Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Who is Pearson?

Pearson is an international learning company with world-leading businesses in education, business information, consumer publishing and professional services. Pearson professional businesses, industry experts in professional testing and training, include Penguin Random House, the Financial Times Group and Pearson English. The Pearson English business includes companies such as:

- GlobalEnglish
- Wall Street English
- Longman English
- Global Education
- Training China
- E^Pro™, the English for Professionals Exam
- Pearson Tests of English

Pearson's English language business publishes print and digital teaching and learning resources for schools, universities and test preparation services around the world.

What is Pearson's experience with English language learners?

Pearson Longman, a division of Pearson Education, is a leading publisher of English as a Second Language programs for middle school (ages 11-13) and high school (ages 14-18) students and adult learners. In addition to its multi-level English courses, skills texts, test prep books and videos, Pearson Longman publishes more than 30 language dictionaries. Longman Multimedia Programs provide interactive resources for teachers and learners of English. Increasingly, Pearson is working in partnership and directly in the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language.

What is Pearson Knowledge Technologies' experience with English language learners?

Pearson Knowledge Technologies has been at the forefront of English language proficiency test development, research and analysis for academic and professional markets since 1996. Over the past 15 years, more than 170 million test questions have been delivered and automatically scored for individuals from over 100 countries around the world.

What does the E^Pro™ exam measure?

This exam was created to measure how well a candidate can understand and use English within a typical professional business environment. This includes the ability to read, write, speak and listen in English.

Are questions on the E^Pro™ exam related to specific contexts?

The questions on the exam deal with common professional workplace situations. This can include writing an email, taking a phone call or participating in a meeting.

How should a candidate prepare for this exam?

In order to become familiar with the structure of the exam, access the online demonstration. This demo will help you understand the format of the exam questions. You can access the demo by clicking on this link: http://eproexam.com/demo. To prepare for the content of the exam, study and practice your English skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

What is the advantage to testing all four communication skills in one exam, rather than testing each skill individually?

The E^Pro™ advantage lies within the exam's ability to accurately measure how well a candidate can read, write, speak and listen in tandem to effectively communicate in a professional setting. This integration of skills mirrors the real world where professionals must be able to efficiently and effectively understand and respond to various and diverse work demands. Because the exam is concise-just 90 minutes-candidates are away from their jobs for testing for a short period of time.

How is it possible to more accurately measure communication skills with an exam that takes less time to complete and has fewer questions than other tests in the market?

While other exams use multiple choice questions that require a simple correct/incorrect answer, questions on the E^Pro™ exam require both receptive and productive skills that are analyzed from multiple perspectives such as fluency, pronunciation and grammar.

This exam structure and answer analysis produce results that more accurately represent a candidate's overall ability to communicate. For more information on this topic, please review the E^Pro™ Exam Validation Report.

Most exam results are not available for two weeks or more. How is it possible to receive E^Pro™ results within three business days?

Pearson Knowledge Technologies' automated scoring systems leverage patented technology to measure speaking & listening skills, while the Knowledge Analysis Technology engine automatically assesses responses for reading and writing. This eliminates the potential for human scoring bias, while producing results very quickly.

How does automated scoring technology work, especially with a written essay or spoken response? How can it be as accurate as human scoring?

Automated scoring uses speech processing technology to assess a variety of speech rhythms and varied pronunciations used by native and non-native English speakers. The system assigns independent scores based on the content of what is said and the manner in which it is said.

To compile a score for a written component of the exam, the system evaluates the meaning of text by examining whole written passages. This engine is based on the implementation of Latent Semantic Analysis, which can understand the meaning of text much the same as a human reader.

In developing automated scoring mechanisms for the E^Pro™ exam, greater than 100,000 responses were used to train the technologies and evaluate the correlation between machine and human scoring. For the writing and speaking sections of the E^Pro™ exam, correlations between exams scored by humans and exams scored by automated scoring technologies ranged between .95 and .98.

For additional information, please refer to the E^Pro™ Exam Validation Report.

How long are scores valid? Why are they valid for that amount of time?

E^Pro™ scores are valid for two years from the date of the exam. Since many test takers continue to study and practice their English skills, test takers will want to be re-evaluated regularly to ensure their score reflects their current proficiency level.

I've heard the exam is very difficult. Why is it so much harder than other English proficiency exams?

E^Pro™ measures a wide range of language proficiency, including advanced skills. Some difficult items are included to specifically target those test-takers whose English skills are advanced.

In addition, the exam requires productive skills rather than simply selecting an answer from multiple choice options. Productive skills require a candidate to demonstrate the ability to read, write, speak and listen. This approach emphasizes functional, real-time use of language skills to ensure a candidate's ability to respond matches real-time conversational expectations.

The E^Pro™ exam is more expensive than other exams in the market. Why?

The cost of this exam correlates to the high level of security that governs the test taker's experience. Exams are administered in secure testing facilities in a proctored environment that confirms the identity of the test taker. This security is paramount in deterring proxy testing and ensuring the validity of an exam score for a test taker. In addition, the cost is influenced by testing four skills in one exam.

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