

How are you?

Vocabulary

- learn
- study
- practice

A-Z

Let's speak English!

ABC

Phrasal verbs

- give up
- look after
- take off

Grammar

- Present Perfect
- Conditionals

✓



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ENGLISH

PCE MOCK EXAMS



Listening

“Practice makes progress”



It takes time to speak a new language

♥

To be

am
is
are



Writing

I think that...

Essay

Introduction
Body
Conclusion



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BEFORE YOU START

This workbook has been created by Academia La llibreta as our own practice material to support preparation for English in the PCE.

It does not reproduce official UNEDasiss exams and should not be understood as a model published by that institution. Its purpose is educational and informative: to help you practise with exercises at an appropriate level, become familiar with the exam format, and gain confidence before the exam.

We recommend using these mock exams as part of your preparation, together with studying the syllabus, reviewing your mistakes, and consulting the latest official sources.

We hope these mock exams help you identify what you already master and what you still need to reinforce. Keep it up!

PCE Mock Exam: South African students using vaping to cope with exam stress

PART A. Comprehension questions on the text. Read the text and answer all the questions.

Scoring system for this part:

A1 and A2 Questions:

- Correct answer: +0.50 points
- Wrong answer: -0.15 points
- Unanswered: 0 points

A3 Question:

- Correct answer: +2 points
- Unanswered: 0 points

In South Africa, where academic success is highly valued and the pressure to perform is intense, vaping—the use of electronic cigarettes—has gained significant popularity among students as a primary mechanism to deal with exam stress. As final assessments approach, the sight of students using these devices in study halls has become increasingly common, sparking a national debate about youth health and the hidden costs of academic achievement.

While the intentions behind turning to vaping might initially seem harmless to a stressed teenager, it is essential to understand the potential risks and long-term consequences associated with the habit. Vaping involves inhaling vaporized liquids that typically contain nicotine and a cocktail of other chemicals. These substances can negatively affect various cognitive functions, such as attention, learning, mood regulation, and impulse control. For a student trying to memorize complex information, the physiological interference caused by nicotine may actually hinder the very academic performance they are trying to protect.

During the peak of exam season, vaping often appears attractive due to the persistent misconception that it offers a quick stress-relief solution and is significantly healthier than traditional cigarettes. However, medical experts are working hard to debunk these myths. Dr. Catherine Egbe, of the South African Medical Research Council, notes that there is currently no comprehensive study available to prove the popular belief that vaping is inherently safer than smoking cigarettes. Instead of relying on

chemical aids, she highlights healthier, sustainable alternatives for stress management, such as mindfulness, getting adequate sleep, and maintaining a balanced diet.

Diverse studies have found that nicotine also predisposes developing teen brains to other kinds of addictions. This neurobiological priming means that young vapers are at a much higher risk of developing future dependencies on alcohol and other drugs. Recognizing the severity of this growing public health problem, the South African government has moved to reduce vaping among teenagers through legislative action. For instance, there are now strict rules against selling vaping products to minors. Additionally, efforts have been made to limit advertising in digital spaces where teenagers are most active. Deborah Arnott, chief executive of the charity Action on Smoking and Health, has expressed deep concern about the aggressive promotion of e-cigarettes to children on social media. In response, some schools have implemented specialized stress-reduction programs, providing students with effective psychological tools to cope with academic pressures without turning to harmful habits.

The economic implications of this trend are vast, carrying substantial costs for the nation's healthcare system. Nicotine use increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases, including hypertension and heart attacks, as well as reproductive disorders and various types of cancers. Treating these chronic conditions requires a significant allocation of public funds. Furthermore, when the youth population becomes unwell, it diminishes the country's future economic productivity, putting an extra financial burden on the social support systems of the country.

Adapted from IOL, 3 November 2023

A1. Find in the text one word that means the same (synonym) as "reduce".

A2. Find in the text one word that means the opposite (antonym) of "beneficial".

A3. Summarise the text: Write between 20 and 25 words(2 points). Avoid phrases like "The text says..." or "As the author says...", as they waste words and do not add relevant information.

PARTB. Use of English. Choose the correct answer. Answer all the questions (0.5 points each). You will lose 0.15 points for each wrong answer, but blank answers won't affect yours core.

