PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH (PIE) EXAM SPECIFICATIONS

Session I: Integrated Writing (Duration 80 minutes/Total 30 pts)

Section A: Reading Input (Note-Taking)
Section B: Listening Input (Note-Taking)
Section C: Essay Writing (using notes taken)

Section 1	Objectives	Source of Text	Number of Text
Section A – Reading Input	To assess the candidate's ability to read a text and find the main and supporting ideas while simultaneously completing a table with relevant notes on the text.	A text taken from an authentic source such as a newspaper, magazine, website or academic text.	1 text (Notes taken in the table will not be graded)
Section B - Listening Input	To assess the candidate's ability to follow and comprehend spoken input while at the same time taking notes to complete a given table recognizing the main and key points in the listening.	A transcript of an academic nature in the form of a monologue taken from an authentic source such as a lecture or radio programme.	Two audio tracks played twice. (Notes taken in the table will not be graded)
Section C– Integrated Writing	To assess the candidate's ability to produce an academic style essay using the correct and appropriate language structures, discourse, and lexis in order to produce a coherent and cohesive piece of writing	The table completed by the candidate during the reading and listening sections above will be used by the candidate to generate the schemata, ideas and vocabulary in order to produce a relevant piece of academic writing.	1 essay of between 275 and 400 words, graded against agreed criteria with a possible maximum of 30 points.

Session II: Listening and Reading Comprehension (Duration 105 minutes/Total 45 pts)

Section A: Listening Comprehension (Duration 35 minutes/Total 15 points)

Section	Objectives	Source of Text	Numbers of Questions
1 – Matching	To assess the candidate's ability to deduce the meaning of functional and idiomatic language, vocabulary and structure in order to match a relevant statement to the specific parts of the audio track	Radio programmes or interviews with a multiple number of speakers giving information. The track is played twice and clearly articulated.	5 matching items with one extra option
2 – Text Comprehension	To assess the candidate's ability to follow and comprehend extended spoken input, to identify and follow the keys ideas, to identify specific information and to be able to infer meaning from the supporting details	An extract from a formal lecture or monologue. The track is played twice and clearly articulated.	5 multiple choice items with 4 options
3 – Dialogue Comprehension	To asses the candidate's ability to follow a conversation, identify specific information or make inferences from the information given.	Two separate informal conversations or dialogues from authentic sources. The track is played twice and clearly articulated.	5 multiple choice items with 4 options

Section B: Reading Comprehension (Duration 70 minutes/Total 30 points)

Section	Objectives	Source of Text	Number of Questions
1 – Matching	To assess the candidate's ability to understand and identify the main ideas in the texts and match this to a given statement, to infer meaning and to guess unknown vocabulary.	Authentic text such as websites, newspaper or magazine articles divided into distinct sections which match with one of the given options.	6 matching items with two extra options
2 – Sentence Insertion	To assess the candidate's ability to recognize the relationship between ideas within a text, and discourse and vocabulary transition items which link ideas within a text.	Authentic text of a semi-academic nature taken from sources such as textbooks, newspapers, magazines etc., with sentences extracted for the students to insert in the correct place.	5 insertion items with two extra options
3 – Text Comprehension	To assess the candidate's ability to understand the key ideas in a text and answer comprehension questions about it, to distinguish between different levels of information, to identify and understand the reason for the author writing the text, to infer meaning and to guess word meanings.	An extended academic type text from an authentic source such as an academic publication, website or lecture. The text is divided into sections with questions related to that part of the text following each section.	8 multiple choice items with 4 options
4 – Text Comprehension	To assess the candidate's ability to understand the key ideas in a text and answer comprehension questions about it, to distinguish between different levels of information, to identify and understand the reason for the author writing the text, to infer meaning and to guess word meanings.	An extended academic type text from an authentic source such as an academic publication, website or lecture. The text is divided into section with questions related to that part of the text following each section.	11 multiple choice items with 4 options

Session III – Use of English (Duration 60 minutes/Total 25 points)

Section	Objectives	Source of Text	Number of Items
1 - Cloze Test	To assess the candidate's ability to comprehend simple, compound and complex sentences and to use correct, appropriate language structures. Also to assess the candidate's awareness of the essentials and details of English grammar, including tenses, prepositions, various language structures as well as the use of idiomatic expressions.	Paragraphs taken from authentic sources. Where necessary some paragraphs may be produced by experienced test writers.	Two texts with 5 blanks with 4 options giving a total of 10 items
2 - Vocabulary	To assess the candidate's understanding of general and academic vocabulary in context and their ability to use this vocabulary within the given context.	Paragraphs taken from authentic sources. Where necessary some paragraphs may be produced by experienced test writers.	One text with 5 blanks with 4 options
3 - Word Formation	To assess the candidate's ability to use vocabulary in the correct form within a given language structure, and within the context of the given text.	Paragraphs taken from authentic sources. Where necessary some paragraphs may be produced by experienced test writers.	1 text with 5 blanks with 4 options
4 - Closest in Meaning	To assess the candidate's ability to identify an alternative way of structuring language so that the meaning of the given sentence is not changed therefore, demonstrating their ability to recognize a variety of compound and complex language structures.	Sentences either taken from an authentic source or written specifically for the task by experienced test writers.	5 items with 4 options

Session IV – Speaking (Duration 10 minutes/Total 100 points)

Part	Objectives	Number of Items
1 – Question & Answer	To communicate personal information, opinions, feelings and ideas on various topics.	Three questions
2 – Role play	To ask for and provide information in a variety of social situations using a range of functional language.	Two role plays
3 – Decision making	To contribute points in a discussion on a familiar context and come to a conclusion.	One theme with ideas
4 - Extended individual long turn	To narrate, describe, explain and express opinions on wide range of general or academic topics in extended speech	One topic