



MAJLIS PEPERIKSAAN MALAYSIA
(MALAYSIAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL)

800 MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY ENGLISH TEST (MUET)

REGULATIONS AND
TEST SPECIFICATIONS



MAJLIS PEPERIKSAAN MALAYSIA



PUSAT UJIAN
MPM
TEST CENTRE

The information in this booklet which includes MUET-CEFR aligned test specifications applies to the Session 1 2021 and thereafter until further notice.

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THE NATIONAL EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

Education in Malaysia is an on-going effort to develop the full potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, in order to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious, based on a belief in and devotion to God. Such efforts are designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well-being in addition to being able to contribute to the improvement of the family, society and the nation at large.

FOREWORD

The Malaysian Examinations Council, which was established under Act 225 (the Malaysian Examinations Council Act 1980) is a statutory body under the Malaysian Ministry of Education. The Malaysian Examinations Council is managed by a board of governors which consists of vice-chancellors from local universities (in accordance with Section 6 of the University and University Colleges Act 1971 and Section 1A of the University of Technology MARA Act 1976), the Chief Secretary of the Ministry of Education, the Director General of Education, the Director of Examinations of the Malaysian Examinations Syndicate, the Chief Executive of the Malaysian Examinations Council, and five other members appointed by His Majesty the Yang di-Pertuan Agong. The Chairman of the Council is also appointed by His Majesty the Yang di-Pertuan Agong from amongst the vice-chancellors of local universities.

The Malaysian Examinations Council has been responsible for the Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM) (the Malaysian Higher School Certificate) examination since 1982. This examination replaced the Higher School Certificate examination conducted by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate in collaboration with the University of Malaya. Since 1999, the Malaysian Examinations Council has also been responsible for the Malaysian University English Test (MUET). MUET is conducted three times a year, and can be taken by local and foreign students who intend to pursue first degree studies in public and private universities in Malaysia.

The present revision of the MUET syllabus is the second since 1999, and has been undertaken in order to ensure that MUET retains its position in testing English proficiency. The changes in the test specification involving Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing have been made in order to align MUET with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the MUET Syllabus Committee for their contributions. I also wish to thank all the institutions that have allowed their students to participate for the purpose of verifying and validating this test instrument.

Finally, I hope that the revised MUET will have a positive impact on the perceptions of students, the enthusiasm of teachers and the support of the public at large with regard to the teaching and learning of English.

Chief Executive
Malaysian Examinations Council

CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
General Regulations	1 – 10
MUET Test Specifications	
1.0 General Description of MUET	11 – 12
2.0 General Description of the Listening Test	13 – 20
3.0 General Description of the Speaking Test	21 – 29
4.0 General Description of the Reading Test	30 – 36
5.0 General Description of the Writing Test	37 – 42
References	43
Panel of Writers	44 – 45

INTRODUCTION

English has always played an important role in the Malaysian education system, and this continuing role is reflected in the revision of the Malaysian University English Test (MUET).

The objective of MUET is to measure the English language proficiency of candidates who intend to pursue first degree studies in order to help institutions make better decisions about the readiness of prospective students for academic coursework, and about their ability to use and understand English in different contexts in the environment of higher education. It is hoped that the MUET tests can also be used to measure the English proficiency of adult learners of English, including teachers and others who need to use English in the workplace in the context of education. MUET tests all four language skills, Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, and assesses candidates' level of proficiency using aggregated scores ranging from 1 to 360, which correspond to Bands from 1 to 5+. A results certificate is given to all candidates who complete all four components of the test.

This booklet contains test specifications giving details of each component of MUET. Having been aligned to the CEFR, the specifications make explicit the skills students need to develop to improve their English proficiency, and to make their academic study at tertiary level more effective. This booklet may also be used as a guide to the MUET tests for independent learners and instructors.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

1 Test Dates

- 1.1 MUET is administered three times a year, and the sessions are named MUET Session 1, MUET Session 2 and MUET Session 3. The Malaysian Examinations Council (MEC) also administers MUET on Demand (MoD). Candidates are advised to refer to the MEC portal and official social media accounts for further information on MoD.
- 1.2 The Listening, Reading and Writing tests are taken on the same day, but the Speaking test is taken at times spread over a duration of two weeks. In the special cases of MoD, all four components are taken on the same day, depending on the number of candidates and subject to the availability of rooms for the Speaking test.
- 1.3 Candidates can obtain information about their test dates using the MUET registration slip (MUET/D), which can be downloaded from the MEC portal <http://www.mpm.edu.my>.

2 Test Centres

State Education Departments choose the test centres, taking into account the towns in which candidates wish to take the test.

3 Registration

- 3.1 Registration for MUET and MoD can be made online through the MEC portal.
- 3.2 Candidates from public and private schools and institutions can register for MUET through their schools or institutions.
- 3.3 Private individual candidates can register for MUET online through the MEC portal.
- 3.4 Dates for registration will be advertised by the MEC in local newspapers and the MEC portal.

- 3.5 It is the responsibility of candidates registering online to ensure that their particulars are entered correctly.
- 3.6 Registration fees can be paid via credit card, internet banking or by purchasing a Malaysian Examinations Council PIN (MEC PIN) from Bank Simpanan Nasional (BSN). Candidates are advised to consult the MEC portal for further information on registration and payment.
- 3.7 Candidates can check their registration status through the MEC portal.

4 Test Fees

- 4.1 The MUET and MoD test fees for Malaysian and non-Malaysian candidates are as follows:

Test Type	Test Fee	
	Malaysian	Non-Malaysian
MUET	RM150.00	RM250.00
MoD	RM350.00	RM550.00

- 4.2 Candidates are advised to pay the test fee in full before taking the test.
- 4.3 The MEC reserves the right to withhold the results of candidates who have not paid the test fee in full.
- 4.4 The MEC PIN can be used once for the specified session only.

