Pre-selection Test Tool (PST) Candidate User Guide (web app version)

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1. **Introduction**

While the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Court of Justice of the European Union have their own interpretation services, recruitment of staff interpreters and selection of conference interpreting agents (ACIs) is carried out jointly. Accreditation as an ACI is obtained by passing an inter-institutional test.

The Pre-selection Test Tool is designed for candidates who have applied to become ACI. Participation in a test is by invitation only and the tool is accessible with the username and password provided by the test organizer. The tool allows candidates who have been invited to a test to log in to the system, take the test and submit their recorded interpretation.

2. **Invitation to a test**

The administrators of the system will send you an e-mail to invite you to a scheduled test. The e-mail message will specify the important details of the test, including the start and end dates, as well as your username and password that will allow you to login to the system.

**Please note that the test is only accessible during the time slot mentioned in the e-mail invitation.**

The following sections of the PST system remain accessible at any time: Contact, Help, FAQ, and Privacy Statement.

The administrators may send you follow up e-mail notifications in case there is a change in the dates of your test, or in case a test is cancelled.

Finally, the administrators will contact you by e-mail to announce the results of your test.

3. **Minimum requirements**

The minimum requirements to use the tool are:

- **Browser**: Internet Explorer 9 and above or Firefox 22 and above or Chrome 21 and above, or latest version of Safari (please note that although other browsers might be compatible as well, the tool has not been tested against them)
- **JavaScript** enabled
- **Broadband internet connection** (a minimum speed of at least 0.5 mbit/sec is recommended)
- **Flash** (minimum version 20)
- **Headset** (for audio playback and microphone recording)

After you login and before you start the test, the application performs automated checks to verify if the device you are using meets the minimal requirements listed above (see point 11 below for more information). If you would like to check your browser and flash version as well as if JavaScript is enabled even before you login to the application, you may visit an online service like [www.whatismybrowser.com](http://www.whatismybrowser.com)
4. **Instructions for test candidates**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

- If you plan to sit your test by using a Windows operation system - in order for you to produce the best possible recording result please make sure to disable the stereo mix in the speaker settings (see below how):

  1. **Right click on speaker**

  ![Image of speaker settings](image1)

  2. **Click on recording device**

  ![Image of recording devices](image2)

  3. **Right click on Stereo Mix - if the setting is present otherwise your configuration is fine for the test**

  ![Image of stereo mix settings](image3)

  4. **Click on disable**

  ![Image of disabling stereo mix](image4)
• Before taking the test, please close all other programs on your device, especially those using an internet connection.

• Check your screen saver options to make sure that your screen saver will not be activated while the test speech is running. It might disturb you if this happens during the test.

• Please always use a good quality head-mounted headset with earphones to guarantee the best possible quality of your recording. Never use the loudspeakers to listen to the speech or the integrated microphone of your device to record your interpretation. What you want to record is only your interpretation of the speech. If you put the loudspeakers on, your microphone will pick up the sound from the speakers, creating a feedback effect.

• Before you start the test, please make sure that you are in a quiet environment and that you will not be disturbed during the test. Please be aware that ambient sounds might be recorded and influence the quality of the audio file you will submit. Don’t stay too close to other electronic devices or mobile phones, even if they are switched off.

• Make sure that you record at sufficiently high volume. Please bear in mind that the evaluator will hear two channels at the same time: the original speech and your recording. It is therefore important that your recording is loud enough to hear you clearly. In the “Simulation & adjustments” step (see point 13), you will be able to test your microphone and the quality of your recording. Make sure that your microphone is properly configured. You will find more instructions on how to configure your microphone settings on the FAQ page of the tool (Question 2): https://pst.secure.europarl.europa.eu/content/faq

5. **Language switch**

The PST application is available in English, French and German. To switch between the available languages, please use the language switch control that is available as part of the banner of the application (Figure 1).

![Figure 1 - Language switch](https://pst.secure.europarl.europa.eu/content/images/language-switch.png)
6. **Login**

To take the test from your desktop or laptop, login to the PST system on [https://www.pst.secure.europarl.europa.eu](https://www.pst.secure.europarl.europa.eu).

Please enter the credentials that have been provided to you.

![Login screen](image)

**Figure 2 – Login screen**

If you have forgotten your password, please follow the steps outlined in the next section.

For security reasons, the system will automatically lock your account after 3 failed attempts to log in. If that happens please contact the helpdesk.

Please note that as a candidate, you can log on to the system only during the testing window which will be communicated to you by the test administrators. If there is no pending test (i.e. a test that has started, has not closed, and for which you have not yet submitted an interpretation) assigned to you, an error message will be displayed if you try to login with the credentials previously sent to you (Figure 5).

The following sections of the PST system remain accessible at any time: Contact, Help, FAQ, and Privacy Statement.

![No assigned test error message](image)

**Figure 5 – No assigned test error message**

7. **Forgotten Password**

To reset your password please follow these steps:

1. Click on the **Forgot your password?** option, which is below the input fields on the login page.
2. Insert your e-mail address (the one mapped to your PST account) and click on the **Reset my password** button (Figure 3).
3. The system will send you an automated e-mail message. Check the e-mail and follow the instructions specified in it (i.e. click on the link mentioned in the e-mail message).
4. Then the system will send you another automated message that will contain your new password (automatically generated). Please use this password to log in.

