

# Guidebook for Score Users

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*CAEL is an integrated English proficiency test*



**CAEL<sup>®</sup>**

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# About CAEL

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The CAEL Test is designed to measure the English language proficiency of individuals planning to study in post-secondary institutions and to become members of professional organizations. CAEL is available both at a test centre, and in select regions as an online test, taken from a home computer.

CAEL is one of the best tools for identifying test takers with the right English skills for success. Test takers read articles, listen to lectures, answer questions, and write a short essay.

One of the unique features of CAEL is that it is an integrated, topic-based test. During the test, test takers use more than one skill to answer questions on unified topics. For example, test takers speak to respond to questions based on what they have read or listened to, and write responses based on a reading passage and mini-lecture.

The advantage of this approach is that it assesses a test taker's ability to synthesize information from a variety of sources. When writing in an academic context, individuals are often required to bring together information from a variety of sources such as statistics, online material, books, and journals.



# The Trusted Proficiency Test

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CAEL is accepted by all major universities and colleges across Canada for academic admission, as well as by several professional organizations for certification, including the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC). For a complete list of accepting institutions and professional organizations, visit our website at [cael.ca/who-accepts-cael-ce](http://cael.ca/who-accepts-cael-ce).

## CAEL Testimonials

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I liked that the test was on the computer, as it was less messy when I wanted to make changes to my responses. As well, I was able to receive my results faster than other testing options, which was helpful for preparing my admission application.

- Mona, CAEL Test Taker

The CAEL Online Courses were a great opportunity to prepare for CAEL, and paired with the CAEL Pretest, provided thorough preparation for my test. I also found that completing all of the test components in one location at one time was very convenient.

- Xuan, CAEL Test Taker

What I liked most about the CAEL was that you can do the test on the computer, and the results are released quickly!

- Alinsson, CAEL Test Taker

I appreciated the availability of test dates for CAEL, and found it convenient and inexpensive compared to other English proficiency tests.

- Aashima, CAEL Test Taker



# How We Work with Score Users

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Prometric is proud to support score users that are invested in accepting CAEL, and we are pleased to provide the following support:

- Presentations and information sessions for your organization about using CAEL scores
- CAEL experts who are able to provide information about CAEL
- A comprehensive score and identity verification system that allows for instant online verification of a test taker's CAEL score

To learn more about becoming a CAEL score user, or to speak to a Paragon representative about CAEL, contact [stakeholder@prometric.com](mailto:stakeholder@prometric.com), or visit [cael.ca](http://cael.ca) to learn more.

# Why Choose CAEL

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CAEL is the only test that provides an authentic representation of language use in an academic context. It evaluates how well test takers combine their English speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills to perform English tasks required in academic and professional environments. We are also focused on helping our test takers achieve their score goals, and provide extensive preparation materials, and more.

## Test Features

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### Robust Test Security

Protected by leading-edge test security, including a scores and identity verification system



### Computer-delivered Test

Done in just one sitting, CAEL is available both in test centres, and as an online test in select regions



### Online Identification System

Test taker identity verification system that allows for scores and identities to be directly validated



### Convenient Study Materials

Free sample tests, pretest sittings, webinars, prep programs & online courses



### Quick Online Results

Available online in 8 business days, sent to 5 institutions at no extra cost



### Growing Availability

CAEL is available across North America, with more availability coming online internationally