5 Changes of Test Centre

- 5.1 Candidates who wish to change their test centre must apply through their respective State Education Departments not later than two weeks after the MUET/D is uploaded to the MEC portal.
- 5.2 An administrative fee of RM40.00 will be charged for MUET, and RM50.00 for MoD.

6 Withdrawal from the Test

Test fees will not normally be refunded in the case of candidates who withdraw from the test. However, a refund of RM90.00 (MUET) or RM230.00 (MoD) will be paid in the following cases:

- (a) Candidates who suffer from long-term illnesses
(A copy of the medical certificate from a Government Medical Officer must be submitted.)
- (b) Candidates who have passed away
(A copy of the death certificate must be submitted by the next of kin or a representative.)
- (c) Candidates who have been offered a place to study at any public institution of higher learning
(A copy of the offer letter from the institutions must be submitted.)
- (d) Candidates who withdraw from the test
(A refund of the basic fee will only be made after the administration of the test is completed.)

7 Postponing the Test

- 7.1 Candidates who wish to postpone taking the test must apply in writing for permission from the MEC before the date of the test, stating reasons supported by evidence.
- 7.2 The MEC may at its own discretion approve the postponement of the test.
- 7.3 Candidates who wish to sit for the test at another session must pay the basic fee.

8 Contagious Diseases

Candidates suffering from contagious diseases are not normally permitted to take the test. If permitted, the candidates will take the test in a separate room.

9 Arrangements for Specific Needs

- 9.1 Applications for specific arrangements are allowed for:
 - (a) candidates adversely affected by illness or other misfortunes, and
 - (b) candidates with special needs.
- 9.2 Applications must be made using specific forms which can be obtained during online registration.
- 9.3 The MEC will not consider cases which are not reported before the date of the test.

10 Materials provided by Candidates

- 10.1 Candidates are required to write their answers using a pen or ball-point pen in black or blue ink, except in the case of multiple-choice tests for which only BB or 2B pencils are to be used.
- 10.2 Candidates are required to bring their own pencils, erasers and other equipment.

11 MUET Results

- 11.1 The MUET results are presented in the form of a certificate which is issued through the State Education Department.
- 11.2 Candidates from public and private schools and institutions collect their results from their schools or institutions.
- 11.3 Private individual candidates receive their results from the MEC by post.
- 11.4 Candidates who have lost their certificates can apply to the MEC for a copy, for which a fee of RM60.00 will be charged.
- 11.5 Results will also be made available on the MEC portal and via SMS.

12 Barred from Tests and Disqualification of Results

12.1 If the MEC is satisfied that a candidate has been involved in; (a) any breach of regulations or caution issued for this test, or (b) in any irregularity, misconduct or dishonesty whatsoever in connection with the test or any of the papers, the MEC may at its sole discretion bar the candidate from the test and refuse the candidate further admission thereto, cancel the candidate's result, and refuse entry as a candidate to subsequent tests.

12.2 If the MEC is satisfied that breaches of regulation or caution or any irregularity, misconduct or dishonesty whatsoever in connection with the test have been widespread at any centre, or that the circumstances in which the test is held at any centre are unsatisfactory, the MEC may at its sole discretion cancel the entire test or the test results at that centre in relation to all the candidates at that centre.

13 Test Results Enquiries

Candidates can make enquiries of their results within one week of the release of the results. Information pertaining to the enquiries and fees can be obtained from the MEC portal.

14 Answer Scripts

All answer scripts remain the property of the MEC.

15 Conditions of Test Registration

There is no entry requirement to sit for the MUET tests.

16 Validity of MUET Results

The validity period for MUET results are as follows:

- (a) Those released before 2009 are valid until 18 July 2013.
- (b) Those released since 2009 are valid for five years from the date of the release of the results.

17 Test Components

The test has four components, Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. The duration and weighting of the components are as follows:

Paper Code	Paper	Duration	Weighting
800/1	Listening	50 minutes	25%
800/2	Speaking	30 minutes	25%
800/3	Reading	75 minutes	25%
800/4	Writing	75 minutes	25%

18 Test Scores

Test scores are reported as follows:

Test Component	Maximum Score	Score Obtained
LISTENING	90	
SPEAKING	90	
READING	90	
WRITING	90	
AGGREGATED SCORE	360	
Band Achieved		

19 Aggregated Scores

AGGREGATED SCORE	BAND	USER
331 – 360	5+	Proficient
294 – 330	5.0	
258 – 293	4.5	Independent
211 – 257	4.0	
164 – 210	3.5	
123 – 163	3.0	
82 – 122	2.5	Basic
36 – 81	2.0	
1 – 35	1.0	

Note:

*Candidates are required to attempt **all four** components to obtain an overall band score. No certificate will be awarded to candidates who fail to attempt all four components.*

20 Description of Aggregated Scores

BAND	DESCRIPTOR				
	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>
		<i>Production</i>	<i>Interaction</i>		
5+	No descriptors available – see Band 5	Can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and demonstrates good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms • Can express themselves fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely • When faced with a problem can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it 	No descriptors available – see Band 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write complex texts clearly and smoothly with a high degree of accuracy and in an appropriate and effective style • Can use structure in a logical and orderly manner which helps the reader to find significant points • Can highlight the relevant salient issues, expand and support points of view at length with relevant points, reasons and examples, and complete the text with appropriate conclusion

