

## Versant™

- **Assess an individual's spoken English language skills objectively**
- **A test of spoken (UK) English with fair and bias-free contents**
- **Convenient, easy to use and by telephone**

**V**ersant™ is a **completely automated** test of spoken English that enables you to ensure applicants and employees have the level of spoken English language skills necessary for a given job. The test is untimed but most test takers complete it within 15 minutes.

Versant saves time and improves the hiring process. When interviewing time is limited, use the fully automated Versant test to screen any number of candidates and make sure you interview only those with sufficient spoken language skills.

The tests are simple and intuitive for proficient non-native speakers of English. Items have been reviewed for fairness and bias-free usage.

A comprehensive guide is available for test administrators.

The Versant for English Test has five sections:

- **Reading**
- **Repeats**
- **Sentence Builds**
- **Open Questions**
- **Short Answer Questions**

The score report comprises an overall score and 4 diagnostic sub-scores:

1. **Pronunciation.**
2. **Fluency.** This reflects the rhythm, phrasing and timing evident in constructing, reading and repeating sentences.
3. **Sentence Mastery.** This reflects the ability to understand, recall and produce English phrases and clauses in complete sentences.
4. **Vocabulary.** This reflects the ability to understand common everyday words spoken in sentence context and to produce such words as needed



"After complaints from the public about the knowledge and comprehension of English by some licensed taxi drivers, East Dorset District Council decided to test for this at the licence application stage. Versant provided me with an open and fair system that could assess each applicant objectively, instead of staff having to make subjective judgements on individuals. Versant is quick and easy to use". **Steve Ricketts, Licensing Manager, East Dorset District Council**

### Who is Versant for?

Versant is currently used by organisations worldwide to help ensure employees have the necessary English communication skills, to interact effectively with their customers (and colleagues).

Versant is an ideal assessment tool for use with a wide range of roles in a variety of work settings and industries:

- **Safety critical roles e.g. train and bus drivers, signal operators, controllers etc.**
- **Customer Service roles**
- **Telesales staff**
- **Receptionists**
- **Applicants for Hackney Carriage licences**
- **Call Centre staff**
- **Technical Support**
- **Cashiers/Clerks**

### TalentLens from Pearson

80 Strand, London, WC2R 0RL

**Tel:** +44 (0)20 7010 2866 **Fax:** +44 (0)20 7010 6631 **web:** [www.TalentLens.co.uk](http://www.TalentLens.co.uk)

## How does the Versant test work?

Versant requires a standard land-based telephone. Scores are provided online only minutes after the test is completed. The three easy administration steps are:

1. The administrator provides the candidate with written instructions and a personal access number. **Tests are untimed** but generally last no more than 15 minutes.
2. The candidates can access the test 24 hours a day by phone. To ensure verification of test taker identity we recommend that, where possible, **Versant should be carried out under supervised conditions at some stage in the selection process.** This could be when the test-taker comes in-person to complete an application form or for an interview etc. **Identity verification is especially important in safety-critical roles.** There is the facility to listen to somebody's recording from their earlier test which enables you to verify that they are the same person as the one who is being interviewed. As the test is item-banked (containing different sets of items) **re-testing is possible.**
3. **The administrator retrieves scores and a report online within minutes.**

## Validation

**Versant is valid, reliable and secure.** Versant spoken language tests are based on years of research in speech recognition, statistical modelling, linguistics and testing theory. Independent studies have shown that these tests are more objective and as reliable as human-rated tests, including one-on-one oral proficiency interviews.

Versant provides a cost-effective measure of oral competence developed by expert linguists and validated with reference to human judgements of proficiency.

**The tests are secure because each test presents a random selection of items drawn from a large item pool.** This means individuals taking the test more than once will be presented with a random selection of items each time.

## Instructions and Examples

**READING:** Test takers read printed, numbered sentences, one at a time, in the order requested.

**REPEAT:** Test takers repeat sentences verbatim. The sentences are presented to the test taker in order of increasing difficulty.

**SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS:** Test takers listen to spoken questions in English and answer each of these questions with a single word or short phrase.



**SENTENCE BUILD:** For this task, test takers are presented with three short phrases. The phrases are presented in a random order (excluding the original word order), and the test taker is asked to rearrange them into a sentence.