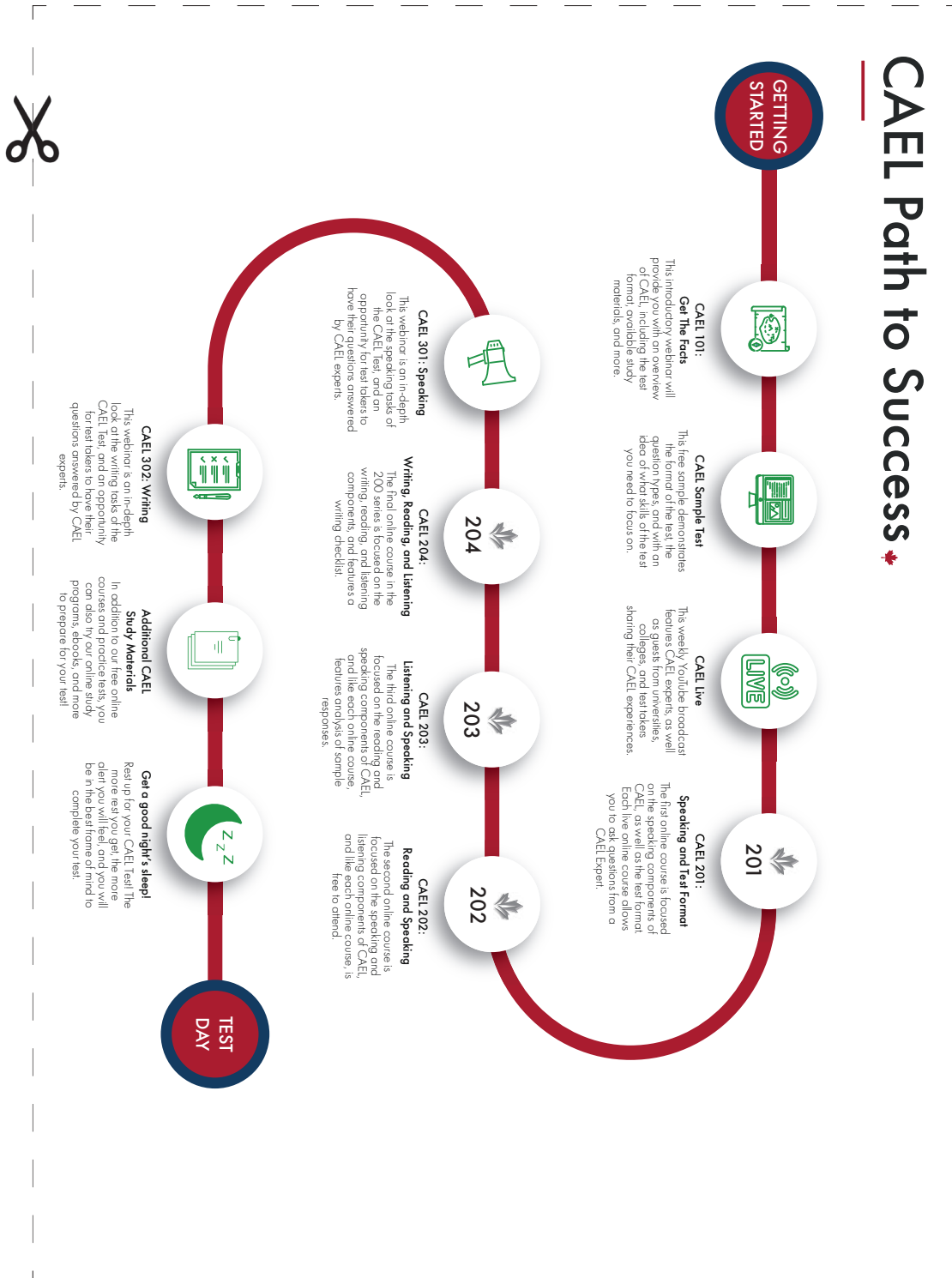


### YouTube and More

With regular YouTube live broadcasts, test takers have a wide range of online prep options

# Preparing for CAEL

To help test takers prepare for CAEL, we've created over 8 hours of free online webinars, as well as a free practice test, and created a learning path to help test takers identify which test components to focus on. For more information about our learning path, and to see our checklist, visit [cael.ca](https://cael.ca)











# CAEL Preparation Checklist

*There are many ways to prepare for CAEL. Chart your own path to success!*

## Step 1: Learning about the test

- |                          |   |   |                          |   |   |                          |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>CAEL 101: Get the Facts</b><br>This webinar is offered live every month, and as a recorded session on our YouTube channel. | <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>CAEL Live</b><br>This weekly YouTube broadcast features CAEL experts, guests, and more to give you CAEL insights | <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>CAEL Practice Test</b><br>This free practice test is available on our website and will help you determine which test components you most need to prepare for. |
|--------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|---|--|

