task	B1

Skill focus	Interactive writing. Responding to a series of written questions with short paragraph-level responses.
Task Level (CEFR)	A1 A2 **B1** B2 C1 C2
task description	The candidate responds interactively to three separate questions. Each response requires a short paragraph-level response. The questions are presented as if the candidate is writing on an internet forum or social network site.
Task description: extra information	The task requires a series of paragraph-level responses to questions. Each subsequent question only appears after the candidate has posted the response to the previous question.
Instructions to candidates	The instructions will identify the setting for the interaction and person or persons with whom the candidate is interacting. The following is an example, and follow-up questions appropriate to the setting and the B1-level targeted should be developed: *You are on your social network website chatting with people on the internet. The topic you are discussing is: The Environment.*
Presentation of rubric	Aural **Written** Other non-verbal (e.g. photo)
Time for task	50 minutes for Writing test. No time limit for individual tasks. (10 minutes recommended for Task 1)
Delivery	Pen and paper **Computer**
Response format	word completion gap-filling form filling **short answer** continuous writing
Intended genre	Interaction in a social-media context within the public, occupational, or educational domains, reflecting real-life situations in which interactive, information-exchange forums might be used, but which do not require specialist knowledge or experience (e.g. students in an online course discussing course options).
Writer / intended reader relationship	The reader will be specified. The reader is not personally known to the candidate but is a participant in the same public/occupational/educational domain.
Discourse mode	**Descriptive** **Narrative** **Expository** Argumentative Instructive
Domain	**Public** **Occupational** **Educational** Personal
Nature of task	**Knowledge telling** Knowledge transformation
Functions targeted	Describing (people, places, job), describing likes/dislike/ interests, describing habits and routines, describing past experiences, describing feelings, emotions, attitudes, describing hopes and plans, expressing opinions, expressing agreement/disagreement, (Based on British-Council EQUALS Core Inventory. Note: describing hopes and plans is listed as B2 in the Core Inventory but when expressed in simple terms would be appropriate for a simple B1-level transfer of information).

Features of the Input / Prompt	
Description	Series of 3 prompts phrased as posts requesting information from the candidate by a member of an interactive forum.
Length of posts	Each post requesting information should be in the form of 1-3 short sentences. Maximum length of a post is 25-30 words, with no one sentence more than 13-15 words.
Lexical Level	**K1** **K2** K3 K4 K5 K6 K7 K8 K9 K10
Grammatical level	A2 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)
Content knowledge	**General** Specific
Cultural specificity	**Neutral** Specific
Nature of information	Only concrete **Mostly concrete** Fairly abstract Mainly abstract
Relevant Domain	**Public** **Occupational** **Educational** Personal
Information targeted	The information targeted should be familiar to the candidate and may include talking about the candidate's personal experiences, plans, etc. One question should ask the candidate to describe some aspect of the candidate's own context from a wider a perspective than the candidate's personal experience (e.g. describing features of the educational or working context in the candidate's country).

Features of the Expected Response	
Description	A series of 3 short constructed responses. Each response needs to be structured as sentences, and candidate must respond adequately to at least 2 questions to receive a rating of 3 or more (out of 5).
Length of response	30-40 words per response
Lexis /grammar	K1-K3 level lexis sufficient to complete task. Response needs to demonstrate control of B1-level grammar, writing at the short paragraph level.
Rating scale for task	A task-specific holistic rating scale is used for the task. The rating scale is a 6-point scale from 0-5. A B1-level performance is required to achieve score bands 3-4. A score of 5 is awarded for performances beyond B1 level.
Timing of rating	Real time **After test event**
Rater	Interlocutor Rater present at test **Rater not present at test event** Automatic scoring
Weighting	Each task is weighted differentially to reflect the task demands and intended level.
Rating extra information	Each task for the same candidate is marked by a different rater. No rater will mark more than one task for a single candidate.

