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IELTS PRINCIPLES AND ASSESSMENT

**The Ultimate Guide To Improve
Your Academic English To Get
Band 9 In IELTS Test**

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Special Report: How Your IELTS Score Is Viewed, and What
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Introduction

The international English Language Testing System (IELTS) is widely recognized as a reliable means of assessing the language ability of candidates who need to study or work where English is the language of communication and owned by three partners, Cambridge ESOL; formerly the University of Cambridge local examination syndicate (UCLES), the British Council and IDP Education Australia.

IELTS Principles and Assessment has been compiled for candidates who are preparing for the IELTS test (Academic and General Training) in order to enter an academic course. It is designed both for independent study and for use as a classroom textbook which especially focused on advice, examples, models to follow and real Band 9 essays to help you get the best possible result in IELTS exam.

This book has also a summary of the ten most common mistakes in IELTS academic writing. Make sure you avoid these mistakes! By using all of the key points, you will make a huge difference to the IELTS examiner's impression of your final result.

This book is based on years of experience preparing candidates for the IELTS exam. We have found that by following these methods, a candidate can improve a Band score by up to 3 levels just by improving their test strategies.

IELTS Principles and Assessment shows you our proven strategies for each part of the Speaking Test, plus transcripts of candidates giving spoken answers at a Band 9 standard, so you can see what is possible. There are also FAQs and examples of speaking test.

WHAT IS THE IELTS TEST FORMAT?

IELTS consists of two versions:

Academic (for students wishing to study in an English-speaking university or college)

General Training (for entry to vocational programs, schools or for immigration).

All candidates take the same Listening and Speaking modules. There is a choice of reading and writing modules according to whether a candidate is taking the Academic or General Training version of the test.

Speaking

It consists of three parts. It is conducted by a trained examiner. The Speaking test of every test taker is recorded.

Part 1: Introduction and Interview

Part 2: Long Turn

Part 3: Discussion

Time: 11-14 minutes No. of Questions: Variable Marks: Not specified

Listening

It consists of **four sections**, each with **1 recording**. Each recording comprises **often questions**. The test taker can hear the recording only once. The questions are designed in such a way that their answers appear in order when the recording is played.

Time: 30 minutes No. of Questions: 40 Marks: 1 mark per question
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IELTS Academic Test

Reading

It consists of three passages. These passages usually cover topics of general interest.

Time: 60 minutes
No. of Questions: 40
Marks: 1 mark per question

Writing

It consists of two compulsory tasks and it must be answered as per the given instructions.

Time: 60 minutes
No. of Questions: 2

IELTS General Training Test

Reading

It consists of three sections. The texts in these sections are taken from notices, advertisements, leaflets, newspapers, instruction manuals, books or magazines. The language and difficulty level of these texts is higher as compared to Academic.

Time: 60 minutes
No. of Questions: 40
Marks: 1 mark per question

Writing

It consists of two tasks of general interest. The test taker is advised to complete both the tasks.

Time: 60 minutes No. of Questions: 2

Chapter 1

Speaking Strategies

Frequently Asked Questions About The IELTS Speaking Test

What happens in the Speaking Test?

The Speaking Test lasts roughly 11 minutes, and has 3 parts. Strategies for each part are explained fully in this book. You (the candidate) will enter a room where an examiner is sitting at a table; the candidate and the examiner are the only people in the room. Your conversation with the examiner is recorded in order to verify the grade that the examiner gives you. The examiner will check your ID and provide you with paper and a pencil to make notes during Part 2 of the test.

What happens in Part 1?

The examiner will ask you a series of questions about some part of your life, for example your home country or your plans for study and work.

What happens in Part 2?

The examiner gives you a topic to talk about, related to something in your past or as present life. You have 1 minute to prepare, and then you need to speak on the topic for between 1 and 2 minutes.

What happens in Part 3?

The examiner will discuss with you a general topic related to the personal topic in Part 2.

How does the examiner mark my speaking?

The examiner is looking for full answers to the questions asked using a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures. The examiner will expect your answers to be relevant, well-structured and accurate. This is why you need to use the strategies we teach in this book. The examiner will make notes on a pad while you are speaking; don't try to see what the examiner is writing!