BAND	DESCRIPTOR				
	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>
		<i>Production</i>	<i>Interaction</i>		
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured, and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly • Can understand television programmes and films without too much effort 	Can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects, integrating sub themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can express themselves fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions • Can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes • Can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate their contribution skillfully to those of other speakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style • Can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to their field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write clear, well-structured and mostly accurate texts on complex subjects • Can highlight the relevant salient issues, expand and support points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples, and complete the text with an appropriate conclusion

BAND	DESCRIPTOR				
	Listening	Speaking		Reading	Writing
		Production	Interaction		
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument, provided the topic is reasonably familiar • Can understand most television news and programmes on current affairs and most films in the standard form of English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to their field of interest • Can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of different options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible • Can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining their views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read texts concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints • Can understand contemporary literary prose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write clear, detailed formal or informal texts on a range of subjects • Can make a distinction between formal and informal language with occasional less appropriate expressions
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in school, leisure, and work • Can understand the main point of many radio or television programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions • Can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans, and describe reactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken • Can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or relevant to everyday life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand texts consisting mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language • Can understand descriptions of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write straightforward responses on familiar topics. The written texts are understandable but occasional unclear expressions or inconsistencies may cause difficulties for the reader

BAND	DESCRIPTOR				
	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>
		<i>Production</i>	<i>Interaction</i>		
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand phrases and high frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance • Can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms everyday activities and experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities • Can handle very short social exchanges, even though they cannot usually understand enough to keep the conversation going 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read very short, simple texts • Can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables, and can understand short simple personal letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write sequences of simple phrases and sentences, linked by means of simple connectors. Longer written texts may contain expressions and problems of coherence which make the text difficult to understand

BAND	DESCRIPTOR				
	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>
		<i>Production</i>	<i>Interaction</i>		
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning themselves, their family, and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly 	No descriptors available – see Band 2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write simple isolated phrases and sentences. Longer texts may contain expressions and problems of coherence which make the text very difficult or impossible to understand

(Adapted from Council of Europe. (2018). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment, Companion Volume with New Descriptors*. Strasbourg Cedex: Council of Europe.

MUET TEST SPECIFICATIONS

1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF MUET

MUET is a test of English proficiency for admission to higher education, measuring the ability of test takers to listen, speak, read, and write English in real situations in the education context. The test covers English as used in both formal and informal environments including:

- (a) more formal academic work (e.g. lectures, classroom readings, assignments, class presentations, group discussions, etc.),
- (b) less formal non-academic contexts encountered
 - on campus (e.g. written texts and spoken discourse, including announcements, notices, advertisements and casual socialising with other students and lecturers, etc.), and
 - off-campus (e.g. emails, phone calls, etc.).

There are four test components, namely Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, all of which test takers must complete to obtain a score. Detailed information on each component is provided later in this document. The Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing tests use a range of task types. The items for Listening and Reading are designed to assess the ability to understand English, and Writing and Speaking tasks are designed to assess the ability to use English in specific communicative contexts. The tasks set are of the kind students are expected to perform while at university in formal and informal contexts, and the content is tailored to the requirements of the purpose of the communication. In this regard, the MUET tests are intended to help institutions make better decisions not only about the readiness of prospective students for academic coursework, but also about their ability to use and understand English in different contexts in the environment of higher education.

The MUET tests adopt a communicative approach to language testing, focusing not so much on grammatical knowledge *per se* (Bachman, 1990; see also Bachman & Palmer, 1996), but rather on communicative language ability, which comprises knowledge or competences, and the capacity to use and understand knowledge appropriately in a specific situational context of communication. The constructs measured are the communicative language skills required to take part in acts of communication as receiver or producer, which means that test items or tasks “must involve the test taker in functions other than simply demonstrating his knowledge of the language.” (Bachman, 1990).

When creating an item or a task, it is important to consider authenticity and what the task is designed to elicit. The test task should be ‘situationally authentic’, and contains as far as possible some key features of the real-life task (see e.g. ALTE, 2011).

A Speaking or Writing task can be made ‘interactionally authentic’ in the following ways:

- using situations and tasks which are likely to be familiar and relevant to the test taker at the target CEFR level,
- making clear the purpose of carrying out a particular task with the intended audience,
- providing appropriate contextualisation, and
- specifying clear criteria for success in completing the task (ALTE, 2011, p. 12).

A test item or task should elicit sufficient appropriate English for a judgement to be made about the communicative ability of test takers to understand and use English. The aim of the Speaking and Writing tests is to elicit and assess test takers' abilities to accomplish particular tasks or task types in acts of communication in which English is essential. In the Listening and Reading tests, test takers are exposed to English in a receptive manner. They meet Bachman and Palmer's definition of a 'nonreciprocal' language use situation in which no feedback is provided, and there is no interaction between language users (Alderson, 2000). This is appropriate for the assessment of some basic skills which are of importance in an academic context.

The tasks and items are designed according to linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences which constitute knowledge of English and the ability to use it (see Council of Europe, 2017, pp. 13-14). Linguistic competence refers to knowledge of the language system, including word formation and vocabulary, pronunciation and sentence formation. Sociolinguistic competence refers to knowledge of language use, with the emphasis on appropriateness of communicative acts and the naturalness of speech in given socio-cultural contexts. Pragmatic competence is concerned with the functional use of language, and the rules of cohesion (the linking of utterances) and coherence (the logical sequencing of ideas). It also includes knowing how to use socially appropriate communicative acts in discourse, and how to make meaningful inferences from what has been said or written.

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE LISTENING TEST

The primary purpose of the MUET Listening test is to assess the ability of test takers to understand spoken discourse in the higher education context, covering both monologues and dialogues.

Subject/topic knowledge: Subjects are related to and typical of the academic and educational environment. They typically involve familiar and unfamiliar topics in different academic areas that a non-specialist would be able to understand including, but not limited to, people and culture, financial awareness and consumerism, science and technology, health and environment, and education.

