

Purpose

METU-EPE is a test battery designed to assess the English language proficiency level of students who are entitled to undertake their undergraduate or graduate studies at Middle East Technical University, where English is the medium of instruction. The aim of the battery is to determine whether the students' proficiency in English is at a level that will enable them to follow courses offered in their respective fields of study and fulfil the requirements of the courses with relative ease. Thus, the METU-EPE is mainly concerned with assessing students' proficiency in reading and understanding academic texts, their ability to follow lectures, take notes and make use of these notes, as well as their competence in composing academic texts of varying length. Therefore, the main focus of the METU-EPE is English for Academic Purposes and it may well serve the needs of students in other English-medium universities, provided it is recognized by their institutions.

Please see <http://www.ydyom.metu.edu.tr/prf/anasayfa.htm> for further information on registration, exam dates and rules.

Contents of METU-EPE

METU-EPE is administered in two separate sessions on the same day — Session I in the morning and Session II in the afternoon.

Every candidate can take both sessions of the exam. The score obtained from the first and second sessions make up the final METU-EPE score.

SESSION I :

Listening Comprehension & Reading Comprehension

(Duration: Approximately 120 minutes / 60 pts.)

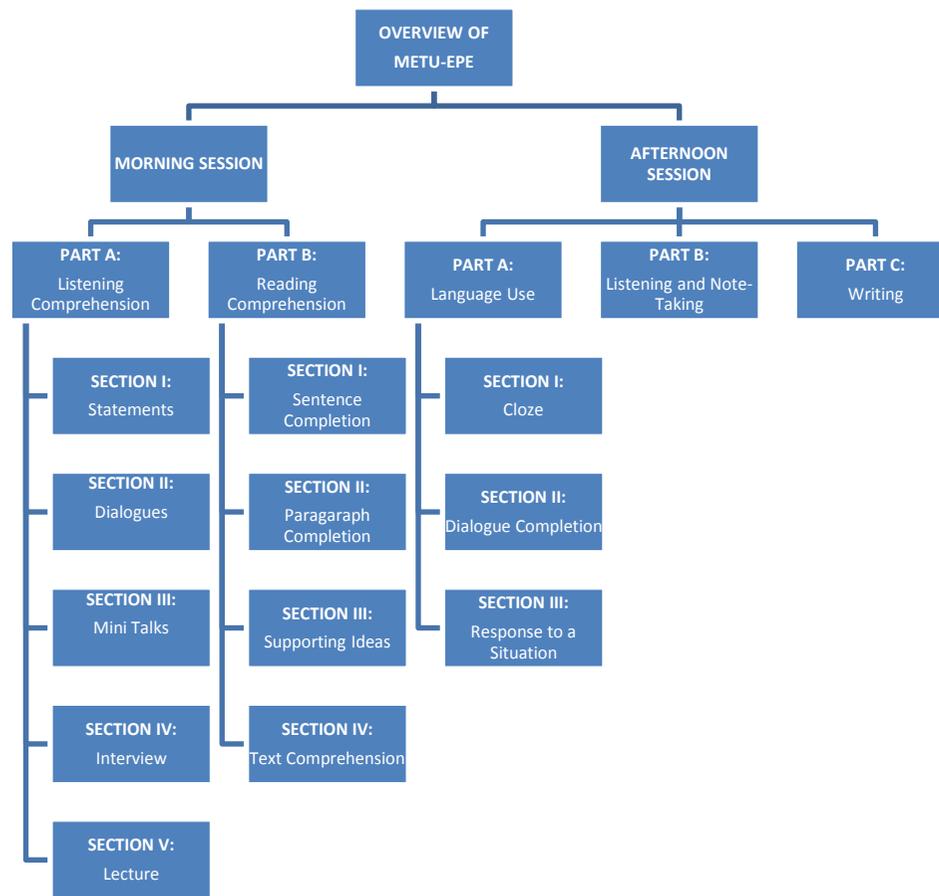
LUNCH BREAK: 90 minutes

SESSION II :

Language Use, Note-Taking & Writing

(Duration: Approximately 120 minutes / 40 pts.)

What follows is an overview of the exam, brief information on the contents of each session of the METU-EPE, its comprising sections, assessment objectives, and some sample items.



MORNING SESSION (Duration: Approximately 120 minutes / Total 60 pts.):

LISTENING COMPREHENSION & READING COMPREHENSION

PART A – Listening Comprehension (30 items / 1 pt. each; total 30 pts.; duration: 60 minutes)

The items in this part are all multiple choice with one correct option and three distracters. Candidates mark their choices on the question booklet as they listen to the recording and then transfer their answers to an optic form, in pencil.

