These guidelines assume that centers will follow best practice, which is to administer the test in a secure environment in person. Where this is not possible and the test must be taken away from the center (e.g. at home), specific notes are supplied below. Unless stated, these guidelines apply to both in-person and remote tests.

# 1. Preparing the students

Students should be made aware of the following information before the start of the test. This is best done in students' first language where possible, to avoid any misunderstanding.

### a. Purpose of test

The aim of the test is to establish the students' level of English, so they can be placed in the best class to help them progress most efficiently. The test should not be used to evaluate what students have learned. For this reason, it's in students' best interests that they take the test on their own and without help.

### b. Kind of test

The NGL Online Placement Test is an adaptive test, which means that the level of the questions presented to students will vary, depending on students' responses at different stages of the test.

### c. Structure of test

The test is made up of 3 stages.

1. 20 language knowledge (vocabulary and usage) questions. These cover all levels from PreA1-C1 (beginner to advanced).

2. 20 reading and listening questions, delivered in the following order:

- 6 listening questions
- 6 reading questions
- 4 listening questions
- 4 reading questions

3. A speaking task. The speaking task is not assessed. It's used by teachers and administrators to help with borderline cases and by centres as part of test security. The platform moves automatically between the stages and they are not necessarily noticeable to the student.

### d. Time

- There is no fixed time limit on the test. Students should be encouraged to answer all questions quickly and not spend a long time trying to decide on an answer. At the beginning of the test, it's likely that students will have questions that they don't know the answer to – this is fine, they should pick an answer and move on. The test will automatically adapt the level to suit each student.

- For most students, the test should take around 30 minutes. However, some higher-level students may need longer (up to one hour) as the texts and questions are more demanding at the higher levels.

### e. IDs for entry

- On arrival, student IDs should be checked to ensure that the person taking the test is the same person that is enrolling on the course. As the test will be used to decide the class into which each student is placed, there is no advantage to the student to ask someone with a higher level of English to take the test.
- Ensure students have their test log-ins and know how to log in to the test.

### f. Test-taking strategies

- Students should be prepared to see questions above their level in the first part of the test. This is part of the process of determining which level they are. Encourage them not to spend too long on any question that they find difficult. Ideally, they should work their way through the questions answering them to the best of their ability and in a relaxed way.
- Reassure students that it's fine if they miss something in a listening question and that they can listen again - twice should be enough.
- Students should not take screen shots or photos of any of the test screens.
- Remind students that the speaking task is to give teachers additional information and is not assessed. They should not spend longer than five minutes on the speaking task and should complete the task without making notes.

### g. Navigation

- Students must give an answer to each question before they can continue. If they're not sure or don't know, they should choose any answer and then click the arrow to continue.
- Throughout the test, students will be asked to "Submit" their answers using a checkmark (✓) icon. Upon selecting this icon, the button will turn into a "Next" arrow that will lead them to the next set of questions. This process allows the test to deliver level-appropriate questions adapted to each student's  performance. Explain that students will operate their own audio recordings by using the play button and that they can, if needed, play the recordings, or parts of the recordings, more than once. Students should be advised that if they can't answer the question after listening twice, they should choose an answer and move on.
- Some of the reading and listening questions have a longer text with two questions. This is indicated in the directions.

### h. Completing the speaking task

- Make sure the students allow microphone access through their browser settings when prompted.
- Students should spend around 3-5 minutes on the speaking task in total.
- There are 3 questions, each of which requires a separate response. Students should read the question, take a few seconds to think about their answer, and then record it.
- Students should avoid making multiple recordings of their responses.
- As each student will work through the test at a different rate, students must speak quietly and directly into their microphone while recording their responses.