1. I usually _____ my grandparents on Sundays, but this week I _____ them on Friday instead.

- a) visit / am visiting
- b) am visiting / visit
- c) visits / am visiting

2. He _____ a lot of sugar in his coffee, even though he knows it's unhealthy.

- a) is putting
- b) put
- c) puts

3. Why _____ you always _____ when I'm trying to study?

- a) do / talk
- b) are / talking
- c) are / talk

4. At the moment, I _____ a book about South African students and stress.

- a) read
- b) reading
- c) am reading

PART C. Write an essay of 150–180 words on ONE of the following subjects (5 points):

A) Teenagers often face pressure during exam periods and may choose different ways to cope with stress—some helpful, others harmful. Think about a time when you had to deal with a stressful situation, such as a school exam or personal challenge. What choices did you make to manage the stress? Were they healthy or unhealthy? How did that experience teach you an important lesson about coping or self-care? Explain how that situation influenced your behavior, mindset, or future decisions. Use specific details to describe the experience and the lesson you learned from it.

B) You recently bought an electronic cigarette (vape) from an online store, but you have experienced several problems with the product. Write an email complaining to the company.

Provide as many details as possible: describe the problem, explain why you are dissatisfied, and state what you expect the company to do.

Adapted from [June 2024 Cantabria Exam, Option A: South African students using vaping to cope with exam stress](#)

PCE Mock Exam: How artificial intelligence is revolutionizing professional sports

PARTA. Comprehension questions on the text. Read the text and answer all the questions.
Scoringsystem for this part:

A1 and A2 Questions:

- Correct answer: +0.50 points
- Wrong answer: -0.15points
- Unanswered: 0points

A3 Question:

- Correct answer: +2 points
- Unanswered: 0points

In the modern era, artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming as commonplace in professional sports as previous technological milestones like 3D motion graphics and high-speed photography. The integration of high-level computing into the athletic world is not merely a trend; it is a fundamental shift in how games are played, managed, and consumed. Its ability to analyze vast amounts of data, identify complex patterns, and make predictions in real time is proving valuable across various aspects of the industry. From the athletes on the field to the coaches on the sidelines, and from global fans to the referees, AI is enhancing performance, decision-making, and engagement at all levels.

In the world of high-stakes competitive sports, even the smallest physiological or tactical differences can determine the final outcome of a game. Consequently, AI is transforming the way elite athletes train, compete, and recover. By using wearable sensors and computer vision, AI systems analyze body movements to provide personalized training plans that focus on specific areas such as speed, endurance, and biomechanical technique. Coaches can now use these digital insights to gain a deeper understanding of player performance, allowing them to make precise adjustments to both individual and team strategies.

Beyond performance, AI significantly reduces injury risk by monitoring workload and recommending optimal recovery periods. It also plays a pivotal role in real-time game strategy. By analyzing years of past performances and studying thousands of hours of video footage, AI identifies subtle patterns that may not be visible to the human eye. This allows coaching staffs to adjust their strategies

mid-game and receive data-driven recommendations for the best approaches to beat a specific opponent. In sports like football and basketball, AI can even suggest the most effective plays based on live defensive positioning, drastically improving the chances of success.

Furthermore, sports referees and judges are increasingly taking advantage of AI to ensure accuracy. This technology allows officials to make better calls on the field, reducing the controversy that often follows human error. In gymnastics, for instance, AI assists with scoring by analyzing an athlete's movements in 3D and comparing them to a massive historical database. This helps judges provide fairer, more consistent scores. AI also helps eliminate subjective bias, ensuring that rankings are based on cold data rather than human emotion.

Finally, AI enhances fan engagement by analyzing individual preferences and digital behavior. It offers personalized content, such as tailored articles or merchandise suggestions, based on a fan's previous interactions. At the 2024 Paris Olympics, AI was used to generate automatic highlight reels, focusing on the specific events fans were most interested in. As AI technology continues to evolve, its influence in the sporting world is expected to grow, bringing unprecedented improvements to the beautiful game.

Adapted from Forbes, August 2024

A1. Find in the text one word that means the same (synonym) as "result".

A2. Find in the text one word that means the opposite (antonym) of "useless".

A3. Summarise the text: Write between 20 and 25 words(2 points). Avoid phrases like "The text says..." or "As the author says...", as they waste words and do not add relevant information.

PARTB. Use of English. Choose the correct answer. Answer all the questions (0.5 points each). You will lose 0.15 points for each wrong answer, but blank answers won't affect your score.