## Step 2: Learning about test components

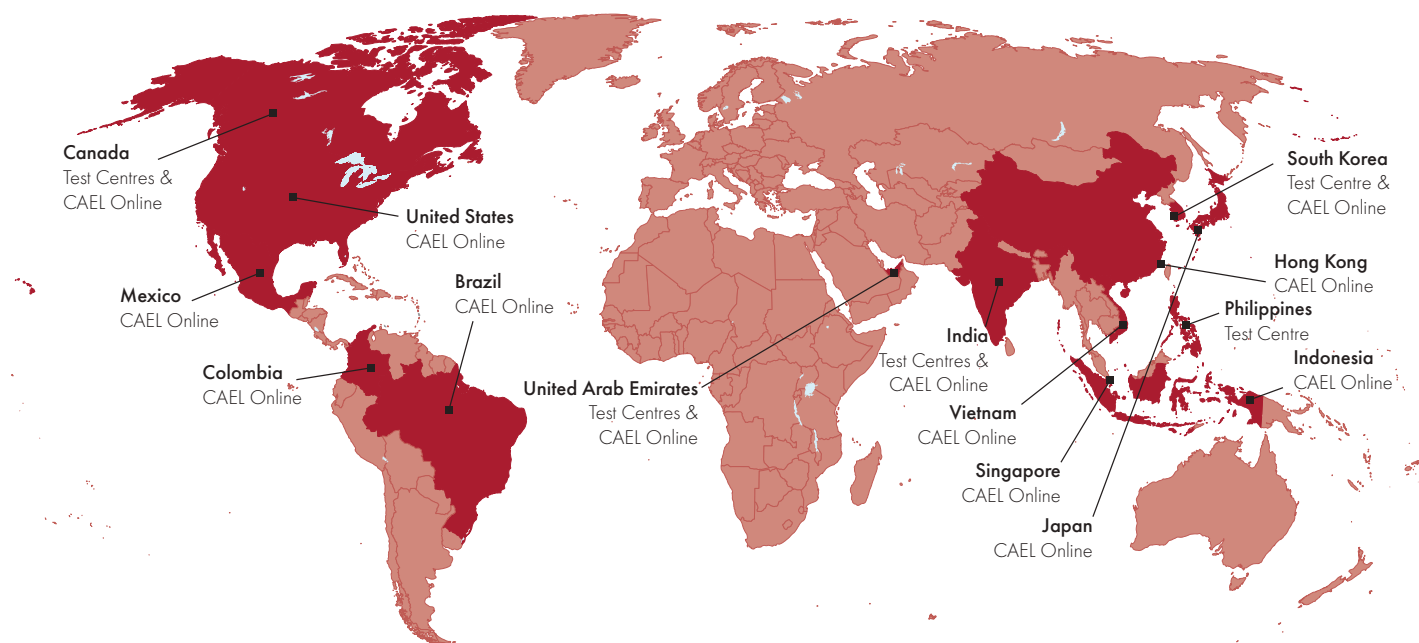
- |                          |   |  |                          |   |   |
|--------------------------|---|--|--------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <br><b>201</b>   | <b>CAEL 201: Speaking and Test Format</b><br>This webinar is offered live every month, and as a recorded session on our YouTube channel. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <br><b>203</b>   | <b>CAEL 203: Listening and Speaking</b><br>This webinar is offered live every month, and as a recorded session on our YouTube channel.          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <br><b>202</b> | <b>CAEL 202: Reading and Speaking</b><br>This webinar is offered live every month, and as a recorded session on our YouTube channel.     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <br><b>204</b> | <b>CAEL 204: Reading, Writing, and Listening</b><br>This webinar is offered live every month, and as a recorded session on our YouTube channel. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <br><b>301</b> | <b>CAEL 301: Speaking</b><br>This webinar is offered live every month, and as a recorded session on our YouTube channel.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <br><b>302</b> | <b>CAEL 302: Writing</b><br>This webinar is offered live every month, and as a recorded session on our YouTube channel.                         |

## Step 3: Additional preparation materials

- |                          |   |   |                          |  |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>CAEL Accelerate</b><br>This webinar is offered live every month, and as a recorded session on our YouTube channel. | <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>CAEL Practice Test Plus</b><br>This online study program is available for test takers looking for additional test preparation. |
|--------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|--|---|



# Testing Around the World



## Test Fees & Frequency

**\$280**  
+ Taxes

Test sittings are available weekly in North America, and internationally.

## International Fees

International test fees may vary. For a complete listing of upcoming test sittings and test fees, visit [cael.ca](https://cael.ca).

# Confidence in CAEL Scoring

In order to ensure that CAEL scores are accurate and reliable, the Test Research and Development department develops CAEL items with a process that upholds the rigorous standards that have made Paragon Testing Enterprises an industry-leading organization. Paragon's quality assurance processes combine efficient automation with meticulous human quality control, and span every step of the test process.



