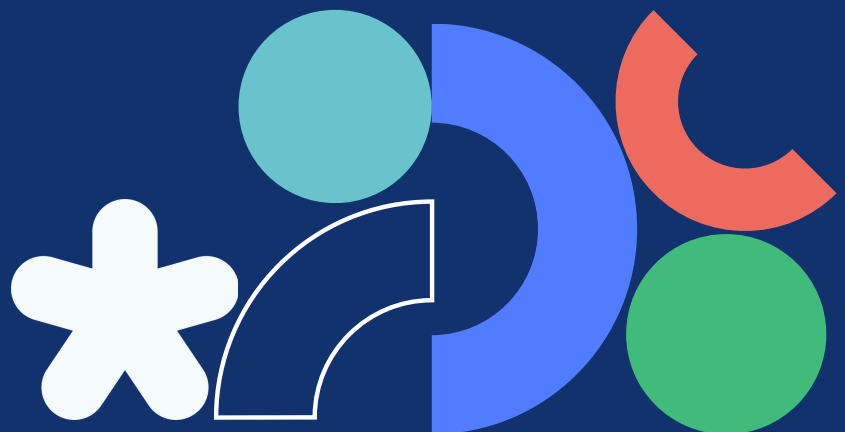




PTE Essay 2026 Pack

Difference Maker 3: Writing section (post-August 2025 update)

The 7-Trait Checklist + the 5-13-2 Time Plan +
Topic Categories





Welcome

This pack pairs with the PTE Essay 2026 video on the E2 PTE channel. It is built around the August 2025 PTE Academic update, which introduced hybrid AI plus human review for the essay and widened the scoring scale on three of its seven traits. Templates that worked in 2024 can now cost you marks.

Use this pack to write three timed essays per week for two weeks. Six essays total. After each one, score yourself against the seven-trait checklist on the next page. If you cannot tick most of the boxes, especially on the three high-weight traits, rewrite.

Then, once you're feeling comfortable, take a mock test scored by experts. The experts can pick up what you miss in your self-review. Scored essay practice with detailed feedback is at [E2Language.com](https://www.E2Language.com).

By Bailey with E2



The 7-Trait Self-Assessment Checklist

Pearson scores your essay on seven traits. Three of them, marked below, now carry the most weight and are reviewed by a human as well as the AI. Use this checklist immediately after writing a practice essay, and tick the boxes you can honestly defend.

TRAIT 1 · Content (human-reviewed · 0 to 6 · top weight)

- ☐ My essay directly answers the question that was asked, not a related question.
- ☐ I have included at least one specific example, not a generic claim.
- ☐ I have taken a clear position, not hedged with "both sides have merit."

TRAIT 2 · Development, Structure & Coherence (human-reviewed · 0 to 6)

- ☐ My essay has a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.
- ☐ Each body paragraph has a topic sentence that previews its point.
- ☐ My ideas develop logically, and transitions between paragraphs are smooth.

TRAIT 3 · General Linguistic Range (human-reviewed · 0 to 6)

- ☐ I have used varied sentence structures, including some complex ones, correctly.
- ☐ My language conveys ideas precisely, without ambiguity.
- ☐ I have not relied only on simple, repetitive sentences.



The 7-Trait Self-Assessment Checklist

TRAIT 4 · Form (word count · AI-scored)

- ☐ My essay directly answers the question that was asked, not a related question.

TRAIT 5 · Grammar (AI-scored)

- ☐ My verb tenses are consistent throughout.
- ☐ My subjects and verbs agree.
- ☐ My punctuation and capitalisation are correct.

TRAIT 6 · Vocabulary (AI-scored)

- ☐ I have used academic vocabulary that I genuinely understand and can use naturally.
- ☐ I have avoided forced words that do not make sense in context (e.g., miscollocations)
- ☐ I have avoided repetition by using appropriate synonyms.

TRAIT 7 · Spelling (AI-scored)

- ☐ I have used one spelling convention consistently (all British or all American, not mixed).



The 7-Trait Self-Assessment Checklist

TRAIT 7 · Spelling (AI-scored)

- ☐ I have used one spelling convention consistently (all British or all American, not mixed).