- If a student receives a recording error pop-up message, they should not close out of the test. This is the standard pop-up if there are recording issues (i.e., microphone isn't connected or the microphone is blocked for a specific site). Tell them to try again.
- Students must click the 'Submit' button for the test to be completed.

i. **Personal possessions**

- No notes, books, electronic devices e.g. smart phones/smart watches/MP3 players, etc. should be allowed in the exam room. All such items must be switched off and removed from students before they enter the test room. Place these items in a secure place with other personal property, e.g. at a desk at the front of the room.
- Pens and paper are not needed for the test, which is completely online. If a student requests a pen/paper for the speaking component, this should be supplied by the supervisor.

j. **Asking questions**

- Students should raise their hands if they want to ask a question and wait for the supervisor to approach before asking it.
- Students should otherwise avoid talking during the test (with the exception of during the speaking task).

k. **Using the restroom**

- Student restroom breaks should be discouraged unless there are special circumstances which are to be noted by the supervisor.
- Students should be told to return directly to the exam room.

l. **Finishing the test**

- When a student finishes, they should raise their hand so the supervisor can check they have submitted the test correctly.
- Students can leave as they finish but should do so as quietly as possible so as not to disturb other students who are still taking the test.
- Remind students to take all personal possessions with them.

## 2. Preparing the testing room

a. Ensure that the internet connection is strong and reliable, as outages will stop the test and mean that students have to start again.

b. Check the exam room is at a suitable temperature, has a clock which is visible to all, and that there is signage outside the exam room to warn other students/members of staff that a test is taking place (and when it starts/ends).

c. Ensure seating spaced for maximum separation between students and check all tables are completely clear of papers, books, etc.

d. Check that the equipment needed is functioning and ready to go before the test begins.

e. Do not allow other people to enter the room and reduce outside noise by closing windows.

## 3. Wellbeing

**a.** Explain to students that the aim of this test is to ensure that they are assigned to the most appropriate class for their level so their language needs are suitably met. This will mean they make better progress in their English.

**b.** The test is not intended to add pressure but instead assess their strengths and weaknesses. It's intended to help measure their future learning needs and provide direction to their teachers, so as to maximise future improvement.

**c.** The outcome of the test will be used only for this purpose and will not affect in any way the final outcome of their English studies.

**d.** Students should focus on their own responses and not worry about what any other students are doing. Because of the way the test is designed, everyone will see a different set of questions and will work through these at different speeds.

**e.** Students should be encouraged to work at their own pace, while not spending too long on any one question.

**f.** The speaking task does not form part of the test. Its purpose is to give the teachers a chance to 'get to know' their students, and to support identity checks.

## 4. Guidelines for supervising during the test

**a.** Before starting the test, check all students have turned off their mobile phones, smart watches, etc.

**b.** Move around the room regularly changing the route you take.

**c.** Watch students from the back of the room or a raised platform if possible.

**d.** If you suspect a student of copying another student, of helping them, or of using notes or a phone, quietly tell the student to stop and focus on their own test. Note details of the event and the student/s involved.

**e.** If a phone rings during the exam, locate it as quickly as possible, turn it off, and take it away from the student, noting their name.

## 5. Dealing with questions during the test

**a.** You can clarify what students need to do if they are unsure, but do not help them answer the test questions nor give clues.

**b.** If the student experiences a technical issue that prevents them from completing the test, they will need to leave the test without submitting. Each test can only be attempted once, so they will need to be reassigned the test to take it again.

## 6. Remote tests

If you decide to have the students test remotely, inform them that:

- They should answer the tests from their own knowledge, and not access other websites or study resources, including other people.
- In case of technical difficulties or how to proceed through the test, they should contact support. https://support.eltngl.com/contact-support/

When tests are taken remotely, there are significant potential risks related to security:

- Once logged in, students may ask a friend or relative to complete the test for them.
- Students have access to other resources and the internet to find answers to questions.
- Students can take screenshots and photos of the test and share these with others, thus compromising the test content.

We therefore strongly encourage you to administer the test in your center. Where this is not possible, there are certain steps which can help to reduce the risks:

- Check how long the student spent on the test. If the student spent significantly longer than expected (over 1 hour), then it's possible they were accessing other resources.
- Review the student's speaking task performance carefully. Does it seem spontaneous? Is the level of English significantly different from the level of their performance in the test?
- If the answer to any of these questions is 'yes', we suggest you carry out the optional interview task (face-to-face or via video conferencing) to verify the student's identity and/or English level.
- If the test outcome remains significantly higher than their oral proficiency, the student should re-sit the test in a supervised environment from the test administrator.