Background/cultural knowledge: The test tasks are intended to be accessible to test takers, so that they will be able to draw on their knowledge or understanding of real world settings to respond to them.

Linguistic knowledge: This is concerned with language as a system which includes phonological, syntactic and lexical knowledge with lexical items ranging from general to discipline-specific of a non-technical nature. Linguistic knowledge also includes the pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspects of language use. The former refers to the functional use of language and knowledge of discourse, cohesion and coherence, and text types. The latter is concerned with the knowledge of sociocultural rules of language use, namely knowing how to use and respond to language appropriately.

Processing: This is based on Geranpayeh and Taylor's (2013) model of cognitive processing which includes input decoding, lexical search, syntactic parsing, meaning construction and discourse construction. Meaning construction is characterised by relating the meaning of clauses and sentences to context, and discourse construction is characterised by relating what has been said so far to the overall meaning of the message. Meaning is constructed at word, phrase, sentence and discourse level in order to understand gist, specific information, details, and main ideas, and to deduce meaning.

TEST OVERVIEW

Duration: Approximately 50 minutes. Test takers will listen to each text twice.

Table 1: Structure of the Listening Test

Test Part	Text Type	Text Length	Question Type	Number of Questions
Part 1	Dialogue	600 to 650 words	Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs - 3 options)	7 (A2-B1)
Part 2	Monologue	600 to 650 words	MCQs - 3 options	7 (B1-B2)
Part 3	Monologue (3 speakers)	350 to 400 words	Multiple matching - 5 options	3 (B2)
Part 4	Dialogue	650 to 700 words	MCQs - 3 options	7 (B2)
Part 5	Short dialogue	250 to 300 words per dialogue	MCQs - 3 options	6 (B2-C1)
Total				30

TASK SPECIFICATION

CEFR level: Between A2 and B1

Table 2: Part 1 – Text 1, Questions 1 to 7

Task format	A dialogue followed by 7 MCQs. Each MCQ has 3 options.
Duration	Approximately 10 minutes
Standard rubrics	The task comes with the following standard rubrics: <i>“Listen to a conversation/interview... As you listen, choose the correct answer for questions 1 to 7. Indicate your answers on the answer sheet.”</i>
Word count	600 to 650 words
Listener-Speaker Relationship	The speakers are named and their roles are specified.
Test focus	Each item may test some of the following skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understanding simple phrases and expressions• identifying general and specific information• understanding main ideas made in clear standard speech on familiar matters
Response	For each question, choose option A, B or C, and indicate the answers on the answer sheet.

CEFR level: Between B1 and B2

Table 3: Part 2 – Text 2, Questions 8 to 14

Task format	A monologue followed by 7 MCQs. Each MCQ has 3 options.
Duration	Approximately 10 minutes
Standard rubrics	The task comes with the following standard rubrics: <i>“Listen to a talk/briefing/lecture... As you listen, choose the correct answer for questions 8 to 14. Indicate your answers on the answer sheet.”</i>
Word count	600 to 650 words
Listener-Speaker Relationship	The speakers are named and their roles are specified.
Test focus	Each item may test some of the following skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understanding simple phrases and expressions• identifying general and specific information• understanding main ideas made in clear standard speech on familiar matters• understanding main ideas in linguistically complex speech• understanding familiar and unfamiliar topics• following extended speech and complex lines of argument on reasonably familiar topics
Response	For each question, choose option A, B or C, and indicate the answers on the answer sheet.

CEFR level: B2

Table 4: Part 3 – Text 3, Questions 15 to 17

Task format	Monologue spoken by 3 different speakers on the same topic. This is followed by 3 questions to be matched with 5 given options.
Duration	Approximately 6 minutes
Standard rubrics	The task comes with the following standard rubrics: <i>“Listen to three people; (name of the people), talking about... For questions 15 to 17, choose from the list A to E... Use the letters only once. There are two extra options which you do not need to use. Indicate your answers on the answer sheet.”</i>
Word count	The 3 texts should be of approximately similar length, and amount to 350 to 400 words in total.
Listener-Speaker Relationship	The speakers are named and their roles are specified.
Test focus	Each item may test some of the following skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understanding main ideas in linguistically complex speech• understanding familiar and unfamiliar topics• following extended speech and complex lines of argument on reasonably familiar topics
Response	For each question, choose option A, B, C, D or E, and indicate the answers on the answer sheet.

CEFR level: B2

Table 5: Part 4 – Text 4, Questions 18 to 24

Task format	A dialogue followed by 7 MCQs. Each MCQ has 3 options.
Duration	Approximately 10 minutes
Standard rubrics	The task comes with the following standard rubrics: <i>“Listen to a conversation/discussion about... As you listen, choose the correct answer for questions 18 to 24. Indicate your answers on the answer sheet.”</i>
Word count	650 to 700 words
Listener-Speaker Relationship	The speakers are named and their roles are specified.
Test focus	Each item may test some of the following skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understanding main ideas in linguistically complex speech• understanding familiar and unfamiliar topics• following extended speech and complex lines of argument on reasonably familiar topics
Response	For each question, choose option A, B or C, and indicate the answers on the answer sheet.

CEFR level: Between B2 and C1

Table 6: Part 5 – Texts 5 to 7, Questions 25 to 30 .