![Figure 3 – Forgot password](image)

8. **Index Page**

Provided that you have been assigned to a test, after logging on to the system, you will be taken to the index page on which the currently assigned tests are displayed (Figure 4). Please plug in your headset before you click on the Start button and move to the next step.

![Figure 4 - Index page assigned tests](image)

9. **Outline of the test flow**

Clicking on the **Start** button initiates the test process, which consists of a series of steps. Those steps are:

1. **Terms and conditions acceptance**
2. **Explanation of the procedure**
3. **Technical instructions**
4. **Simulation & adjustments**
5. **Test**

10. **Terms and conditions acceptance**

On this screen (Figure 6), you need to read and accept the **terms and conditions**. Read them carefully and tick the **I Accept** checkbox, which will then allow you to move to the next step.
11. **Explanation of the procedure**

This page explains the procedure that needs to be followed in order to take the test (Figure 7).

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**Figure 6 – Welcome screen**

**Figure 7 – Explanation of the procedure**
12. Technical Instructions

After clicking on the Next: Technical Instructions button you will need to enable the Adobe Flash Player plugin, which will request access to your camera (not used during the test) and microphone (Figure 8). Clicking on the Allow button is mandatory for taking the test, as otherwise it will not be possible to use your microphone to record your interpretation. Please note that the Chrome browser will display an additional request to allow recording. You should accept this as well.

After the Flash plugin is enabled, the system will run a number of automated checks. After completion of each check, a green tick is displayed next to it. If one of the automated checks is not passed, you must take the appropriate corrective action before moving on to the next step.

- If JavaScript is not enabled already, then you need to enable it. Please refer to your browser's help pages to find out how to enable JavaScript.
- If the Flash automated test is not passed, then you either need to upgrade Flash or to install it from scratch.
- If the Audio recording capability automated test is not passed then you need to check your device's hardware/software capabilities/configuration.
- If the Audio recording permission automated test is not passed then you need to allow the Flash plugin (see image above). You can go back to the previous step and then return to this step again to force the Flash plugin pop-up to be displayed again.

As well as the automated checks, you will need manually to confirm 4 other checks (Figure 9). Confirming those checks is mandatory to allow you to go on to the next step.
13. **Simulation & Adjustments**

The purpose of the simulation part of the test is to give you the opportunity to fine tune your environment and to familiarize yourself with the process before taking the real test.

**Step 1**

The purpose of the first step of the simulation is to allow you to verify that you can play back a video and to check the quality of the sound and make any necessary adjustments (Figure 10). When you are satisfied that everything is OK, please click on the Sound is OK button to move on to the next step of the process.
**Step 2**

The purpose of the second step of the simulation is to allow you to verify that you can record your voice and to check the quality of the recording and make any adjustments if necessary until you are satisfied with the result (Figure 11).

To start the recording, click on the REC button. Then start speaking into your microphone. When you are done, click on the STOP button to stop the recording. To play back your recording, click on the PLAY button. You can repeat the process by clicking on the REC button again. When you are satisfied that everything is OK, click on the Audio recording is OK button to move on to the next step of the process.

![Simulation & Adjustments](image)

Figure 11 - Test audio recording

**Step 3**

The purpose of the third step of the simulation is to simulate a real test (Figure 12). Therefore, the simulation test video starts automatically after a countdown of 5 seconds. When it does, start recording your interpretation. You can stop the recording at any point by clicking on the STOP button. Once you press on the STOP button, the recording will be compressed and uploaded to the server for processing. Then, when the merged video is ready (i.e. the original simulation video and the recording of your voice), click on the play button on the video to play back the merged file. Assess the sound quality of your recording, and if you think that you need to redo the step to make any adjustments, click on the REPEAT button and repeat the process until you are ready to go to the next step. When you are satisfied that everything is OK, click on the Simulation test is OK button to move on to the next step of the process.

Simulation test
14. Test

To start the actual test, click on the Start Test button (Figure 13). Please pay particular attention to the fact that you will only be allowed to play the test video once. If you navigate back or close the browser while the test video is running, the test will be invalid and you will not be allowed to repeat it.

Clicking on the Start Test button will trigger the 5 seconds countdown until the test video starts automatically (Figure 14).
The video starts with an introduction to the test and the explanation of some key terms. After the introduction ends, your interpretation will be recorded (Figure 15). When you are finished with recording your interpretation for the test, please click on the Complete the Test button. Please note that you can use this button at any time, even before the end of the test video, if you wish to abort the test. The system will automatically complete the test 30 seconds after the end of the test video even if you do not press on the Complete the Test button.

Then your recording is compressed and uploaded to the server (Figure 16). Please do not close the browser or leave the page until the process is finished.
Please note that, depending on the browser, the internet connection speed and other technical parameters of the device you are using, the upload of the recording file may take several minutes. Do not log out, leave the page or close the browser until you are notified that your recording has been uploaded to the server (see Figure 17).

The system will display a message telling you when it is safe to log out (Figure 17).

15. **Logout**

You can click on the **Logout** link, in order to log out from the PST application.

16. **Help, support and contact**

The banner of the PST application features links to pages that contain useful information, such as **Contact**, **Help**, **FAQ**, and the **Privacy Statement**.