ES3C25 – VTCT (ITEC) Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International (C2)

Sample Assessment Material

Listening Part One – 7 marks

Listen to a conversation, then select the correct answer for questions 1-7 by choosing from A), B) or C).
You will hear the conversation **twice**.
For each sentence or question, place **a black mark** over the correct answer on your answer sheet.

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1. Why did Laura decide to leave her previous company?
   A She felt professionally undervalued.
   B She wanted a shorter commute.
   C The company was financially unstable.

2. What does she mention about her new workplace?
   A It is less structured.
   B It encourages independent thinking.
   C It offers better facilities.

3. How does Laura describe her initial experience?
   A Overwhelming but stimulating.
   B Disappointing and confusing.
   C Predictable and routine.

4. What is Laura's current role?
   A Strategic consultant.
   B Project coordinator.
   C Policy analyst.

5. What do both speakers agree about modern workplaces?
   A They demand constant adaptability.
   B They lack creativity.
   C They are less competitive than before.

6. What advantage does Laura highlight?
   A Increased autonomy.
   B Higher salary.
   C Shorter working hours.

7. What is Michael considering?
   A Starting his own business.
   B Moving into a leadership role.
   C Changing industries entirely.

Part Two – 7 marks

Listen to an interview, then select the correct answer for questions 8-14 by choosing from A), B) or C).
You will hear the interview **twice**.
For each sentence or question, place **a black mark** over the correct answer on your answer sheet.

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8. What does Professor Hall suggest about misinformation?
   A It is a modern phenomenon.
   B It spreads faster due to technology.
   C It is mainly politically motivated.

9. Why has misinformation become more visible?
   A Traditional media has declined.
   B People consume more digital content.
   C Governments publish more data.

10. According to Hall, critical thinking skills develop
    A through formal education alone.
    B gradually across different life stages.
    C primarily during adolescence.

11. The interviewer is surprised that
    A misinformation can unite people.
    B education levels do not always prevent misinformation.
    C older generations are more vulnerable.

12. Hall says emotional responses
    A weaken analytical thinking.
    B are unrelated to belief formation.
    C are more common among young people.

13. What does the interviewer imply about regulating content?
    A It is ethically complicated.
    B It is unnecessary.
    C It is ineffective.

14. What solution does Hall emphasise?
    A Stronger censorship laws.
    B Improved digital literacy education.
    C Limiting social media access.

Part Three - 10 marks

Listen to a broadcast, then select the correct answer to questions 15-24 by choosing from A), B) or C).
You will hear the broadcast **twice**.
For each sentence or question, place **a black mark** over the correct answer on your answer sheet.

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15. What does the speaker say about global urbanisation?
    A It is slowing down.
    B It is reshaping economic priorities.
    C It benefits all regions equally.

16. One challenge of megacities is
    A cultural uniformity.
    B infrastructure strain.
    C declining innovation.

17. The speaker mentions housing as
    A a temporary issue.
    B a politically sensitive topic.
    C a minor concern.

18. Smart technologies are described as
    A experimental and unreliable.
    B essential but insufficient alone.
    C prohibitively expensive.

19. Environmental sustainability requires
    A reduced migration.
    B coordinated planning.
    C fewer regulations.

20. Social inequality in cities is
    A gradually decreasing.
    B exaggerated by media.
    C increasingly visible.

21. The speaker suggests economic growth
    A automatically improves living standards.
    B must be inclusive to be sustainable.
    C is unrelated to urban design.

22. The tone of the broadcast is
    A alarmist.
    B cautiously analytical.
    C dismissive.

23. The future of cities depends largely on
    A political cooperation.
    B private investment alone.
    C technological breakthroughs only.

24. The speaker concludes that urban transformation
    A is unavoidable but manageable.
    B is unrealistic.
    C is already complete.

READING – 24 MARKS

Part One - 8 marks

Read the text below and then select the correct answer to questions 25- 32 by choosing from A), B), or C).
Fill in the space on your answer sheet with **a black pen only**.
There is only **one correct answer** for each number.
For each sentence or question, place **a black mark** over the correct answer on your answer sheet.

