

# ETA

## English Test for Aviation

**Oxford**  
aviation academy

The world's leading independent provider of flight training and crew resourcing

**emeryroberts**

Aviation English Training

Specialist language training service providers and coursebook writers

## Why develop a language test?

1. Customer demand for a high quality aviation English test to meet the International Civil Aviation Organisation's language proficiency requirements effective from March 5th 2011:
  - Retrospective flight crew assessment; and
  - Assessment of cadets on completion of ATPL training.
2. There were very few tests available to Oxford Aviation Academy with evidence of test quality

## Test development



- To measure English language proficiency for VFR and IFR radiotelephony communications;
- To assess the skills of listening comprehension and speaking only;
- To measure proficiency in plain English in an aviation context;
- To include, but not overtly measure, standard ICAO phraseology;
- To be designed for pilots operating aircraft on international flights;
- To measure language proficiency according to the *ICAO rating scale* and *holistic descriptors* at levels 3 to 5; and
- Not to be linked to and to be used independently of a particular course of study.



*How to define the constructs implied in the ICAO rating scale?*

*How to develop test tasks to operationalise the construct?*

*How to assess listening?*

*Which levels - pre-elementary (level 1) to expert (level 6)?*

\*Test specifications based on:

ICAO Document 9835: Manual on the implementation of the language proficiency requirements, ICAO Circular 318-AN/180: Language Testing Criteria for Global Harmonisation, analysis of pilot language use tasks in international radiotelephony communications and reference to literature in language testing

# Test tasks

## Part 1: Radiotelephony role play (17-22 minutes) Assesses listening and speaking

This task simulates radiotelephony communications during flight operations. The test taker interacts with an SME examiner in voice-only communications. This task is designed to measure listening to aerodrome and meteorological information broadcasts and communicating with air traffic control in plain English in non-routine situations.



A departure scenario followed by...



an en route scenario; or  
An en route scenario followed by...



an arrival scenario

## Part 2: Monitor and report (6-8 minutes) Assesses listening

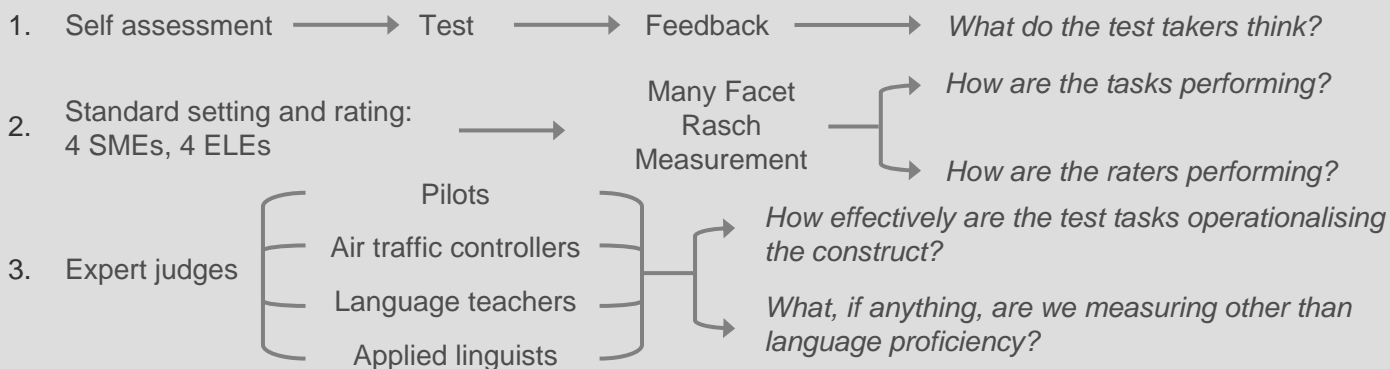
This task simulates the pilot task of monitoring the radio frequency during flight operations. The test taker listens to a recording from a busy international tower, approach or en route radio frequency. The test taker may make notes while listening. The test taker then gives an oral report of the non-routine events from the recording to the ELE examiner. This task is designed to measure abilities such as comprehending 'a range of international accents' and 'linguistic and situational complications' in radiotelephony communications.

## Part 3: Describe and discuss (6-7 minutes) Assesses speaking

The test taker describes an aviation related image, and then responds to discussion prompts on related topics delivered by the ELE examiner. This task is designed to give the test-taker opportunity to demonstrate ICAO level 5 abilities such as using 'complex structures' and 'idiomatic vocabulary', and 'speaking at length'.

# Trials and analysis

27 experienced pilots from Russia, Turkey, Bahrain, Iraq, France and Morocco and the Netherlands



# Next Steps

Develop and release the operational test and train test personnel - Summer 2010.

Seek UK Civil Aviation Authority approval for language testing activities.

Work with international organisations and agencies to promote regulation in aviation language testing.