## Test Content Review

Rigorous content development processes involve multiple internal and external reviews



## Rater Accuracy

Multi-layer training, evaluation, feedback, and retraining; our processes continually monitor raters for quality



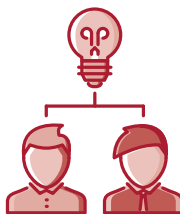
## Test Content

Elicits the evidence required to make accurate decisions about test taker's language proficiency



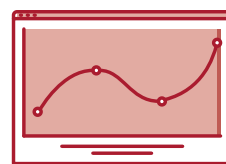
## Quality Assurance

Checks and balances at every step through content creation, administration, scoring, and reporting



## Double Rating

Delivering accurate, rigorous, and consistent scores for all test takers



## Psychometrics

Expertise in test analysis based on continual research and adherence to professional standards

# CAEL Test Format

CAEL assesses English language proficiency in an integrated context. Test takers receive scores for the Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing components, as well as an overall score.

The test includes activities that students engage in during post-secondary study. The topics and tasks in the test are taken from first-year university courses. Some of these tasks will require test takers to use what they have read and listened to in order to answer a question by speaking or writing their response.

CAEL is fully computer delivered, providing test takers the opportunity to complete all test components in one sitting. The total test time for CAEL is approximately 3.5 hours, and the test fee is \$280 CAD + tax (international test fees may vary).

## ■ Speaking

Reply to on-screen prompts verbally

7-10 minutes

## ■ Integrated Reading

Read passages and reply to questions

35-50 minutes

## ■ Integrated Listening

Listen to passages and reply to questions

25-35 minutes

## ■ Academic Unit A

Answer comprehension questions and write a reply

60-70 minutes

## ■ Academic Unit B

Answer comprehension questions and write a reply

40-45 minutes

# CAEL Scoring

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The Reading and Listening components of CAEL are computer-scored. All the answers to CAEL Reading and Listening questions are scored dichotomously: a response is either correct or incorrect. Questions that are left blank are scored as incorrect.

The Speaking and Writing components are scored by Paragon's trained raters, using scoring criteria relevant to standards applied in academic contexts.

To rate the Speaking and Writing components of CAEL, raters use a variety of criteria specifically designed to assess academic speaking and academic writing. These criteria are:

- ✓ Completing the task: Whether test takers fulfill the requirements of the task
- ✓ Content of the response: How well test takers communicate their ideas or argument
- ✓ Vocabulary use: How well test takers' chosen words, idioms, and collocations convey their intended meaning
- ✓ Grammatical accuracy: Test takers' degree of mastery over linguistic patterns of English to clearly and precisely communicate their intended message
- ✓ Use of source materials: How well test takers use the information from the image, passage, or mini-lecture in their response
- ✓ Audience awareness and tone: Test takers' ability to set and maintain an appropriate tone throughout their response

# CAEL Band Scores

After completing CAEL, test takers receive a score report that details individual English proficiency scores for the Speaking, Reading, Listening, and Writing components as well as an overall score. CAEL scores are reported on a scale from 10 to 90, with accompanying descriptors of what this performance represents. The overall score is calculated as an equally weighted average of the four component scores rounded to the nearest ten-point interval.

CAEL Score	CAEL Band Descriptor
80–90	<b>Expert:</b> Demonstrates a high level of competence, accuracy, and effectiveness in academic/professional settings
70	<b>Adept:</b> Uses generally accurate language in most settings; some limitations in flexibility are evident
60	<b>Advanced:</b> Displays competence in academic or professional settings
50	<b>High Intermediate:</b> Exhibits some competence in academic or professional settings; communication may break down in places
40	<b>Intermediate:</b> Demonstrates some ability to comprehend and articulate complex ideas and arguments typical of academic or professional settings
30	<b>High Beginner:</b> Expresses basic ideas about familiar topics in routine settings
10–20	<b>Low Beginner:</b> Communicates with limited ability

## Sample Score Requirements

Organization	Required Score
University of Toronto	CAEL 70
University of British Columbia	CAEL 70
Humber College	CAEL 60
McGill University	CAEL 70
American Veterinary Medical Association	CAEL 60
Alberta College of Massage Therapy	CAEL 70
College of Dental Hygienists of Nova Scotia	CAEL 70
College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants(CICC)	CAEL 70



# CAEL Components

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## Part 1: Speaking

In Part 1, there are three Speaking tasks, each on a different topic:

- ✔ Task 1 & 2: Test takers will discuss various aspects of educational plans or experiences and discuss other topics applicable to academic study.
- ✔ Task 3: Test takers will describe and draw conclusions about a visual image, such as a chart or graph.

Test takers' responses to Part 1 speaking questions are evaluated on the content of their response, the accuracy of their language, and their ability to reference details in a visual image (if present).