Task format	Three unrelated dialogues each of which is followed by 2 MCQs. Each MCQ has 3 options. Dialogue 1 – Questions 25 and 26 Dialogue 2 – Questions 27 and 28 Dialogue 3 – Questions 29 and 30
Duration	Approximately 3 minutes (60 seconds per dialogue)
Standard rubrics	The task comes with the following standard rubrics: <i>“Listen to a conversation between... talking about... As you listen, choose the correct answer for questions 25 and 26 / 27 and 28 / 29 and 30. Indicate your answers on the answer sheet.”</i>
Word count	The 3 texts should be of approximately similar length, and each text consists of 250 to 300 words.
Listener-Speaker Relationship	The speakers are named and their roles are specified.
Test focus	Each item may test some of the following skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understanding main ideas in linguistically complex speech• understanding familiar and unfamiliar topics• following extended speech and complex lines of argument on reasonably familiar topics• following extended speech on abstract and complex topics outside field of study, and confirming occasional details• following less structured implied messages in extended speech• understanding idiomatic expressions, colloquialisms and variation in language use
Response	For each question, choose option A, B or C, and indicate the answers on the answer sheet.

ASSEMBLY SPECIFICATION

The Listening test consists of 5 parts, and includes 7 listening texts with a total of 30 questions (Table 1: Structure of the Listening test).

DELIVERY SPECIFICATION

Approximately 50 minutes is given for the Listening test.

3. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SPEAKING TEST

The primary purpose of the MUET Speaking test is to assess the ability of test takers to give an oral presentation of ideas individually, and to interact in small groups in both more formal and less formal academic contexts.

Subject/topic knowledge: The test progresses from familiar topics within the test takers' personal experience to more abstract topics in a range of fields and interest areas that may be encountered in late secondary/early tertiary education contexts. Possible areas include but are not limited to people and culture, financial awareness and consumerism, science and technology, health and environment, and education. In the case of the more abstract topics, the test is limited to covering familiar and unfamiliar topics in different academic areas that a non-specialist would be able to talk about.

Background/cultural knowledge: The test tasks are intended to be accessible to test takers, so that they will be able to draw on their knowledge or understanding of real world settings to respond to them.

Linguistic knowledge:

This refers to language as a system which includes the following:

- Accuracy: Using grammatically correct language; using correct pronunciation, stress and intonation
- Range: Using varied sentence structures
- Fluency: Speaking with confidence and without unnecessary/undue hesitation

It also includes the pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspects of language use. The former refers to the functional use of language and knowledge of discourse, cohesion and coherence, and text types. The latter is concerned with the knowledge of sociocultural rules of language use which includes using language appropriate for the intended purpose and audience, using varied vocabulary and expressions, and observing conventions appropriate to a specific situation.

TEST OVERVIEW

Table 7: Structure of the Speaking Test

Test Part	Task Type	Timing
Part 1	Individual presentation based on a written prompt	2 minutes to prepare 2 minutes to present
Part 2	Group discussion based on a written question and five prompts in the form of a mind map	3 minutes to prepare 8 to 12 minutes to discuss

PART 1 – INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION

CEFR level: Between B1 and B2

PROMPT ATTRIBUTES

Type of stimulus	Textual stimulus, in the form of a brief statement on the topic, followed by an aspect of the topic for each test taker to talk about.
Standard rubrics	Each task comes with the following standard rubrics: “ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>You have 2 minutes to prepare.</i> • <i>You have 2 minutes to talk</i> ... ” <i>“You have to give a presentation to ... Talk about ...”</i>
Word count	Excluding the standard rubrics, the statement of the topic (the situation) is made in two or three sentences, and the prompt for each test taker consists of no more than 10 words starting with <i>“Talk about ...”</i>
Speaking Context	Individual presentation to group members
Language Functions	Each task should elicit some of the following functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expressing opinions • giving reasons • elaborating • justifying • summarising • concluding

TASK SPECIFICATION

Group Size	While the speaking test is conducted in groups of two to four, test takers respond to Part 1 individually.
Time allowed	2 minutes to prepare, and 2 minutes to present.
Topic	The topics for Part 1 and for Part 2 are related. However, Part 1 is written so that test takers can speak more generally and draw from personal experience if desired.
Examiners	Two examiners are present during the test. One examiner will give the instructions to the task (see Appendix A).
Materials	<p>An examiner guide (see Appendix A) is provided which details what the examiner will say during the speaking test as well as the written input for candidates.</p> <p>Test takers have their own task sheets providing the standard rubrics and information on what they should talk about. They will be asked to talk about different aspects of the topic.</p>

RESPONSE ATTRIBUTES

Length of response	Test takers are expected to speak for up to 2 minutes.
Mode	Oral presentation
Register	The expected register is somewhat formal. Production relates mostly to concrete matters.
Level of response	Task may result in speech ranging from A2 to B2.

PART 2 – GROUP DISCUSSION

CEFR level: B2

PROMPT ATTRIBUTES

Type of stimulus	Visual and textual stimuli, in the form of a brief statement about the topic, and a mind map containing ideas for discussion.
Standard rubrics	The task comes with the following standard rubrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>You have 3 minutes to prepare.</i>• <i>In your discussion, you may support or oppose the other test takers' views.</i>• <i>Some ideas have been provided in the mind map below. You may use these ideas, or you may also come up with your own ideas.</i>• <i>At the end of the discussion, try to decide on the best suggestion.</i>• <i>You have 8 to 12 minutes for the discussion.</i>
Word count	Excluding the standard rubrics, the statement of the topic is made in two or three sentences. The mind map has one question with five ideas consisting of one to three words.
Speaking context	Group discussion
Language Functions	The task should elicit some of the following functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• expressing opinions• giving reasons• elaborating• justifying• inferring• evaluating• initiating• prompting• negotiating• turn-taking• interrupting• summarising• concluding