1. Everything is arranged. She _____ meet us at the restaurant at 8 PM.

a) will



b) is going to

c) is meeting

2. They haven't decided yet, but maybe they _____ move to a new apartment next month.

a) are going to

b) will

c) are moving

3. Eddy: Do you want to play football? Maggie: Not now. I _____ dinner.

a) 'm having

b) have

c) 've

4. Nancy: Is football your favourite sport? Mark: Yes, but I _____ basketball too.

a) often play

b) 'm playing often

c) 'm often playing

PART C. Write an essay of 150–180 words on ONE of the following subjects (5 points):

A) Artificial intelligence (AI) is used in many sports today, such as helping athletes train better or making decisions during games. Some people think AI will make sports fairer and more exciting, but others worry it might take away from the human side of the game. Do you think AI is good for sports, or do you think it causes problems? Explain your answer with reasons.



B) AI is helping sports teams connect with fans by offering personalized content and faster communication. Some people think this makes watching sports more fun, while others think it could make fans feel less involved. Do you think AI makes watching sports better, or do you think it takes away from the experience? Explain why.

Adapted from [June 2025 Cantabria Exam, Option B: How artificial intelligence is revolutionizing professional sports](#)



PCE Mock Exam: Bilingual brains: variety makes you mentally fit

PART A. Comprehension questions on the text. Read the text and answer all the questions.
(0,5 point each)

Scoring system for this part:

A1 and A2 Questions:

- Correct answer: +0.50 points
- Wrong answer: 0 points
- Unanswered: 0 points

A3 Question:

- Correct answer: +2 points
- Unanswered: 0 points

For several decades, researchers specializing in linguistics and neuroscience have reported fascinating findings regarding how bilingualism—the ability to speak two languages fluently—affects the human brain. Two of the most significant discoveries involve the concept of "executive control" and the delay of dementia symptoms in older age. Regarding the first, bilingual individuals have consistently shown that they are better able to focus on demanding mental tasks despite the presence of external distractions. In other extensive studies, it has been estimated that bilinguals experience the initial stages of dementia, on average, about five years later than monolinguals.

This week, the scientific community has received new evidence to support these claims. A team of researchers led by Roberto Filippi of Anglia Ruskin University conducted an experiment involving young pupils. They found that bilingual children did a much better job answering tricky questions when a noisy voice was played in the background compared to a monolingual control group. This ability to filter out irrelevant information is proving valuable across various aspects of cognitive development, especially in noisy classroom environments.

The researchers in this line of inquiry tend to share a common hypothesis: that being bilingual acts as a kind of constant mental exercise. Because there are two distinct languages residing in the mind, every time an object is named, an alternative word must be actively suppressed. Likewise, every time a sentence is constructed, the alternative grammar and syntax of the second language must be pushed aside. This continuous "blocking out" of distracting

information is exactly what researchers find that bilinguals do so well.

In competitive academic or professional environments, these small cognitive advantages can eventually determine the final outcome of a person's success. As for the long-term effects on aging, the process seems to be a mental analogue to physical activity; just as exercise keeps a body fit over a lifetime, the mental effort of managing two languages keeps the brain resilient.

However, the field is not without its critics. Why bilinguals seem to perform better in quite a few differently designed studies still requires more longitudinal research to be fully understood. Furthermore, some parents still hold the outdated belief that bilingualism might harm a child's early development or cause confusion. Despite these concerns, the current evidence suggests that the bilingual brain is not only more flexible but also better protected against the natural decline of aging.

Adapted from The Economist, 17th October, 2014

A1. Find in the text one word that means the same (synonym) as "shown".

A2. Find in the text one word that means the opposite (antonym) as "harmed".

A3. Summarise the text: Write between 20 and 25 words (2 points). Avoid phrases like "The text says..." or "As the author says..." as they waste words and do not add relevant information.

PARTB. Use of English. Choose the correct answer. Answer all the questions (0.5 points each). You will lose 0.15 points for each wrong answer, but blank answers won't affect your score.

1. "I ___ this book for years, but I still haven't finished it."
 - a) have read
 - b) have been reading
 - c) am reading
2. "She ___ a new car recently, so she's really excited."

- a) has bought
- b) has been buying
- c) is having

3. "I _ _ _ the results of the exam all morning, but the website is still down."

- a) have checked
- b) have been checking
- c) am checking

4. "I'm exhausted because I _ _ _ for the last three hours."