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
I – Statements	To assess the candidate's ability to deduce the meaning of functional expressions, idiomatic expressions, vocabulary and structure, to identify paraphrasing and to draw conclusions.	Sentences mostly constructed by the test writers.	7

For the items in this section, you will hear a statement for each item and a question related to it. Before you listen to each statement and the related question, you will be given 15 seconds in order to have a look at the four alternatives to the question. Each statement will be spoken only once. After you listen to each statement you must mark the alternative which best answers the question that follows.

Sample Item:

You will hear...

(Speaker A) Read the question and the four alternatives given for this sample item.

(Speaker B) Sally wishes her son had taken her advice and studied medicine instead of law.

(Speaker A) What do we learn about Sally's son?

You will read...

- a) He majored in law.
- b) He took his mother's advice.
- c) He preferred to study medicine.
- d) He chose neither medicine nor law.

The correct answer is (a) because Sally's son studied law.

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
II – Dialogues	To assess the candidate's ability to deduce the meaning of functional expressions, idiomatic expressions, vocabulary and structure, to identify paraphrasing and to draw conclusions.	Dialogues mostly constructed by the test writers.	6

For the items in this section, you will hear a dialogue for each item and a question related to it. Before you listen to each dialogue and the related question, you will be given 15 seconds in order to have a look at the four alternatives to the question. Each dialogue will be spoken only once. After you listen to each dialogue you must mark the alternative which best answers the question that follows.

Sample Item:

You will hear...

- (Speaker A) Read the question and the four alternatives given for this sample item.
- (Speaker B) I'm taking so many courses that I need a lot of time to work on my assignments.
- (Speaker C) Will you have the time to complete all of them?
- (Speaker B) All of my classes are in the morning, so I can spare time every week day from noon on. And of course, my weekends are free.
- (Speaker A) When can the student study?

You will read...

- a) Every morning.
- b) Afternoons and weekends.
- c) When she is in class.
- d) Weekdays

The correct answer is (b) because the student has classes till noon every day and she is free at weekends.

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
III – Mini Talks	To assess the candidate's ability to comprehend short stretches of spoken discourse and to predict what will follow.	Texts taken and adapted from authentic sources and converted into spoken English.	7

For the items in this section, you will hear a mini talk for each item. However, the last sentence of each mini talk is incomplete. Before you listen to each mini talk, you will be given 15 seconds in order to have a look at the four options that may complete the last sentence. Each mini talk will be spoken only once. After you listen to each mini talk and hear the "beep" sound, mark the alternative which best completes the sentence.

Sample Item:

You will hear...

(Speaker B) Exercise without good nutrition will not result in a healthy body—neither will good nutrition without exercise. The most important thing about exercise is that it should be done regularly together with a well-balanced diet. It's also desirable to do more than one kind of sport, as different sports ... (beep).

You will read...

- a) call for a more balanced diet.
- b) exercise different parts of the body.
- c) appeal to different people.
- d) require different kinds of nutrition.

The correct answer is (b) because it gives the reason why one should do different kinds of sport.

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
IV – Interview	To assess the candidate's ability to follow a conversation, to identify specific information on a range of topics and to distinguish between facts and opinions.	Semi-academic interviews taken from authentic sources. Caution is exercised to make sure the interviews do not require specialized background knowledge.	5

In this section, you will hear one interview. You will listen to the interview only once. As you listen to the interview, mark the choice that best answers each question or completes each statement.

Before you listen to the interview, you will have one minute to look at the questions and the alternatives.

Sample Item:

You will hear...

For items 21-25, you will hear a radio program on which a doctor answers the most frequently asked questions about SARS (or Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome). As you listen, mark the choice that best answers each question or completes each blank.

Now you have one minute to look at the questions and the alternatives.

[..... (Speaker A) On this edition of **Q&A**, we'll be focusing on SARS. The continuing spread of SARS has all of Asia — and much of the rest of the world — on edge. What do we know about this mysterious disease? And how can we protect ourselves against it? Our guest today is Doctor Miller. He is going to answer the questions most frequently asked by the audience about SARS. First of all, what is SARS, Doctor Miller?

(Speaker B) Well, according to the World Health Organization, SARS is a disease caused by a virus that affects the lungs. It leads to a dry cough, shortness of breath, stiffness, fever and loss of appetite. The symptoms are very similar to those associated with the flu, except that SARS can appear as pneumonia in chest x-rays.....]

You will read...

21. Which of the following is NOT a symptom of SARS?

- a) Stiff muscles
- b) Cough
- c) Drop in body temperature
- d) Difficulty in breathing

The correct answer is (c).

