An Introduction to

TEST OF ENGLISH
FOR AVIATION

Managed and administered by **Mayflower College** which is approved by UKCAA to conduct language proficiency testing.

Civil Aviation Authority

Contents

1. Test Design

The test is designed to:

- Test plain English proficiency in communications common to both pilots and controllers in an aviation context.
- Elicit language assessable by the ICAO band descriptors.
- Be a one-to-one interview between candidate and examiner.

There are pros and cons to different exam formats:

1	2 examiners in room 1 interlocutor & 1 'live' rater
2	1 interlocutor, rated remotely by a different rater
3	1 interlocutor with 2 or more raters
4	1 examiner with dual-role of interlocutor & rater

Advantages and disadvantages to model 4 (dual-role single examiner) include:

Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Ability to react immediately to candidate so as to probe & extend 2. No prolonged rating discussion that may be influenced by factors such as status & experience 3. Less labour intensive	1. Requires consistent external monitoring to maintain reliability 2. Conflict of interests where rater knows candidate 3. Increased risk of security being compromised

TEA uses models 2 & 4.

TEA is designed **<u>not</u>** to be:

- *a reading and writing test*
- *a memory test*
- *a test of operational procedure*
- *a test of phraseology*
- *an intelligence test*
- *a logic test*
- *a test of keyboard skills*

We are trying to test:

- language that is wholly assessable according to the **ICAO *Descriptors***

- ability to use the **ICAO *Dominant Communicative <u>Functions</u> In Radiotelephony Communications***

- language related to the **ICAO *Priority Lexical Domains***

As such we need to elicit language that is assessable by the *ICAO Rating Scale*:

- *Familiar, common & work-related topics*
- *Unfamiliar work-related topics*
- *Wide variety of international accents*
- *Linguistic/situational complications*
- *Opportunities:*

  - *for discourse management*
  - *to display idiomatic expressions*
  - *to speak at length*

2. ICAO Dominant Communicative Functions

Provide information	Reassure
Request information	Give Orders
Express opinion	Give approval & permission
Elaborate	Request
Explain	Offer
State preference	Advise
Express needs / wishes	Encourage
Speculate	Express misunderstanding
Describe	Request repetition
Compare	Summarise
Predict	Express concern
Check, Confirm, Clarify understanding	

3. ICAO Priority Lexical Domains

- ATC and ground
- Fire and Smoke
- Health
- Interference
- Technical
- Human
- Weather and Environment

4. Test Format

TEA lasts approximately 30 minutes and in 3 parts:

- Part 1 - Work-related interview

- Part 2 - Interactive Comprehension

- Part 3 - Description & Discussion

5. Part 1 - Introduction & Experience-related Interview

- Direct interaction between examiner and candidate

- Based on common, concrete & work-related topics

- ~ 8 minutes long

- Initial questions act as a 'warmer'

- Provides rater with initial impressions of the candidate

Could you tell me about your job?

- *Why did you want to be a pilot?*

- *Do you enjoy some flights more than others?*

- *How will your flying change in the future?*

*Now I'd like to ask you some questions about **Aviation Communication**:*

- *Before take-off, what do you and your crew discuss about the flight?*

- *When communicating with ATC, which factors sometimes make clear communication difficult?*

- *If there is a radio malfunction during flight, what would you do?*

- *If you cannot understand an ATC message, what would you do and what would you say?*

- *When communicating in emergency situations, what extra problems could there be?*

🔊 Listen to an example here:

6.   Part 2 - Interactive Comprehension

- Semi-direct (CD/digital audio recordings)
- No eye-contact, no facial cues (ICAO)
- International speakers of English (ICAO)
- 8 - 11 minutes
- 3 tasks – 2A, 2B & 2C

Part 2A

In Part 2A, you will hear 6 recordings in which a pilot or controller is talking in a non-routine aviation situation. After each recording, you should show you understand the situation fully by reporting your answers to 2 questions: "what was the message?", and "who do you think was speaking, a pilot or a controller?". You will be given a Task Card to remind you of these 2 questions. The examiner will ask you to "report what you can". You should show that you understood the situation by reporting it either in your own words or using the words in the recording. All the information in the situation is important. This includes stating what the message was and who was speaking (whether it was a pilot or controller). If you do not give all of the information, it will affect your score.

Part 2B

In Part 2B, you will hear 4 longer recordings in which a pilot or controller describes a problem, says what they need, and gives some extra details. The examiner will give you a pen for you to take notes on the Task Card. You need to report the message as fully as possible - the more details you can provide, the better. You should describe the problem, say what the speaker needs and give any extra details that you can. If you do not give all of the information, it will affect your score.

Part 2C

In Part 2C, you will hear 3 short recordings in more general, non-routine situations. After each recording, you have 20 seconds to ask the speaker questions to find out more about the situation. Show you understand the situation by asking as many relevant questions as you can. The examiner will also ask you if you have any advice to give the speaker: again, show you understand the situation by giving some relevant advice.

🔊 Listen to an example here:

7. Part 3 Picture Description & Discussion

- Lasts ~10 minutes
- Candidates describe and compare 2 connected pictures. The task is interactive as specific questions are asked about both pictures. Finally, the examiner leads a discussion of general aviation topics related to the pictures. Routine / non-routine situations
- Direct discussion (~6 minutes) linked to the pictures
- Graded scripted questions with spontaneous follow-up questions to create an interactive challenge
- ICAO: *"features of language use that go beyond the work-related context indicated at lower levels"*

A

B

Now look at this second picture. I'd like to ask you some questions about Picture B:

- *What is the passenger doing?*
- *What type of situation is this?*
- *What do you think will happen next?*

Both pictures show emergency training situations.

- *What are the main differences between the two situations?*
- *What is the same about them?*
- *In your opinion, which situation looks more serious?*

*OK, now let's consider **Emergency Situations** in general:*

- *When is a situation an **emergency** situation?*
- *Which emergency situations should passengers be most worried about?*
- *People hear a lot more about emergency situations on television these days. What would you say to people who are worried about flying?*
- *Now let's think about depressurisation. What can cause depressurisation?*
- *How is it different to other emergency situations?*
- *What should passengers do in the event of depressurisation?*

🔊 Listen to an example here:

8. Assessment

The test performances are assessed by profile, either remotely or live, and certificates show the candidate's score in all 6 profiles.

The certificates have a number of security features and can be verified online.