## Part 2: Integrated Reading

In Part 2, there are two types of reading passages, each followed by a set of comprehension questions. The comprehension questions assess test takers' abilities to:

- ✔ Comprehend the general meaning of the passage
- ✔ Identify specific information in the passage
- ✔ Make inferences based on information in the passage

In the final task of Part 2, test takers respond to one speaking question that is answered using material from one of the reading passages.

Test takers' responses to the reading comprehension questions are scored as correct or incorrect. Test takers' spoken responses are evaluated on the content of their response, the accuracy of their language, and their use of source material.

# CAEL Components

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## Part 3: Integrated Listening

In Part 3, there are two types of listening passages, each followed by a set of comprehension questions. The comprehension questions assess test takers' abilities to:

- ✔ Comprehend the general meaning of the passage
- ✔ Identify specific information in the passage
- ✔ Make inferences based on information in the passage

In the final task of Part 3, test takers respond to one speaking question that is answered using material from one of the listening passages.

Test takers' responses to the listening comprehension questions are scored as correct or incorrect. Test takers' spoken responses are evaluated on the content of their response, the accuracy of their language, and their use of source material.



## Part 4: Academic Unit A

There are three sections in Part 4, each of which is about an aspect of the same academic topic:

- ✔ One reading passage with comprehension questions
- ✔ One listening passage with comprehension questions
- ✔ One writing question requiring an extended response, using material from both the reading passage and the listening passage.



## Part 5: Academic Unit B

There are three sections in Part 5, each of which is about an aspect of the same academic topic. The topic in Part 5 is different than the topic test takers encounter in Part 4.

- ✔ One reading passage with comprehension questions
- ✔ One listening passage with comprehension questions
- ✔ One writing question requiring a short response, using material from the reading passage or the listening passage.

In Part 4 and Part 5, test takers' responses to the reading and listening comprehension questions are scored as correct or incorrect. Test takers' written responses are evaluated on the content of their language, the accuracy of their language, and their use of source materials.

# CAEL Score Guidance

We recommend that organizations where the primary language is English consider the CAEL overall band scores in the table below when setting their English language admission standards.

CAEL Score	Linguistically demanding regulatory programs	Linguistically less demanding regulatory programs	Linguistically demanding vocational programs	Linguistically less demanding vocational programs
80–90	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
70	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
60	English needs improvement	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
50	English needs improvement	English needs improvement	Acceptable	Acceptable
40	English needs improvement	English needs improvement	English needs improvement	Acceptable

Note that these recommended standards vary based on the nature of the academic programs for which the candidate is being admitted. If the program calls for a high degree of group work, discussion, and oral presentations, academic institutions might wish to require in addition a minimum band score on the speaking component of the test.

# CAEL Scores and Identity Verification System

The CAEL Scores and Identity Verification System (SIVS) is a simple and fast way for organizations to verify an individual's CAEL scores and identity, and provides administrative personnel with an effective tool for score verification.

## Benefits of CAEL SIVS

- The CAEL SIVS allows for institutions to directly verify an individual's scores with the CAEL Office, without relying on mailed, paper score reports.
- In addition, the CAEL SIVS also allows organizations to subscribe to the Bulk Scores Download feature, which allows for organizations to automatically receive scores to that institution.

## Sample Score Report

The screenshot displays the CAEL SIVS web interface. On the left is a navigation menu with options: MANAGE USERS, VERIFY SCORES (highlighted), BULK SCORES, and ACTIVITY LOG. The main content area is titled 'Verify CAEL Scores' and includes a form for 'Registration Number' and 'PIN'. Below the form, a note states: 'The Registration Number and PIN can be found on the CAEL Official Score Report.' Underneath is the 'Identity Information' section, which lists fields like Last Name, First Name, Date of Birth, Signature, Picture, Scanned Document 1, Scanned Document 2, and Voice Sample, each with a 'View' link. On the right, a sample 'OFFICIAL SCORE REPORT' is shown. It features the CAEL logo, a user photo, and a table of test results.

Sub-test Results	
Reading	60
Listening	70
Writing	50
Speaking	50

Overall Band Score
60

The overall score is calculated by taking the average of the total of the scores from the four sub-tests. Overall scores are reported to the nearest band.

**Overall CAEL Band Descriptors**

80-90	<b>Expert:</b> Demonstrates a level of competence, accuracy, and effectiveness in academic/professional settings.
70	<b>Adapt:</b> Uses generally accurate language in most settings.