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
V – Lecture	To assess the candidate's ability to follow and comprehend extended spoken input and identify its purpose, to track the development of the argument, to identify specific information on a range of topics, to distinguish between facts and opinions and to distinguish main ideas from supporting details	The transcript of a recorded lecture on a topic related to either social or physical sciences, not excessively specialized.	5

In this section, you will hear one lecture. You will listen to the lecture only once. As you listen to the lecture, mark the choice that best answers each question or completes each statement.

Before you listen to the lecture, you will have one minute to look at the questions and the alternatives.

Sample Item

You will hear...

For items 26-30, you will hear a lecture on TOMATOES. As you listen to the lecture, mark the choice which best answers each question or completes each statement. Now you have one minute to look at the questions and the alternatives.

[..... (Speaker) ... The tomato has been grown since prehistoric times. We believe that it first originated in South America and was cultivated by Indians in the Andes Mountains. More than 3,000 years ago, it moved from South America to Mexico. The tomato was first introduced to Europe in the 16th century, but it was not until the 19th century that it became popular in Europe. This is most probably because Europeans considered the tomato poisonous and therefore inedible.....]

You will read...

26. The tomato was _____.
- a) first grown in Mexico
 - b) not known in Europe till the 19th century
 - c) first cultivated during prehistoric times
 - d) brought to South America by Indians

The correct answer is (c).

PART B – Reading Comprehension (30 items / 1 pt. each; Total 30 pts.; Duration: 60 minutes)

The items in this part of the exam are all multiple choice with one correct option and three distracters. Candidates mark their choices on an optic form.

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
I – Sentence Completion	To assess the candidate's ability to recognize the relationship between ideas in a text and to recognize and interpret cohesive devices for linking different parts of a text.	Sentences taken and adapted from various authentic sources, such as academic texts, course books, newspaper and journal articles.	4

Sample Item:

Mark the alternative which best completes the sentence or thought.

The fur trade is a controversial issue. On the one hand, fur farmers and sellers are fighting to be allowed to continue producing fur goods, and, on the other hand, _____.

- a) the fur traders say that they do not cause unnecessary suffering to animals
- b) people concerned about animal rights are trying to prevent the ongoing trade
- c) if the trade were made illegal, hunters without licenses would cause greater suffering to animals
- d) an animal has more right to live than a human does to wear its coat

The correct answer is (b).

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
II – Paragraph Completion	To assess the candidate's ability to recognize the relationship between ideas within a text, discourse organization and transitions that tie ideas to one another in a paragraph.	Paragraphs taken and adapted from authentic sources such as academic texts, course books newspaper and journal articles.	3

Sample Item:

Mark the alternative which best completes the paragraph.

Between 1820 and 1840, an estimated 700,000 immigrants arrived in the United States, mainly from the British Isles and German-speaking areas of continental Europe. During the 1840s, this substantial flow suddenly became a flood. No less than 4,200,000 crossed the Atlantic between 1840 and 1860. This was the greatest influx in proportion to total population—then about 20 million—that the nation had ever experienced. _____. Smaller contingents came from Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands.

- a) Many came to escape great suffering because of natural causes or systems that kept them in poverty
- b) The great “push” factor that caused a million and a half Irish to leave their homeland was the great potato famine
- c) The largest single source of the new mass immigration was Ireland, but Germany was not far behind
- d) Yet, what many of them found in their new land was not exactly what they expected

The correct answer is (c).

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
III – Supporting Ideas	To assess the candidate's ability to recognize ideas that support a given topic sentence.	Sentences taken and adapted from authentic sources such as academic texts, course books newspaper and journal articles.	3
<p><u>Sample Item:</u></p> <p>In the following items, three of the alternatives support the main statement or idea and one does not. Mark the alternative that <u>DOES NOT</u> support the given topic statement.</p> <p>While life outside the city is the secret dream of certain city-dwellers, it has many drawbacks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Because there are fewer people, one has a smaller number of friends. b) One is much closer to nature and can enjoy more peace and quiet. c) Entertainment, particularly in the evening, is difficult to find. d) There are fewer services, thus fewer employment opportunities. <p>The correct answer is (b).</p>			

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
IV – Text Comprehension	To assess the candidate's ability to understand the key ideas in a text and answer comprehension questions, to distinguish between different levels of information, to identify the purpose of a text, to understand the author's point of view, to comprehend implied meanings and to guess meanings of words.	Texts taken and adapted from various authentic sources. Caution is exercised to select texts in a balanced fashion from both social and physical sciences aimed at popular readers; i.e., not requiring very specialized background knowledge.	5 –6 texts of varying lengths accompanied by 2 – 6 items.