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1. Contemporary consumers are frequently told that they have never enjoyed greater choice. Online platforms present thousands of products within seconds, streaming services offer endless entertainment, and comparison websites promise optimal decision-making. On the surface, this abundance appears empowering. Yet beneath this veneer of freedom lies a paradox: the more options individuals encounter, the less autonomous their decisions may become.
2. Digital marketplaces rely heavily on algorithmic curation. Rather than presenting a neutral range of possibilities, platforms filter and rank options based on prior behaviour, demographic data and commercial partnerships. While this personalisation may enhance convenience, it also narrows exposure to unfamiliar alternatives. Consumers are subtly guided toward predictable preferences, reinforcing existing patterns rather than encouraging exploration.
3. Behavioural economists have long argued that excessive choice can produce decision fatigue. When confronted with too many alternatives, individuals may either delay making decisions or rely on superficial cues such as popularity rankings. In such cases, apparent abundance reduces meaningful engagement.
4. Moreover, the architecture of digital platforms often prioritises visibility for sponsored products. This commercial logic shapes what users perceive as “best” or “most relevant,” thereby influencing outcomes without overt coercion. The illusion of neutral comparison conceals embedded incentives.
5. Defenders of digital marketplaces counter that consumers retain ultimate agency: no purchase occurs without voluntary confirmation. However, this argument overlooks the subtle power of interface design. Default settings, recommendation banners and limited-time prompts can significantly shape behaviour.
6. The broader implication is not that digital markets eliminate freedom, but that they recalibrate it. Autonomy persists, yet it operates within carefully structured environments. Understanding these structures becomes essential if consumers are to exercise genuine choice.

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25. What is the main argument of the text?
    A Digital platforms eliminate consumer freedom.
    B Increased choice does not necessarily guarantee autonomy.
    C Algorithms are unreliable.
26. What does “this abundance” in paragraph 1 refer to?
    A Digital marketing strategies
    B Large numbers of available options
    C Personal data collection
27. According to paragraph 2, algorithms primarily
    A expand consumer awareness.
    B reduce exposure to unfamiliar alternatives.
    C eliminate commercial bias.
28. What is “decision fatigue”?
    A Physical exhaustion from online shopping
    B Confusion caused by insufficient information
    C Reduced ability to decide when facing many options
29. Paragraph 4 suggests that
    A sponsored products are clearly labelled.
    B commercial priorities influence visibility.
    C consumers distrust rankings.
30. The writer believes interface design
    A has minimal impact on decisions.
    B subtly influences behaviour.
    C guarantees rational choices.
31. The tone of the text can best be described as
    A alarmist.
    B analytical and critical.
    C indifferent.
32. Which title best fits the text?
    A The End of Consumer Choice
    B Algorithms and Commercial Strategy
    C The Paradox of Digital Abundance

Part Two – 8 marks

Read the text below and then select the correct answer to questions 33- 40 by choosing from A), B), or C).
Fill in the space on your answer sheet with a **black pen only**.
There is only **one correct answer** for each number.

For each sentence or question, place **a black mark** over the correct answer on your answer sheet.

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1. Productivity has long been equated with measurable output: hours worked, tasks completed, profits generated. This industrial understanding persists even as work itself evolves. In knowledge-based economies, however, productivity resists simple quantification.
2. Many organisations continue to reward visible busyness. Employees who respond instantly to emails or remain online late into the evening are frequently perceived as more committed. Yet such behaviours may reflect inefficiency rather than effectiveness. Constant responsiveness fragments attention and diminishes cognitive depth.
3. Recent research in cognitive science suggests that sustained concentration is essential for complex problem-solving. Interruptions, even brief ones, impose cognitive switching costs that accumulate over time. The result is not greater output but diminished intellectual quality.
4. Nevertheless, modern workplaces are structured around perpetual connectivity. Collaboration tools, instant messaging platforms and shared digital dashboards create the expectation of immediate availability. The boundary between focused work and reactive communication becomes blurred.
5. Some companies have begun experimenting with “deep work” policies, designating uninterrupted periods for concentrated activity. Early findings indicate improvements in both employee satisfaction and innovation. However, such reforms challenge entrenched managerial norms.
6. Ultimately, redefining productivity requires cultural transformation. Organisations must shift from measuring visible activity to evaluating substantive contribution. Without this recalibration, the rhetoric of efficiency risks obscuring genuine progress.

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33. What is the central idea of the text?
    A Productivity can be easily measured.
    B Modern definitions of productivity may be outdated.
    C Technology has improved efficiency.
34. What does paragraph 2 criticise?
    A Flexible working hours

B The emphasis on visible activity
C Remote collaboration

35. According to cognitive science, interruptions
A enhance creativity.
B are insignificant.
C reduce intellectual performance.

36. What does “this recalibration” in paragraph 6 refer to?
A Increasing work hours
B Shifting how productivity is evaluated
C Reducing collaboration tools

37. “Deep work” policies aim to
A increase communication.
B create uninterrupted focus time.
C reduce salaries.

38. The writer suggests modern workplaces
A encourage constant availability.
B discourage teamwork.
C minimise distractions.

39. The tone of the text is
A reflective and analytical.
B humorous.
C dismissive.

40. Which title best captures the text?
A The Myth of Multitasking
B Productivity Beyond Busyness
C The Digital Office Revolution

Part Three – 8 marks

Read the text below and then select the correct answer to questions 41-48 by choosing from A), B), or C).
Fill in the space on your answer sheet with a **black pen only**.
There is only **one correct answer** for each number.