TASK SPECIFICATION

Group Size	Part 2 of the test involves a group discussion with a maximum of four members.
Time allowed	Three minutes to prepare and 8 to 12 minutes to discuss, depending on the size of the group (see Appendix B).
Topic	The topics for Part 1 and Part 2 are related. However, Part 2 is written so that test takers have to address the topic at a more abstract and conceptual level, negotiating their way to answer the question.
Examiners	Two examiners are present during the test. One examiner will give the instructions to the task (see Appendix A).
Materials	<p>An examiner guide (see Appendix A) is provided giving details of what the examiner will say during the speaking test as well as the written input to the candidates.</p> <p>Test takers will each have a task sheet providing the standard rubrics, and information on what they should talk about, including the mind map.</p>

RESPONSE ATTRIBUTES

Length of response	Test takers are expected to discuss the topic for 8 to 12 minutes, depending on the size of the group (see Appendix B).
Mode	Group discussion
Register	The expected register is general academic language, but can vary in terms of formality. Production should cover more abstract and conceptual matters.
Level of response	The task may result in speech ranging from B1 to C1.

ASSEMBLY SPECIFICATION

Part 1 of the Speaking test should have a number of different speaking prompts. Part 1 and 2 are thematically linked.

DELIVERY SPECIFICATION

The test is administered by two examiners to groups of 2 to 4 test takers. However, only one of the examiners will give the instructions to the task.

Examiner guide

Part 1

Examiner In this part of the test I'm going to give each of you a question. I'd like you to talk about your question on your own for about 2 minutes.

(Candidates A-D), Here are your questions.

*Give **task sheets 1A-1D** to Candidates A-D.*

Your questions are all about **ways to keep healthy**. You now have 2 minutes to prepare your presentation.

All right?

Allow candidates 2 minutes to prepare.

Okay, Candidate A it's your turn first, talk about **the importance of what and when people eat**.

Candidate A

⌚ 1-2 minutes

.....

Examiner

Thank you. Now, Candidate B, talk about **the importance of exercise**.

Candidate B

⌚ 1-2 minutes

.....

Examiner

Thank you. Now, Candidate C, talk about **the importance of seeing the doctor regularly**.

Candidate C

⌚ 1-2 minutes

.....

Examiner

Thank you. Now, Candidate D, talk about **the importance of getting enough rest**.

Candidate D

⌚ 1-2 minutes

.....

Examiner

Thank you. Can I have the task sheets, please? *Turn the task sheet over.*

Examiner

Tell candidates to look at Part 2.

Now, in this part of the test you're going to discuss for about 8 to 12 minutes about **how healthcare can best be improved**.

In your discussion, you may support or oppose the other candidates' views.

You may use the ideas in the mind map or come up with your own ideas.

At the end of the discussion, try to **decide on the best suggestion**.

You now have 3 minutes to prepare.

All right?

Allow candidates 3 minutes to prepare.

Now, discuss **how healthcare can best be improved**.

Candidates A-D

⌚ 8-12 minutes

.....

Note: Should the need arise, the examiners may wish to use the following prompts to encourage contributions and further discussion:

- What do you think?
- Do you agree?
- And you?

Examiner

Thank you.

Group Formation Guide and Time Given for Group Discussion

Number of Test Takers	Group Formation	Number of groups
20	4+4+4+4+4	5
19	4+4+4+4+3	5
18	4+4+4+3+3	5
17	4+4+3+3+3	5
16	4+4+4+4	4
15	4+4+4+3	4
14	4+4+3+3	4
13	4+3+3+3	4
12	4+4+4	3
11	4+4+3	3
10	4+3+3	3
9	3+3+3	3
8	4+4	2
7	4+3	2
6	3+3	2
5	3+2	2
4	4	1
3	3	1
2	2	1

Group Size	Time Given for Discussion
4	8 - 12 minutes
3	6 - 10 minutes
2	4 - 8 minutes

4. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE READING TEST

The primary purpose of the MUET Reading test is to assess the ability of test takers to understand reading texts in the higher education context, covering both more formal and less formal text types.

Subject/topic knowledge: Subjects are related to and typical of the academic and educational environment. Both familiar and unfamiliar topics in different academic areas that a non-specialist would be able to understand including but not limited to people and culture, financial awareness and consumerism, science and technology, environment and health, and education.

Background/cultural knowledge: The test tasks are intended to be accessible to test takers, so that they will be able to draw on their knowledge or understanding of real world settings.

Linguistic knowledge: This is concerned with language as a system such as grammatical, syntactic and lexical knowledge with lexical items ranging from general to discipline-specific of a non-technical nature. It also includes the pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspects of language use. The former refers to the functional use of language and knowledge of discourse, cohesion and coherence, and text types. The latter is concerned with the knowledge of sociocultural rules of language use, namely how situational factors (e.g. time, setting, age, gender, etc.) affect the language used.

Processing: Based on Khalifa and Weir's (2009) model of cognitive processing in reading, the elements are visual input, word recognition, lexical access, syntactic parsing, establishing propositional meaning at clause and sentence levels, inferencing, building a mental model, creating a text level representation, and creating an intertextual representation. The reading skills tested are the following: identifying specific information, identifying main ideas and supporting details, inferencing, identifying details and examples from sources to support an argument, distinguishing facts from opinions, interpreting text for the author's intention, attitudes and style, identifying the purpose of a paragraph or text, recognising the text structure of the whole text, categorising similarities and differences across texts, identifying cause and effect relationships, predicting outcomes, summarising, comparing and evaluating information in different texts.

TEST OVERVIEW

Duration: 75 minutes

Overall text length: each part of the test has a word count range, but the total word count for the whole test is between 3300 and 4150.