Sample Item:

On your answer sheet, mark the alternative which best answers the question or completes the statement about the text.

One of the leading schools of psychological thought in the twentieth century is behaviorism — the belief that the role of the psychologist is to study behavior, which is observable, rather than conscious or unconscious thought, which is not. Probably the best-known proponent of behaviourism is B.F. Skinner, who is famous for his research on how rewards and punishments influence behavior. He came to believe that positive reinforcements such as praise, food, or money were more effective in promoting good behaviour than negative reinforcement, or punishment.

1. The school of behaviourism is concerned with _____.

a) conscious thought patterns	c) psychological thought
b) observable actions	d) unconscious behaviour

2. According to Skinner, good behaviour is _____.

a) effective when one is punished	b) important in influencing rewards and punishment
c) promoted by not being praised	d) encouraged by positive reinforcement

Correct answers: 1. (b) 2. (d)

AFTERNOON SESSION (Duration: Approximately 120 minutes (Total 40 pts.):

LANGUAGE USE, NOTE-TAKING AND WRITING

PART A- Language Use (Total 20 pts.; Duration: 45 minutes)

This part is comprised of three sections: (I) Cloze, (II) Dialogue completion, and (III) Response to a situation.

The **cloze** section includes texts with certain words removed. Candidates are required to fill in each blank with **one word** that fits into the text both meaningfully and grammatically. (N.B. Contractions such as *don't*, *can't* count as one word.) No list of words is provided; the candidates are required to produce the right word for each blank. Each blank is worth 0.5 point.

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
I- Cloze	<p>To assess the candidate's ability to understand context and vocabulary in order to produce the right word that fits the context both meaningfully and grammatically.</p> <p>Deleted words are intended to test primarily grammatical and, secondarily, some lexical knowledge in text construction and comprehension.</p>	<p>Paragraphs taken and adapted from various authentic sources, such as academic texts, course books, newspaper and journal articles.</p>	<p>2 texts of varying lengths with a total of 20 blanks</p>

Sample Item:

In the following text, ONE WORD is missing in each blank. Find the word which completes each blank and write it in the box provided on the answer sheet. (0.5 pt. each)

According to research, happy people have four basic characteristics. First of all, they have self-esteem. However, a healthy self-esteem should be (1)_____ positive and realistic. People occasionally do feel inferior, especially when comparing themselves with those (2)_____ have higher status, better looks, or income. The deeper and more frequently they have such feelings, the more unhappy they (3)_____. Therefore, it is preferable to have modest, realistic ideals. Second, happy people are optimistic. That is, they see the glass of life as half-full (4)_____ than half-empty. Optimists are also healthier and (5)_____ likely to enjoy greater success because they view setbacks as chances for a new approach, not as signs of their incompetence. Third, they are extroverted, that is, outgoing. Extroverts are simply more cheerful and high-spirited. They like themselves, so they are confident that others will like them, (6)_____. Such attitudes also tend to lead extroverts to experience more positive events. Compared to introverts, extroverts more easily get married, find good jobs, and (7)_____ new friends. They experience more affection and enjoy greater social support. Finally, happy people feel in control of their lives and believe (8)_____ choose their destinies. Such attitudes toward life can noticeably improve their health and morale as well. They also manage their time effectively. In other (9)_____, their time is filled and planned; they are punctual and efficient. Establishing pre-set deadlines and then meeting them can bring about the delicious, confident feeling of personal control, (10)_____ eventually leads to happiness.

Correct answers: 1. both 2. who / that 3. become / are / get / feel 4. rather
5. more 6. too 7. make 8. they 9. words 10. which

The **dialogue completion** section includes mini dialogues with one utterance removed in each dialogue. Candidates are required to complete each dialogue with one utterance that completes the dialogue both meaningfully and grammatically. The test takers are required to create the utterances since no list of utterances is provided. Each item is worth 1 point.

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
II- Dialogue Completion	To assess the candidate's ability to understand communicative functions and produce appropriate utterances and express them in conversational discourse.	Dialogues produced by the exam committee	5

Sample Item:

In questions 21 – 25, complete each dialogue with ONE statement or question. Write your answer in the box provided on the answer sheet. (5 pts. / 1 pt. each)

Clerk : Next please. How can I help you?

Dina : I'd like to open a bank account. ____ (22) ____

Clerk : Only a copy of your ID card.

Dina : I only have my student ID card with me. Is it OK?

Clerk : Sure. And please fill in this form while I'm photocopying your ID card.