For each sentence or question, place **a black mark** over the correct answer on your answer sheet.

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1. Scientific progress has historically been celebrated as inherently beneficial. From medical breakthroughs to technological innovations, research has transformed human life. Yet the assumption that knowledge is intrinsically neutral warrants scrutiny.
2. Scientific discoveries do not exist in isolation; they unfold within political, economic and ethical contexts. Nuclear physics, for example, produced both energy generation and weaponry. Similarly, advances in artificial intelligence promise efficiency while raising concerns about surveillance and displacement.
3. The question, therefore, is not whether science should advance, but how responsibility should be distributed. Some argue that researchers must anticipate potential misuse. Others contend that the burden lies with policymakers who regulate application.
4. Funding structures further complicate accountability. When research is financed by private interests, commercial priorities may shape investigative direction. Conversely, public funding may reflect governmental agendas.
5. Ethical review boards attempt to mediate these tensions. However, they often evaluate immediate procedural compliance rather than long-term societal consequences. Predicting downstream effects remains inherently speculative.
6. Critics warn against paralysing innovation through excessive precaution. Scientific inquiry thrives on openness and risk-taking. Overregulation could deter exploratory research that ultimately benefits humanity.
7. Nonetheless, a purely laissez-faire approach appears equally problematic. History demonstrates that unexamined advancement can yield unintended harm. The challenge lies in cultivating ethical literacy alongside technical expertise.
8. Scientific responsibility, then, is not a static obligation but an evolving dialogue between researchers, institutions and society. Only through sustained reflection can progress align with collective well-being.

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41. The writer challenges the idea that science
    A progresses too slowly.
    B is always beneficial.
    C lacks funding.

42. Paragraph 2 suggests that scientific discoveries
    A are ethically neutral.
    B function independently of society.
    C have multiple consequences.
43. The central dilemma concerns
    A who is accountable for misuse.
    B how to increase funding.
    C whether research should continue.
44. Funding sources may influence
    A ethical standards.
    B research direction.
    C scientific accuracy.
45. Ethical review boards are criticised for
    A being unnecessary.
    B lacking expertise.
    C focusing narrowly on procedures.
46. A “laissez-faire approach” (paragraph 7) implies
    A strict regulation.
    B no intervention.
    C balanced oversight.
47. The writer’s overall position is
    A strongly anti-science.
    B uncritically supportive of innovation.
    C cautiously balanced.
48. Which title best fits the text?
    A The Political Nature of Research
    B Innovation Without Limits
    C Science and Moral Accountability

WRITING – 24 MARKS

There are 12 marks available for Part One and 12 marks available for Part Two.

Part One – 12 marks

Choose **ONE** of the following tasks between A, B, C and D.

Write a **formal** response in the correct format for the type of text. Please pay attention to the required word count for your text.

For your chosen **ONE** option, you must write between **250 and 350 words**. Write clearly and use a **black pen only**.

Option A: You regularly contribute to an academic discussion website. The site has asked for submissions on the theme: **"Has technological convenience made modern society intellectually complacent?"**. Write an article.
Include in your article:

- Whether you believe technology reduces or enhances critical thinking
- The impact of constant access to information
- The role of education in maintaining intellectual standards
- Your view on how society can balance convenience with depth

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Option B: A literary journal has invited readers to submit a critical review of a contemporary novel that explores moral ambiguity. Write a review.
Include in your review:

- A concise overview of the novel's central themes
- An evaluation of character development
- An assessment of the author's stylistic choices
- A comparison with other works in a similar genre

Option C: You have read a thought-provoking essay arguing that globalisation has weakened cultural identity. Write a response article presenting your own perspective. Include in your article:

- Whether you believe cultural identity is diminishing or evolving
- The influence of global media and migration
- The economic and social implications of cultural exchange
- Your prediction for the future of cultural identity

Option D: Your university/workplace is considering implementing a policy that limits digital communication outside official working hours. Write a proposal evaluating this initiative.
Include in your proposal:

- Why boundaries between work and personal time matter
- Potential benefits of limiting after-hours communication
- Possible drawbacks or resistance
- Practical recommendations for implementation

Part Two – 12 marks

Write an informal response in the correct format for the type of text.
Please pay attention to the required word count for your text.
You must write between **250 and 350 words.**
Write clearly and use a **black pen only**.

You have a close friend who is considering relocating to a country with a very different political and cultural environment for career opportunities. They are excited but uncertain.

Write an email to your friend.

Include:

- Your reaction to their decision
- Possible cultural or ethical challenges they may face
- The professional advantages of international relocation
- Personal advice and encouragement