# How to Register for the CAEL SIVS

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*Registering your organization for CAEL SIVS is fast and easy:*

- 1 Download the Application Form**  
Download the CAEL Scores and Identity Verification System Application Form from [cael.ca/sivs](http://cael.ca/sivs).
- 2 Email the Completed Form**  
Email the completed form to [stakeholder@prometric.com](mailto:stakeholder@prometric.com) with the subject line "CAEL SIVS Application". Once received, Paragon will review your organization's form submission.
- 3 Receive SIVS Confirmation**  
Once your submission has been reviewed, Paragon will contact you and provide your organization with instructions on how to use the system.

To learn more about SIVS, and to enroll your institution, visit [cael.ca/sivs](http://cael.ca/sivs).



# From our Testing Experts

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*CAEL measures academic language proficiency. What is academic language proficiency?*

Academic success requires individuals to make sense of complex content, appropriately articulate their understanding of that content, and negotiate social interactions. The language skills, knowledge, and abilities individuals need to be successful in an academic setting is language proficiency. An individual who has academic language proficiency can understand material that is read and heard in English, and can write and speak about this material in an academic style.

As an academic English language proficiency test, CAEL:

- ✔ Measures a test taker's ability to read, write, listen, and speak in English;
- ✔ Assesses whether a test taker has acquired the ability to use English in typical academic situations; and
- ✔ Evaluates a test taker's ability to use English according to an ability scale that is related to actual language use in academic contexts.

*CAEL is an integrated skills test. What does that mean?*

Academic success requires individuals to use many language skills at the same time – read a book and make an oral presentation, or listen to a lecture and write down the questions they may have. CAEL assesses a test taker's language ability in a way that mirrors the situations individuals encounter in an academic context. The integrated task design in CAEL allows for the interaction of receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills, creating a more realistic testing environment.

CAEL tasks include:

- ✔ Speaking for academic purposes to relay information and show understanding;
- ✔ Reading academic texts of different lengths in order to synthesize or paraphrase key ideas and selectively applying information from the readings;
- ✔ Listening to mini-lectures and transferring or applying information on a topic introduced by the lecture; and,
- ✔ Incorporating what has been learned from readings and mini-lectures in formal, opinion-based responses to academic speaking and writing tasks.

The integrated speaking and writing tasks also provides test takers with common content on which to base their spoken or written responses. By providing common sources, CAEL ensures that all test takers, regardless of their background knowledge, have access to the information needed to succeed on the speaking and writing tasks. Test takers do not need and do not benefit from background knowledge of the topics covered in the test.

# From our Testing Experts

Paragon emphasizes research-lead assessment design. Paragon Working Papers, Test Reports, and Research Blogs present the findings from research; validity evidence for CAEL and CELPIP; and guidance on how to interpret test scores. For a complete list of research publications, conference presentations, working papers, and more, visit [cael.ca/research](http://cael.ca/research).

## Research Publications



PARAGON RESEARCH BLOG: CONTEXT

October 5, 2018

Paragon Research Blog: Context



ACHIEVING FAIRNESS IN DEVELOPING  
CONTENT FOR STANDARDIZED LANGUAGE  
TESTS

Paragon Research Blog: Achieving  
Fairness in Developing Content for  
Standardized Language Tests

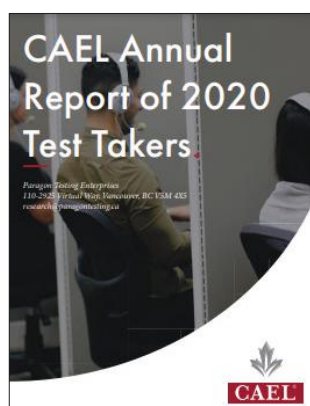


UNDERSTANDING TEST RESPONSE  
PROCESS: A STUDY OF TEST-TAKING  
STRATEGIES IN A READING

Paragon Research Blog:  
Understanding Test Response Process:  
A Study of Test-Taking Strategies in a  
Reading Comprehension Test



Linking CAEL CE Scores to  
IELTS – Academic Scores: Full Report



CAEL Annual Report of  
2020 Test Takers

# Contact Us

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Visit [cael.ca](https://cael.ca) to learn more about Canada's leading academic English language test, or email [info@cael.ca](mailto:info@cael.ca) for more information.

Follow @CAELTest on social media



[youtube.com/CAELOfficial](https://youtube.com/CAELOfficial)



[instagram.com/CAELTest](https://instagram.com/CAELTest)



[twitter.com/CAELTest](https://twitter.com/CAELTest)



[facebook.com/CAELTest](https://facebook.com/CAELTest)



[tiktok.com/CAELTest](https://tiktok.com/CAELTest)