Writing Task 2

Test	Aptis Advanced	Component	Writing	Task	B2

Skill focus	Integrated writing task requiring longer paragraph level writing in response to an email and some notes provided. Appropriate use of register

Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
				B2		

Task Description	The candidate writes an e-mail in response to the task prompt which contains an e-mail from an unknown reader connected to the information in the prompt (management, customer services, etc.) and notes made by the e-mail writer.
Task description: extra information	The task is designed to elicit responses demonstrating control of appropriate formal register.
Instructions to candidates	The instructions will clearly identify the purpose by presenting a transactional email from the organization. The e-mail will present a problem/issue/offer/opportunity/enquiry, which the candidate is expected to respond to. The following is an example only: *You have received the following e-mail from your local supermarket. Read the e-mail and the notes you have made. Write a reply using all the information in your notes and express how you feel about the situation. You should write between 120 and 150 words.*

Presentation of rubric	Aural	Written	Other non-verbal (e.g. photo)

Time for task	50 minutes for Writing test. No time limit is set for individual tasks. (Recommended time: 20 minutes)

Delivery	Pen and paper	Computer

Response format	Word completion	gap-filling	form filling	short answer	continuous writing

Intended genre	Formal email
Writer / intended reader relationship	The intended reader of the email will be specified (e.g. manager of a bank) but may or may not be personally known to the writer.

Discourse mode	Descriptive	Narrative	Expository	Argumentative	Instructive

Domain	Public	Occupational	Educational	Personal

Nature of task	Knowledge telling	Knowledge transformation

Possible Functions targeted	Expressing opinions; giving reasons and justifications; giving precise information; expressing certainty, probability, doubt; generalising and qualifying; synthesizing; evaluating; speculating, and hypothesizing; expressing agreement / disagreement; expressing reaction, e.g. indifference; developing an argument systematically; conceding/emphasizing a point, feeling, issue; defending a point of view persuasively; complaining, suggesting (based on British Council Equals Core Inventory)

Features of the Input / Prompt			

Description	A transactional e-mail message is presented as the starting point. This e-mail is written in a formal impersonal register. The e-mail must contain three distinct points of information. The notes that accompany the e-mail are written as bullet points and/or in note form (i.e. not complete sentences) in an informal register. There are three separate notes – one for each distinct point of information in the e-mail. Number annotations indicate which notes apply to which pieces of information. The notes must appear in the same sequence as the information in the e-mail. The candidate will be required to expand these notes into complete sentences framed in an appropriate formal register.
Length of input email	50-80 words
Length of notes	Range 9-12 words per note; range 27-36 words per whole text

Lexical Level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	
	K1	K2	K3	K4							

Grammatical level	B1 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)

Content knowledge	General				Specific

Cultural specificity	Neutral				Specific

Nature of information	Only concrete	Mostly concrete	Fairly abstract	Mainly abstract

Relevant Domain	Public	Occupational	Educational	Personal

Information targeted	The information will be relevant to eliciting more complex and abstract functions described above.

Features of the Expected Response	

Description	One e-mail response in a formal register.
Length of response	Within the range of 120-150 words.
Lexis /grammar	K4-K5 lexis will be sufficient to complete the e-mail response adequately. Response must show control of B2-level grammar and cohesion and coherence across longer continuous writing texts.
Rating scale for task	A task-specific holistic rating scale is used for the task. The rating scale is a 6-point scale from 0-5. A B2-level performance is required to achieve score bands 3-4. A score of 5 is awarded for performances beyond B2 level.

Timing of rating	Real time	After test event

Rater	Interlocutor	Rater present at test	Rater not present at test event	Automatic scoring

Weighting	Each task is weighted differentially to reflect the task demands and intended level.
Rating extra information	Each task for the same candidate is marked by a different rater. No 1 rater will mark more than 1 task for a single candidate.

Writing Task 3

Test	Aptis Advanced	Component	Writing	Task	C1

Skill focus	Integrated writing task requiring longer paragraph level writing in response to notes provided on a given subject. Appropriate use of register for intended audience.

Task Level (CEFR)	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2

Task Description	The candidate writes an informational text for an online publication on a topic of general interest.
Task description: extra information	The task is designed to elicit responses demonstrating an ability to synthesise and organise factual information in an extended text.
Instructions to candidates	*Things You Should Know* is a website that accepts short articles from members of the public on subjects of popular interest. You have been asked to contribute an article on the subject of [**Topic Inserted Here**]. You have already done some research on the subject in note and diagram form. Use information from your research notes below to help you write an article that is both informative and interesting. Write between 180 and 220 words.

Presentation of rubric	Aural	Written	Other non-verbal (e.g. photo)

Time for task	50 minutes for Writing test. No time limit is set for individual tasks. (Recommended time: 20 minutes)

Delivery	Pen and paper	Computer	

Response format	word completion	gap-filling	form filling	short answer	continuous writing

Intended genre	Online educational publication for a general reader.
Writer / intended reader relationship	The intended reader of the text is not personally known to the writer.