- a) have worked
- b) have been working
- c) am working

PART C. Write an essay of 150–180 words on ONE of the following subjects (6 points):

A) Is multilingual education as effective as it is usually considered? Explain from your own experience why it is effective or not. If not, would you suggest a traditional method? Explain why.

B) Describe your experience and point of view about bilingualism and how speaking more than one language might affect the way we think, learn, or stay mentally fit.

Adapted from June 2015 Valencia PAU Exam, Options A and B.

PCE Mock Exam: "Life in a refugee camp: "The cold and fear get in your bones"

PART A.Comprehension questions on the text. Read the text and answer all the questions.

Scoring system for this part:

A1 and A2 Questions:

- Correct answer: +0.50 points
- Wrong answer: -0.15points
- Unanswered: 0points

A3 Question:

- Correct answer:+2 points
- Unanswered: 0points

"I was not born to live here like this," says Ali, a young man from Iran. We are currently standing in the middle of a refugee camp, but to describe this location simply as a "camp" feels fundamentally wrong to anyone witnessing it. In reality, there are no basic facilities available for the inhabitants. None at all. Instead of a structured settlement, it is a vast, miserable field of thick mud and fragile tents. I am constantly surrounded by people waiting for hours to see a doctor, holding little paper tickets and looking at each other with a sense of deep suspicion and exhaustion.

Families are arriving at the site all the time, adding to the growing population. While the average refugee is a young man, there are more and more women and children appearing in the queues every day. Inside the camp, women sit in cramped tents frying potatoes over small flames. They try to smile and chat to maintain some dignity, but the reality is that everyone is freezing. Everything—from the blankets to the soil—is perpetually wet. Everyone here has a harrowing story of how they arrived. Some show me images on their phones of the moment they climbed out of dangerous boats. Having travelled from places like Syria or Eritrea to flee torture and unimaginable darkness, these phones are their only lifelines. The devices connect them back to the homes they left behind and to a modern world they are now physically locked out of.

Ali considers getting to England as more than just a journey; for him, it is "an exam, a challenge." He admits, "I have failed five times already, but I will eventually do it." Every night, desperate

people try different ways to get over the barbed wire or sneak into the back of trucks heading north. Consequently, many of the injuries the volunteer doctors treat are the direct outcome of these failed attempts to reach the United Kingdom. However, the squalid way these people are forced to live is also making them physically ill. Respiratory and stomach infections are everywhere, aggravated by the presence of rats and mice that roam the tents.

The conditions of these unofficial settlements do not meet even the most basic UN humanitarian standards. Everything here is inherently dangerous. Frequent fires start as candles accidentally tip over in the wind. Trapped and desperate, these people often feel forced to do desperate things just to survive another day. Ultimately, the biting cold and the constant fear get deep inside your bones, leaving a mark that is difficult to erase.

Suzanne Moore, The Guardian, 28-11-2015

A1. Find in the text one word that means the same (synonym) as "regards".

A2. Find in the text one word that means the opposite (antonym) of "hopeful".

A3. Summarise the text: Write between 20 and 25 words (2 points). Avoid phrases like "The text says..." or "As the author says..." as they waste words and do not add relevant information.

PARTB. Use of English. Choose the correct answer. Answer all the questions (0.5 points each). You will lose 0.15 points for each wrong answer, but blank answers won't affect your score.

1. When I arrived at the station, the train _ _ _.

- a) left
- b) was leaving
- c) had left

2. While she _ _ _ dinner, the phone rang.

- a) cooked
- b) was cooking
- c) had cooked

3. They _ _ _ the match because they hadn't trained enough.
a) lost
b) were losing
c) had lost
4. I realised I _ _ _ my wallet at home when I tried to pay.
forgot
b) was forgetting
c) had forgotten

PART C. Write an essay of 150–180 words on ONE of the following subjects (5 points):

A) Millions of people around the world are forced to leave their homes due to war, persecution, poverty, or climate change. What problems do refugees face in today's society? Discuss the main challenges they encounter in host countries, such as social integration, access to education or employment, and legal or economic difficulties. Support your ideas with clear arguments and relevant examples.

B) Have you ever thought about what it would be like to leave your home and live in a refugee camp? Reflect on this experience and express your opinion on how refugees are treated, using examples and personal reflections to support your ideas.