Table 8: Overview of the Reading Test with Text Length and Question Type

Test Part	Text Length	Question Type	Number of Questions
Part 1	Three short texts of the same text type, thematically linked, amounting to a total of 100 to 150 words	Multiple matching Three texts preceded by 4 multiple matching questions	4
Parts 2 and 3	Two texts each of 300 to 450 words	MCQs - 3 options	10
Part 4	Two independent texts based on the same theme (not necessarily of the same text type) amounting to a total of 700 to 800 words	Two MCQs based on Text 1, two MCQs based on Text 2, and two MCQs comparing the two texts (3 options)	6
Part 5	One text of 500 to 600 words	A gapped text with 6 missing sentences (7 options)	6
Parts 6 and 7	Two texts of 700 to 900 words each	MCQs - 4 options	14
TOTAL			40

TASK SPECIFICATION

CEFR level: Between A2 and C1

Table 9: Part 1 – Multiple Matching

Task format	Four questions to be matched to three short adapted authentic texts. The four questions follow on from the same stem. Texts are linked by theme and text type.
Standard rubrics	The task comes with the following standard rubrics: Part 1 <i>“Read three (text type) about X. Answer questions 1 to 4 based on the (text type) about X (A to C).”</i> Questions should follow on from a same stem, e.g. <i>“Which house?”</i>
Word count	The three texts are of similar length: Total of 100 to 150 words.
Test focus	Each task tests the following: Reading multiple texts for specific factual information.
Text type	Three short simple texts including advertisements (flyers, brochures), announcements, notices, short official documents, signs, labels, directories, prospectuses, menus, and timetables, linked by theme and text type
Response	For each question, choose which text, A, B or C, as the answer and indicate the answer on the answer sheet.

Table 10: Parts 2 and 3 – Multiple choice

Task format	Texts followed by 5 MCQs. Each MCQ has 3 options.
Standard rubrics	The task comes with the following standard rubrics: Part 2 <i>“Read (text type). Answer questions 5 to 9 based on the (text type).”</i> Part 3 <i>“Read (text type). Answer questions 10 to 14 based on the (text type).”</i>
Word count	The texts are of similar length: 300 to 450 words.
Test focus	The task tests some of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reading for main ideas and supporting details• inferencing• identifying details and examples to support an argument• predicting outcomes
Text type	Straightforward factual texts such as short stories, light magazines/newspaper articles, blogs, biographies, emails, informal letters, and formal letters (e.g. Letter to the Editor, letter of complaint, job application letter)
Response	For each question, choose from options A, B or C as the correct answer, and indicate your answer on the answer sheet.

Table 11: Part 4 – Multiple choice

Task format	Two thematically linked texts followed by 6 MCQs. Each MCQ has 3 options. Questions 15 and 16 refer to the first text, questions 17 and 18 refer to the second text, questions 19 and 20 refer to both texts.
Standard rubrics	The task comes with the following standard rubrics: Part 4 <i>“Read two (reviews about...) Answer questions 15 and 16 based on Review 1. Answer questions 17 and 18 based on Review 2. Answer questions 19 and 20 based on Review 1 and Review 2.”</i>
Word count	The texts are of similar length: Total of 700 to 800 words.
Test focus	The task tests some of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understanding the main idea and supporting details, and gist• understanding text organisation features• deducing meaning from context• distinguishing facts and opinions• interpreting text for author’s intention, attitudes and style• comparing and evaluating information in different texts
Text type	Long and complex texts such as specialist magazine articles, reviews, feature articles, formal letters, research bulletins, and discussion forums
Response	For each question, choose from options A, B or C as the correct answer, and indicate your answer on the answer sheet.

Table 12: Part 5 – Gapped text

Task format	A text in which six sentences have been removed. This is followed by seven sentences (A to G), to be selected to fill each gap. There is one sentence which is not needed.
Standard rubrics	Each task comes with the following standard rubrics: Part 5 <i>“Read (an article about...) Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences A to G the one which fits each gap (21 to 26). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.”</i>
Word count	Text length: 500 to 600 words including the removed sentences
Test focus	Each task tests some of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identifying the purpose of a paragraph or text• recognising the text structure of the whole text• identifying cause and effect relationships in a text
Text type	Long and complex texts such as specialist magazine articles, reviews, feature articles, and research bulletins
Response	For each question, choose the correct sentences from options A to G, which fits each gap, and indicate the options on the answer sheet.

Table 13: Parts 6 and 7 – Multiple choice

Task format	A text followed by 7 MCQs. Each MCQ has 4 options.
Standard rubrics	The task comes with the following standard rubrics: Part 6 <i>“Read (an article on...)”</i> <i>“Answer questions 27 to 33 based on the article.”</i> Part 7 <i>“Answer questions 34 to 40 based on the article.”</i>
Word count	The texts are of similar length: 700 to 900 words.
Test focus	Test takers are required to deal with a relatively extensive and complex text. The task tests some of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• recognising text content features (detail, opinion, emotions, attitude, writer's purpose, main idea and implication)• recognising text organisation features (exemplification, comparison and reference)
Text type	Lengthy complex texts such as specialist magazine articles, textbooks, reviews, reports, journal articles, research bulletins, professional publications, and literary writing
Response	For each question, choose from options A, B, C, or D as the correct answer, and indicate your answer on the answer sheet.

ASSEMBLY SPECIFICATION

The Reading test consists of 7 parts, and includes 10 texts and 40 questions.

DELIVERY SPECIFICATION

A total time of 75 minutes is given for the Reading test.

5. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE WRITING TEST

The primary purpose of the MUET Writing test is to assess the ability of test takers to communicate in writing in the context of higher education, covering both more formal and less formal writing genres.

Subject/topic knowledge: In the case of the less formal writing task, the test is limited to situations and subjects relating to and typical of the academic and educational environment. In the case of the more formal writing task, the test is limited to familiar and unfamiliar topics in different academic areas that a non-specialist would be able to write about.