Discourse mode	Descriptive	Narrative	Expository	Argumentative	Instructive

Domain	Public	Occupational	Educational	Personal

Nature of task	Knowledge telling	Knowledge transformation

Possible Functions targeted	Expressing opinions; giving reasons and justifications; giving precise information; expressing abstract ideas; expressing certainty, probability, doubt; generalising and qualifying; synthesizing; evaluating; speculating; hypothesizing; expressing opinions tentatively; expressing shades of opinion; developing an argument systematically; conceding a point; emphasising a point, feeling, issue; defending a point of view persuasively (based on British Council Equals Core Inventory)

Features of the Input / Prompt	
Description	The candidate is presented with some notes in bullet point format on the topic and a simple grid (three rows, three columns) containing additional information in numerical form (e.g. population figures, number of subscribers etc.) The information in the bullet point notes should focus on abstract concepts (such as advantages and disadvantages, possible causes and effects, etc.). The information in the table should focus on concrete information (size, scope, range etc.) to allow for contrast and comparison and interpretation. **Note**: the factual information does not have to be accurate but should be seen as plausible.
Length of input notes	Between 4-6 bullet points in note form; total text length of 40-50 words.
Length of table notes	Numbers (e.g. age, population etc.) or minimal text (e.g. countries) of 1-2 words

Lexical Level	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	

Grammatical level	B1 Grammatical exponents (See Guidelines on Adhering to Grammatical Level)

Content knowledge	General				Specific

Cultural specificity	Neutral				Specific

Nature of information	Only concrete	Mostly concrete	Fairly abstract	Mainly abstract

Relevant Domain	Public	Occupational	Educational	Personal

Information targeted	The information will be relevant to eliciting more complex and abstract functions described above.

Features of the Expected Response	
Description	An informational text intended for online publication.
Length of response	Within the range of 180-220 words.
Lexis /grammar	Response must show control of C1-level grammar and cohesion and coherence across longer continuous writing texts.

Rating scale for task	

Timing of rating	Real time	After test event

Rater	Interlocutor	Rater present at test	Rater not present at test event	Automatic scoring

Weighting	Each task is weighted differentially to reflect the task demands and intended level.
Rating extra information	Each task for the same candidate is marked by a different rater. No 1 rater will mark more than 1 task for a single candidate.

The following examples provide descriptions of the performance expected at each score point band in the task-specific rating scales used for rating the Speaking and Writing components. Each scale is task specific. The highlighted score bands for each scale describe the target-level performance at the proficiency level targeted by that task.

Speaking Task 1

Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range & accuracy, vocabulary range & accuracy, pronunciation, fluency and cohesion.

5 B2 (or above)	Likely to be above B1 level.
4 B1.2	Responses to all **three** questions are on topic and show the following features: • Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures. • Sufficient range and control of vocabulary for the task. Errors occur when expressing complex thoughts. • Pronunciation is intelligible but inappropriate mispronunciations put an occasional strain on the listener. • Some pausing, false starts and reformulations. • Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.
3 B1.1	Responses to **two** questions are on topic and show the following features: • Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures. • Sufficient range and control of vocabulary for the task. Errors occur when expressing complex thoughts. • Pronunciation is intelligible but inappropriate mispronunciations put an occasional strain on the listener. • Some pausing, false starts and reformulations. • Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.
2 A2.2	Responses to at least **two** questions are on topic and show the following features: • Uses some simple grammatical structures correctly but systematically makes basic mistakes. • Vocabulary will be limited to concrete topics and descriptions. Inappropriate lexical choices for the task are noticeable. • Mispronunciations are noticeable and put a strain on the listener. • Noticeable pausing, false starts and reformulations. • Cohesion between ideas is limited. Responses tend to be a list of points.
1 A2.1	Response to **one** question is on topic and shows the following features: • Uses some simple grammatical structures correctly but systematically makes basic mistakes. • Vocabulary will be limited to concrete topics and descriptions. Inappropriate lexical choices for the task are noticeable. • Mispronunciations are noticeable and put a strain on the listener. • Noticeable pausing, false starts and reformulations. • Cohesion between ideas is limited. Responses tend to be a list of points.
0	• Performance below A2, or no meaningful language or the responses are completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).

Speaking Task 2

Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range & accuracy, vocabulary range & accuracy, pronunciation, fluency and cohesion.