Adapted from June 2016 Valencia PAU Exam, Option B.

PCE Mock Exam: How to make the world happier

PART A. Comprehension questions on the text. Read the text and answer all the questions.

Scoring system for this part:

A1 and A2 Questions:

- Correct answer: +0.50 points
- Wrong answer: -0.15 points
- Unanswered: 0 points

A3 Question:

- Correct answer: +2 points
- Unanswered: 0 points

There is a clear wind of change blowing through our modern society. Increasingly, people are talking openly about their feelings, and even men, who traditionally avoided such topics, are participating in this shift. All around us, there is a burgeoning concern with our own inner lives and a deep interest in how other people feel. Experts suggest that a new, gentler culture is emerging, prioritizing emotional well-being over raw ambition.

By contrast, the older culture, which still dominates many aspects of our lives, encourages individuals to aim primarily at tangible personal success. This traditional mindset focuses on achieving high grades, securing a prestigious job, earning a high income, and finding a desirable partner. However, this culture involves a significant amount of stress, and many people are beginning to wonder why we are not happier despite achieving these milestones. This mental burden often stems from the pressure to maintain a perfect image in every area of life.

The answer to this dissatisfaction is surely the ultra-competitive nature of the dominant culture. Its primary objective is individual success. However, the problem with this model is that if I succeed, someone else often has to fail. An alternative culture offers a different aim: that we should, of course, take care of ourselves, but we should also seek as much happiness as possible by contributing to the happiness of others. Competition, this movement argues, is valuable in the right context—such as in sports—but what we truly need between individuals in daily life is cooperation, not constant rivalry.

In recent years, the rise in competitiveness has been made worse by the advent of social media platforms. These digital tools have encouraged a culture of self-advertisement and constant comparison, which has made more young people feel inadequate, anxious, and "left out." In addition, the digital landscape has encouraged populism, which presents a significant challenge to a cohesive and loving society. The outcome of this hyper-connectivity is often a decrease in genuine human connection.

A shift of perspective is central to the happiness movement. It is about recognizing the importance of our feelings and the quality of life as we actually experience it. By changing our focus, we can become more effective as creators of happiness, both as citizens and as professional workers. Moving away from a "me-first" attitude toward a more collective well-being is the essential goal of this new social era.

Adapted from an article by Richard Layard, *The Observer*, 19-01-2020

A1. Find in the text one word that means the same (synonym) as "growing".

A2. Find in the text one word that means the opposite (antonym) of "decrease"

A3. Summarise the text: Write between 20 and 25 words (2 points). Avoid phrases like "The text says..." or "As the author says..." as they waste words and do not add relevant information.

PARTB. Use of English. Choose the correct answer. Answer all the questions (0.5 points each). You will lose 0.15 points for each wrong answer, but blank answers won't affect your score.

1) This exercise is _____ than the one we did yesterday.

- a) more easy
- b) easier
- c) easiest

2) Of all the students in the class, Laura is the _____.

- a) more intelligent
- b) most intelligent
- c) intelligent

3) This film is _____ interesting than the book.

- a) much
- b) more
- c) most

4) That was the _____ experience I have ever had.

- a) worse
- b) worst
- c) more bad

PART C. Write an essay of 150–180 words on ONE of the following subjects (5 points):

A) Social media plays an important role in modern life. Do they contribute to people's happiness? Discuss both positive and negative aspects and give reasons for your answer.

B) Some people believe that small acts of kindness, such as helping a stranger or offering emotional support, can create positive change in society. Others think that only large-scale actions can make a real difference. Do you agree or disagree? Support your answer with relevant arguments and examples.

Adapted from July 2020 Valencia PAU Exam, Option A.



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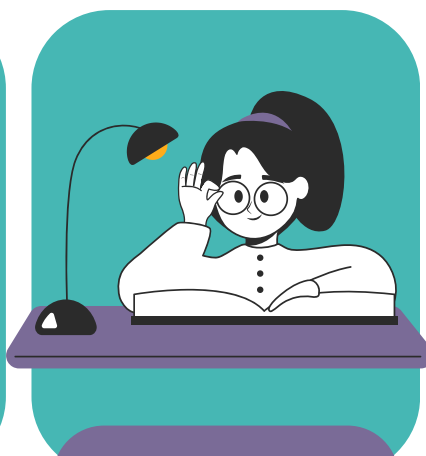
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