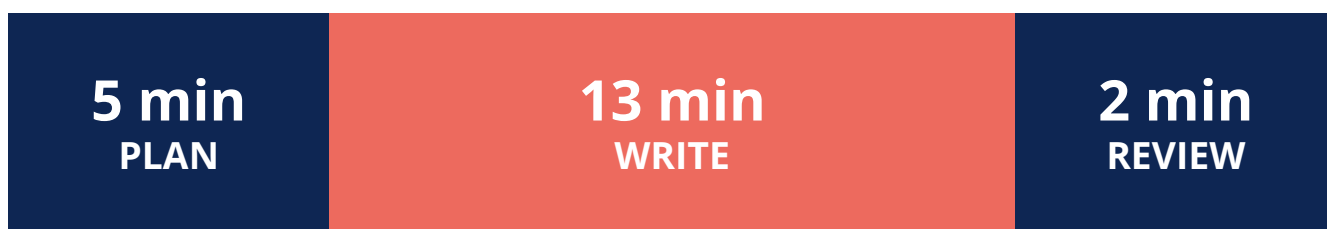
How to use this

The three human-reviewed traits (Content, Development/Structure/Coherence, and General Linguistic Range) carry the most weight, so if you are dropping ticks, fix those first. A strong essay ticks almost everything here, and any box you cannot honestly tick is your next revision. This is a self-check to guide your practice, not a score predictor. Only a scored mock test gives you an actual band.



The 5-13-2 Time Plan

Twenty minutes total. Five to plan, thirteen to write, two to review. The plan is what replaces the template, because it builds structure specific to the prompt you got.



The 5-minute plan, minute by minute

Minute 1: Read the prompt twice. Identify the question type (opinion / discuss both sides / problem-solution).

Minute 2: Brainstorm one specific example for each side of the argument.

Minute 3: Decide your view. Commit clearly. No hedging.

Minute 4: Outline four paragraphs. One topic sentence each.

Minute 5: Quick check. Does the outline answer the question? If not, fix it now, not while you are typing.

The 13-minute write: paragraph internal structure

Every paragraph has the same internal shape. Universal structure, original content.

1	Topic sentence • states the paragraph's main point
2	Supporting sentence • explains or expands the topic sentence
3	Specific example • the personal stamp that template essays cannot generate
4	Summary sentence • connects the paragraph back to the prompt



The 5-13-2 Time Plan

The 2-minute review: four passes

Pass 1: Verbs. Tense consistency. Subject-verb agreement.

Pass 2: Articles. "A," "an," "the." Easy to drop when typing fast.

Pass 3: Sentence length. Anything over thirty words gets broken in two.

Pass 4: Word count. Aim for 250 words. Safe zone: 230 to 280.

Word count, plainly

PTE rewards clarity and economy, not length. 250 words is the target, not the floor. Padding to 300 introduces grammar errors and weakens vocabulary, both of which lower your trait scores. Trust the shorter target.



Five topic categories: shapes for each

Memorise structure, not essays. These are examples to help you brainstorm - adapt these to a context you genuinely know.

EDUCATION	<i>A vocational training pathway you know of (a trade, a TAFE or college course, an apprenticeship) and the concrete outcome it led to for someone: a job, a skill, a career change. Name the specific pathway, not "studies show."</i>
ENVIRONMENT	<i>A specific local policy you've seen (a plastic-bag ban, a recycling scheme, a car-free zone in a city you know) and one visible change it produced.</i>
TECHNOLOGY	<i>A tool you've actually used or seen used in a real setting (a workplace, a hospital, a school) and how it changed the work, ideally where it helped a person rather than replaced them.</i>
HEALTH	<i>A health habit or campaign you've encountered (a workplace step challenge, a local walking group, a screening drive) and the effect you observed.</i>
WORK	<i>A working arrangement you have direct experience of (remote, hybrid, shift-based) and where it worked well versus where it didn't.</i>

What a specific example looks like: "A friend who retrained through a local trades course was working in the field within a year, proof that skills-based pathways lead somewhere concrete." Notice it names a real, personal situation and one concrete outcome. It has no statistics to memorise, and no one else can reuse it, because it's yours.

How to use these examples

Do not memorise these word-for-word. The hybrid AI plus human review flags memorised content. Use these as starting frameworks for your own thinking. For each category, write one example that draws on a context you actually know. The point is specificity that no template would generate.



Where to go next

This pack gives you the system. Putting it into practice with scored mocks, real audio recordings, and live classes is what locks the score in.

Mock tests

Sit a full PTE Academic mock test marked by expert tutors and former examiners. Discover exactly which tasks are pulling your overall band down.

[E2Language.com](https://www.E2Language.com)

The video this pack pairs with

PTE Essay 2026: How to Score 79+ Without a Template

youtube.com/@E2PTE

Real-time scored essay practice with detailed feedback is at [E2Language.com](https://www.E2Language.com). Our mock tests are the fastest way to find out whether your essay is hitting the new scoring rules.

Bailey

E2 PTE Channel