6 **C2**	Likely to be above C1 level.
5 **C1**	Response addresses all **three** questions and is well-structured. • Uses a range of complex grammar constructions accurately. Some minor errors occur but do not impede understanding. • Uses a range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Some awkward usage or slightly inappropriate lexical choices. • Pronunciation is clearly intelligible. • Backtracking and reformulations do not fully interrupt the flow of speech. • A range of cohesive devices are used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.
4 **B2.2**	Responses to all **three** questions are on topic and show the following features: • Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not lead to misunderstanding. • Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not lead to misunderstanding. • Pronunciation is intelligible. Mispronunciations do not put a strain on the listener or lead to misunderstanding • Some pausing while searching for vocabulary, but this does not put a strain on the listener. • A limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.
3 **B2.1**	Responses to **two** questions are on topic and show the following features: • Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not lead to misunderstanding. • Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not lead to misunderstanding. • Pronunciation is intelligible. Mispronunciations do not put a strain on the listener or lead to misunderstanding • Some pausing while searching for vocabulary, but this does not put a strain on the listener. • A limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.
2 **B1.2**	Responses to at least **two** questions are on topic and show the following features: • Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures. • Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. • Pronunciation is intelligible but occasional mispronunciations put an occasional strain on the listener. • Noticeable pausing, false starts, reformulations and repetition. • Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.
1 **B1.1**	Response to **one** question is on topic and shows the following features: • Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures. • Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. • Pronunciation is intelligible but occasional mispronunciations put an occasional strain on the listener. • Noticeable pausing, false starts, reformulations and repetition. • Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.
0 **A1/A2**	Performance not sufficient for B1, or no meaningful language, or the responses are completely off-topic (memorised or guessing).

Speaking Task 3

Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, grammatical range & accuracy, vocabulary range & accuracy, pronunciation, fluency and cohesion.

6 **C2**	• Presentation is convincingly presented and well structured, highlighting and expanding on points from each section. • The follow up question response is **well-structured**. **There is a clear and coherent response.** • Uses a range of complex grammar constructions accurately. Some **very minor errors** occur but do not impede understanding. • Uses a range of vocabulary to discuss the topic required by the task. **No awkward usage or inappropriate lexical choices.** • Pronunciation is clearly intelligible. • Backtracking and reformulations **do not interrupt** the flow of speech. • A range of cohesive devices are used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.
5 **C1**	• Presentation is clear, highlighting points from each section. Gives reasons in support of or against particular points of view. • The follow up question response is **coherent.** • Uses a range of complex grammar constructions accurately. Some **minor errors occur** but do not impede understanding. • Uses a range of vocabulary to discuss the topic in the poster in his/or own words. **Some awkward usage or slightly inappropriate lexical choices.** • Pronunciation is clearly intelligible. • Backtracking and reformulations **do not fully interrupt** the flow of speech. • A range of cohesive devices are used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.
4 **B2.2**	Response **addresses points from each section**, the follow-up question is on topic and the response shows the features associated with **B2** spoken production.
3 **B2.1**	Response **does not address points from both sections**, the follow-up question is on topic and the response shows the features associated with **B2** spoken production:
	Features associated with **B2** spoken production: • Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not lead to misunderstanding. • Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not lead to misunderstanding. • Pronunciation is intelligible. Mispronunciations do not put a strain on the listener or lead to misunderstanding • Some pausing while searching for vocabulary, but this does not put a strain on the listener. • A limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.
2 **B1.2**	The candidate is unable to construct a coherent and sustained response, **is heavily dependent on the input prompts** and is not able to address the follow-up question. The response shows the features associated with **B1** spoken production.
1 **B1.1**	The candidate is unable to construct a coherent and sustained response, **reads directly from the prompts** and is not able to address the follow-up question. The response shows the features associated with **B1** spoken production.
	Features associated with **B1** spoken production: • Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures. • Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. • Pronunciation is intelligible but occasional mispronunciations put an occasional strain on the listener. • Noticeable pausing, false starts, reformulations and repetition. • Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.
0 **A1/A2**	Performance not sufficient for B1, or no meaningful language, or the responses are completely off-topic (memorised or guessing).

Writing Task 1

Areas assessed: task fulfilment / topic relevance, punctuation, grammatical range & accuracy, vocabulary range & accuracy, cohesion.