**OPEN QUESTIONS:** In this task, test takers listen to a spoken question in English asking for an opinion, and the test taker provides an answer, with an explanation, in English. The questions deal either with family life or with the test taker's preferences and choices. This task is used to collect a spontaneous speech sample. The test taker's responses are not scored automatically at present, but these responses are available for human review by authorised listeners.

**To experience a free sample test for yourself, log on to [www.versanttest.co.uk/default.htm](http://www.versanttest.co.uk/default.htm).**

...

## Sample instructions

 <b>Versant for English</b>		Test Identification Number <b>1234 5678</b>
<p><b>Introduction:</b>  <i>Thank you for calling the Ordinate testing system.          Please enter your Test Identification Number on the telephone keypad.          Now, please say your name.          Now, please follow the instructions for Parts A through E.</i></p>		
<p><b>Part A: Reading.</b> <i>Please read the sentences as you are instructed.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When it comes to art, people's tastes vary widely.</li> <li>2. Some enjoy pictures that look as real as a photograph.</li> <li>3. Others prefer the forms and colors of abstract works.</li> <li>4. A good art museum will include all types to satisfy a variety of visitors.</li> <li>5. Now that summer is here, our town has opened up a farmers market.</li> <li>6. Once a week, local people sell fresh produce and flowers near the bank.</li> <li>7. Not only are there vegetables, there's also entertainment for kids.</li> <li>8. It's an enjoyable place for a family to spend a Saturday morning.</li> <li>9. We received our electricity bill today.</li> <li>10. I couldn't believe how high our electricity costs were.</li> <li>11. It had more than doubled since a year ago.</li> <li>12. We'll have to start using energy-efficient light bulbs.</li> </ol>		
<p><b>Part B: Repeat.</b> <i>Please repeat each sentence that you hear.</i>          Example: a voice says, "Leave town on the next train."          and you say, "Leave town on the next train."</p>		
<p><b>Part C: Questions.</b> <i>Now, please just give a simple answer to the questions.</i>          Example: a voice says, "Would you get water from a bottle or a newspaper?"          and you say, "a bottle" or "from a bottle".</p>		
<p><b>Part D: Sentence Builds.</b> <i>Now, please rearrange the word groups into a sentence.</i>          Example: a voice says, "was reading" ... "my mother" ... "her favorite magazine"          and you say, "My mother was reading her favorite magazine."</p>		
<p><b>Part E: Open Questions.</b> <i>You will have 20 seconds to answer each of three questions. The questions will be about family life or personal choices. Each question will be spoken twice, followed by a beep. When you hear the beep, you will have 20 seconds to answer the question. At the end of the 20 seconds, another beep will signal the end of the time you have to answer.</i></p>		
01-12345 - 1		
		Expires: 2007/11/18

...

## Sample report

# SCORE REPORT



## Versant English Test (Demo)

Test Identification Number: 1111 1111  
 Test Completion Date: August 12, 2009  
 Test Completion Time: 3:46 PM (UTC)

### OVERALL SCORE

**69**

SKILL AREA	SCORE	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	
Overall	69								
Sentence Mastery	74								
Vocabulary	80								
Fluency	63								
Pronunciation	51								

	DESCRIPTION
Overall	The Overall Score of the test represents the ability to understand spoken English and speak it intelligibly at a native-like conversational pace on everyday topics. Scores are based on a weighted combination of four diagnostic subscores. Scores are reported in the range from 20 to 80.
Candidate's Capabilities	Candidate speaks and understands at native-speaker speeds with minimal effort, and can contribute readily to a native-paced discussion at length, maintaining the colloquial flow. Speech is fluent and intelligible; candidate has consistent mastery of complex language structures.

© 2008 Pearson Education, Inc. or its affiliate(s). All rights reserved. Ordinate and Versant are trademarks, in the U.S. and/or other countries, of Pearson Education, Inc. or its affiliate(s). Other names may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

For more information, visit us online at [www.VersantTest.com](http://www.VersantTest.com)



**For further information or for a sample report:**  
 visit [www.TalentLens.co.uk](http://www.TalentLens.co.uk), call **020 7010 2866** or email [info@TalentLens.co.uk](mailto:info@TalentLens.co.uk)

**TalentLens from Pearson**

80 Strand, London, WC2R 0RL

**Tel:** +44 (0)20 7010 2866 **Fax:** +44 (0)20 7010 6631 **web:** [www.TalentLens.co.uk](http://www.TalentLens.co.uk)