- Correct Answers:**
- What documents are required?
 - What are the necessary documents?
 - What documents am I supposed to submit?
 - What documents do you need?
 - What is required?
 - What do you need?
 - What do I have to give you?
 - What do I need for this?

The ‘**response to a situation**’ section includes descriptions of situations with an accompanying question that asks *what you would say* in the described situation. Candidates are required to create and write one utterance that is appropriate to the situation and question. Each item is worth 1 point.

SECTION	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
<p style="text-align: center;">III- Response to a Situation</p>	<p>To assess the test taker’s ability to produce appropriate utterances as responses to the given situations</p>	<p>Situations created and written by the exam committee members</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5</p>

Sample Item:

In questions 26 – 30, respond to the situation provided in ONE statement or question. Write your response in the box provided on the answer sheet. (5 pts. / 1 pt. each)

Your friend is supposed to pick you up from the station and you know that he/she is waiting for you now, but you have missed the train and you will be one hour late.

Call your friend and apologize by explaining the situation: _____(27)_____

- Correct Answers:**
- I am really sorry (to keep you waiting), (but I will be one hour late because) I have missed the train.
 - I do apologize for making you wait so long, but I’ve missed the train?
 - Listen, I’ve missed the train and I’ll be an hour late, I’m really sorry

PART B – Listening and Note-Taking (Total 5 pts.; Duration: 25 minutes)

The note-taking part of the exam requires test takers to listen and take notes in order to answer an open-ended item in 4-6 sentences. The candidates do not see the item until the listening and note-taking task is completed.

	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
Listening and Note-Taking	<p>1. To assess the candidate's ability to follow and comprehend extended spoken input, to predict the organization and the content of a talk throughout, to recognize the outline of the talk and take notes on salient points expressed in the speech</p> <p>2. To assess the candidate's ability to recognize the attitude of the speaker towards the issue he/she is talking about and to understand his/her point of view and arguments.</p>	<p>The transcript of a recorded lecture of 5 - 6 minutes on a topic that doesn't require field specific background knowledge.</p>	<p>1 item requiring the test taker to either summarize, synthesize, compare, argue for or against in 4-6 sentences</p>
<p><u>Sample Note-Taking Sheet:</u></p> <p>In this section, you will hear a talk on whether or not money brings happiness. As you listen to the talk, take notes on the <u>speaker's views</u> on the issue. You will answer a question in 3-4 sentences using your notes. You will hear the talk <u>ONLY ONCE</u>. Your notes will not be graded.</p> <p>You may also use your notes in fulfilling the related writing task.</p>			
<p><u>Sample Item:</u></p> <p>Answer the following question by referring to your notes. (5 pts.)</p> <p>According to the speaker, what kind of spending would bring happiness? Explain why he thinks so in 3-4 sentences.</p>			

PART C – Writing (15 pts.; Duration: 50 minutes)

	OBJECTIVES	SOURCE OF TEXTS	NUMBER OF ITEMS
Writing a Paragraph	To assess the candidate's ability to use correct, appropriate language structures, vocabulary and discourse features in writing, to follow the conventions of standard written English, to produce a cohesive and coherent piece of writing that accomplishes the given task.	The notes taken in the listening and note-taking section can be used in the writing as the topics may be loosely related.	1 paragraph of approximately 200 words

Sample Item

Write **ONE** paragraph of approximately 200 words on the topic given below. (15 pts.)

The advantages of having a lot of money

- ✓ Make sure that you write a well-organized paragraph; that all your ideas are relevant to the topic; and that you stay within the word limit of 180-220, or else you will lose points.
- ✓ Your paragraph will be graded according to *content, organization, and accuracy of language*.

METU-EPE Scoring Procedure and Guidelines

- **Morning Session – Listening Comprehension and Reading Comprehension** - is scored by an optic reader.
- **Afternoon Session – Language Use, Listening and Note-Taking, Writing** – is graded by a group of experienced raters in accordance with an answer key and guidelines provided. The raters go through standardization before each grading session. Each paper is graded by two raters.

Reporting of the METU-EPE Scores

Every candidate is eligible to take both sessions of the exam. The score obtained from the entire exam and the scores obtained from each part will be announced in approximately 5 days as of the exam day. Those who would like to receive an exam report card may do so by applying to the Registrar's Office after the exam results are officially announced.

The list of scores are posted on the bulletin boards at the Registrar's Office and the School of Foreign Languages. The scores are also announced on the Web page of the School of Foreign Languages: <http://www.ydyom.metu.edu.tr/prf/anasayfa.htm>.