5 **B2 (or above)**	Likely to be above the B1 level.
4 **B1.2**	Responses to all **three** questions are on topic and show the following features: • Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures. • Punctuation and spelling mostly accurate. Errors do not impede understanding. • Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions. • Uses simple cohesive devices to organize responses as a linear sequence of sentences.
3 **B1.1**	Responses to **two** questions are on topic and show the following features: • Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures. • Punctuation and spelling mostly accurate. Errors do not impede understanding. • Vocabulary is sufficient to respond to the questions. • Uses simple cohesive devices to organise responses as a linear sequence of sentences.
2 **A2.2**	Responses to at least **two** questions are on topic and show the following features: • Uses simple grammatical structures to produce writing at the sentence level. Errors with simple structures common and sometimes impede understanding. • Punctuation and spelling mistakes are noticeable. • Vocabulary is not sufficient to respond to the question(s). Inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable and sometimes impede understanding. • Responses are lists of sentences and not organised as cohesive texts.
1 **A2.1**	Response to **one** question is on topic and shows the following features: • Uses simple grammatical structures to produce writing at the sentence level. Errors with simple structures common and sometimes impede understanding. • Punctuation and spelling mistakes are noticeable. • Vocabulary is not sufficient to respond to the question(s). Inappropriate lexical choices are noticeable and sometimes impede understanding. • Responses are lists of sentences and not organised as cohesive texts.
0	Performance below A2, or no meaningful language or the responses are completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).

Writing Task 2

Areas assessed: task fulfilment, register, grammatical range & accuracy, vocabulary range & accuracy, punctuation and spelling, cohesion.

6 **C2**	Response fully on topic and appropriate register used. Response shows the following features: • Range of complex grammar constructions used accurately. **No grammar errors occur.** • Range of vocabulary used. **No awkward or inappropriate lexical choices.** • No more than two minor punctuation or spelling errors occur. • Range of cohesive devices used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.
5 **C1**	Response fully on topic and appropriate register used. Response shows the following features: • Range of complex grammar constructions used accurately. **Minor grammar errors occur.** • Range of vocabulary used. **Some awkward or slightly inappropriate lexical choices.** • Minor errors in punctuation and spelling occur. • Range of cohesive devices used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.
4 **B2.2**	**Response fully on topic and appropriate register used**. Response shows the following features: • Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not impede understanding. • Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not impede understanding. • Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding. • Limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.
3 **B2.1**	**Response partially on topic and/or appropriate register partially used**. Response shows the following features: • Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not impede understanding. • Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not impede understanding. • Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding. • Limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.
2 **B1.2**	**Response partially on topic and/or appropriate register partially used**. Response shows the following features: • Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures. • Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. Errors impede understanding in parts of the text. • Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding. • Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.
1 **B1.1**	**Response not on topic and/or task not fulfilled in terms of appropriateness of register.** Response shows the following features: • Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures. • Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. Errors impede understanding in parts of the text. • Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding. • Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.
0 **A1/A2**	Performance below B1, or no meaningful language or the response is completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).

Writing Task 3

Areas assessed: task fulfilment, grammatical range & accuracy, vocabulary range & accuracy, coherence and cohesion.

6 **C2**	**Response is informative and interesting. Clever use of the input with mostly original text.** Response shows the following features: • Range of complex grammar constructions used accurately. Minor errors occur. • Range of vocabulary used accurately. **No awkward or inappropriate lexical choices.** • Minor errors in punctuation and spelling occur. • Range of cohesive devices used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.
5 **C1**	**Response is not interesting. Correct use of the input with mostly original text.** Response shows the following features: • Range of complex grammar constructions used accurately. Minor errors occur. • Range of vocabulary used. **Some awkward or slightly inappropriate lexical choices.** • Minor errors in punctuation and spelling occur. • Range of cohesive devices used to clearly indicate the links between ideas.
4 **B2.2**	**Response is not interesting. Correct use of the input with mostly original text.** Response shows the following features: • Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not impede understanding. • Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topic required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not impede understanding. • Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding. • Limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.
3 **B2.1**	**Response is not interesting or informative. Key parts of the input are missing with mostly original text.** Response shows the following features: • Some complex grammar constructions used accurately. Errors do not impede understanding. • Sufficient range of vocabulary to discuss the topics required by the task. Inappropriate lexical choices do not impede understanding. • Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding. • Limited number of cohesive devices are used to indicate the links between ideas.
2 **B1.2**	**Response is not interesting or informative. Key parts of the input are missing with mostly original text.** Response shows the following features: • Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures. • Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. Errors impede understanding in parts of the text. • Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding. • Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.
1 **B1.1**	**Response is not interesting or information. Input is not used correctly or text is mostly copied from the input.** Response shows the following features: • Control of simple grammatical structures. Errors occur when attempting complex structures. • Limitations in vocabulary make it difficult to deal fully with the task. Errors impede understanding in most of the text. • Punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding. • Uses only simple cohesive devices. Links between ideas are not always clearly indicated.
0 **A1/A2**	Performance below B1, or no meaningful language or the responses are completely off-topic (e.g. memorised script, guessing).

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