Background/cultural knowledge: The test tasks are intended to be accessible to test takers, so that they will be able to draw on their knowledge or understanding of real world settings to respond to them.

Linguistic knowledge: This is restricted to the writing knowledge factors such as “organisational knowledge” which includes vocabulary, morphology, grammar, syntax, spelling, cohesion, and rhetorical organisation and “pragmatic knowledge” which includes functions, dialect, register, naturalness, cultural references, and figures of speech (Bachman & Palmer, 2010).

Processing: Drawing from Kellogg (1994), Field (2004), and Shaw and Weir (2007), processing includes the following:

- macro-planning (gathering ideas, genre, target readership),
- organisation (ordering ideas, identifying relationships, and central and secondary ideas) and
- micro-planning (focusing on the part of the text that is about to be produced, at two levels: (a) the goal of the paragraph aligned with the overall goal of the writing activity; (b) within the paragraph, the immediate need to structure an upcoming sentence in terms of information).

TEST OVERVIEW

Duration: 75 minutes

Table 15: Overview of the Writing Test with Text Length and Question Type

Task	Stimulus	Response	Level
Task 1	Letter or email 100–135 words	Letter or email of at least 100 words	The language in the stimulus should not exceed B1. Responses may range from A2 to C1.
Task 2	Statement setting out an idea or a problem in 40–80 words	Essay (discursive, argumentative, or a problem-solution) of at least 250 words	The language in the stimulus should not exceed B2. Responses may range from B1 to C1.

PROMPT ATTRIBUTES

Table 16: Task 1 – Guided Writing

Type of stimulus	Textual stimulus in the form of a letter or an email containing three or four notes, and rubrics contextualising the task.
Standard rubrics	Each task comes with the following standard rubrics: <i>“You are advised to spend about 25 minutes on this task.”</i> ... <i>“Using all the notes given, write a reply of at least 100 words in an appropriate style.”</i>
Word count	Excluding the standard rubrics, the stimulus should contain between 100 and 135 words. Each note is no longer than 4 words.
Reader-Writer Relationship	The target reader is an individual who may or may not be personally known to the writer. The relationship between the reader and writer can range from close or familiar (e.g. classmate) to distant or unfamiliar (e.g. school official) to something in between (e.g. lecturer).
Language Functions	Each task should elicit some of the following functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expressing thanks, apologies, reactions, and preferences • accepting/declining/rejecting invitations/offers • making requests • giving precise information • describing experiences, feelings, and events • providing advice, reasons, opinions, and justifications

TASK SPECIFICATION

Time allowed	25 minutes
Presentation features	The letter or email input and the notes are presented in different fonts. The notes appear outside the borders of the letter or email.

RESPONSE ATTRIBUTES

Length of response	Test takers are expected to write at least 100 words , although there are no explicit penalties for shorter or longer responses. Responses will be read as a whole and marked accordingly.
Text type	A letter or an email
Register	The expected register can vary from informal to formal. Production relates mostly to concrete matters.
Level of response	The task may result in writing ranging from A2 to C1.

PROMPT ATTRIBUTES

Table 17: Task 2 – Extended Writing

Type of stimulus	A textual stimulus, in the form of a few sentences and statements, establishing the communicative context, the idea or problem for the test takers to respond to, and the formal genre expected.
Standard rubrics	Each task comes with the following standard rubrics: <i>“You are advised to spend about 50 minutes on this task.”</i> ... <i>“Write at least 250 words.”</i>
Word count	The stimulus contains between 40 and 80 words, excluding the standard rubrics.
Reader-Writer Relationship	The target reader is a general reader or belongs to a group of people (e.g. a committee) not personally known to the writer.
Language functions	Each task should elicit some of the following functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussing ideas and evaluating arguments or solutions to problems • providing advice, reasons, opinions, and justifications • giving examples and supporting information

TASK SPECIFICATION

Time allowed	50 minutes
Presentation features	The task may include information about the target reader, the purpose of writing and the general context.

RESPONSE ATTRIBUTES

Length of response	Test takers are expected to write at least 250 words , although there will be no explicit penalties for shorter or longer responses. Responses will be read as a whole and marked accordingly.
Genre	Test takers are expected to write an essay (discursive, argumentative, or problem-solution).
Register	The expected register is generally formal language. Production should cover more abstract and conceptual matters.
Level of response	The task may result in writing ranging from B1 to C1.

ASSEMBLY SPECIFICATIONS

The Writing test consists of Task 1 and Task 2.

DELIVERY SPECIFICATIONS

The two tasks are presented on separate pages. The total time for the Writing test is 75 minutes.

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Majlis Peperiksaan Malaysia (MPM) merupakan Badan Berkanun Persekutuan di bawah Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. Ia ditubuhkan di bawah Akta Parlimen, Akta Majlis Peperiksaan Malaysia 1980 [Akta 225]. MPM merupakan sebuah badan pentaksiran yang diiktiraf di Malaysia untuk mengelolakan peperiksaan Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM), ujian *Malaysian University English Test* (MUET) mengikut sesi dan mengikut kaedah *MUET on Demand* (MoD), dan Ujian Sijil Kecekapan Bahasa Melayu bagi Warganegara Asing (SKBMW). Sijil STPM telah diiktiraf pada peringkat antarabangsa, dan MPM telah berkolaborasi dengan *Cambridge Assessment, United Kingdom* sejak tahun 1980. Di samping itu, MUET telah disejajarkan dengan *The Common European Framework of Reference for Language* (CEFR) dan diiktiraf serta diterima oleh beberapa universiti terkemuka di luar negara.



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