Chapter One – Speaking Strategies

What are the examiners like?

IELTS examiners are trained to be friendly, professional and to make you feel comfortable. They are used to candidates being slightly nervous, and they will try to help you relax.

You should try to build a professional rapport with the examiner as soon as you meet him/ her. You should smile, say ‘*Very nice to meet you*’ and shake the examiner’s hand. You should sit at the table in a professional way, as if you were at a seminar or a meeting, placing your hands in view and leaning slightly forward to maintain eye contact. This might be different from your national culture, but it will show the examiner that you are alert and interested in the test.

How fast should I speak?

Try to speak at a normal professional speed. ‘Professional’ in this context means the way you would speak in a seminar or business meeting in an English-speaking situation. Please note that this maybe slower than the speed you naturally speak when talking in your mother tongue language. Don’t get very excited or emotional, or make gestures which could be confusing, such as banging the table with your hand.

Should I speak in a very formal or academic way?

No! Candidates sometimes think that they need to speak in the same way as they would write in the IELTS academic writing test, for example by using words such as ‘*therefore*’ and ‘*nevertheless*’. In the speaking test, this is optional, but not necessary. It’s more important to use the most advanced and natural English that you can, and organize your answers well.

I speak English with quite a strong accent. Is this a problem?

This is not normally a problem. Many people from English speaking countries have strong local accents. The only problem is if your pronunciation makes it difficult for the examiner to understand your speech.

I make some grammatical mistakes when I speak English? Is this a problem?

If you make a few mistakes and these errors don't stop the examiner understanding you, this is not a major problem. We have seen many cases of candidates who have a strong accent and who make some small grammatical mistakes, who still go on to achieve band 8 or 9 in IELTS Speaking. The problem arises if your errors stop the examiner from understanding what you mean.

Chapter One – Speaking Strategies**STRATEGIES FOR PART 1 OF THE SPEAKING TEST**

In Part 1 (which lasts roughly 3 to 4 minutes) the examiner asks you a series of questions about your life and/or your current situation. These questions may be on a single topic (e.g. your leisure interests) or on a variety of topics (e.g. your leisure interests, your friends and your living accommodation.)

Please note that the answers from this candidate do not contain any grammatical mistakes. Also, it is not a problem that the candidate asked for an explanation of the word *'festival.'* The reason that the mark would be quite low is because the information that the candidate provided was too basic, and the candidate did not expand on his initial comment.

How to answer the part 1 questions using a 2-step process

Now here is an example of the same questions from the same examiner to a different candidate. This candidate would receive a Band 9 score for this part of the test.

Examiner: Let's talk about your home country. What is the climate like?

Now here is an example of the same questions from the same examiner to a different candidate. This candidate would receive a Band 9 score for this part of the test.

Examiner: Let's talk about your home country. What is the climate like?

Candidate: It's generally hot and humid, although it rains heavily in October. This has a big influence on our way of life and our industries because work tends to stop in the rainy season.

Thank you. What are the main industries?

The main industry is the production of cars and buses, which are mostly exported. Plastic items, especially toys, are important exports as well. In fact, we tend to export most of the products that we manufacture.

I see. And what are the main festivals?

Sorry, can you explain what the word 'festival' means?

It means a special time when communities and families celebrate something.

Thanks. Well, our principal festivals are religious, because most people in my country follow the same religion. We have a three day festival in summer, when people exchange gifts. We also have a national independence day in January. On both festivals, families celebrate together and the shops close for several days. So we need to plan these events carefully, as you can imagine.

In this second example, the candidate was using more advanced vocabulary (e.g. humid, tend to, exchange.) This is one reason why the mark would be higher. However, the main reason the Band score is high is because the candidate used a 2-step process to answer the questions.

Let's explain what this means. The candidate said:

It's generally hot and humid, although it rains heavily in October. This has a big influence on our way of life and our industries because work tends to stop in the rainy season.

Here the candidate describes the climate and then gives a second, more general piece of information about the climate, telling us about its influence.

The main industry is the production of cars and buses, which are mostly exported. Plastic items, especially toys, are important exports as well. In fact, we tend to export most of the products that we manufacture.

Here, the candidate does something similar: he answers the question and then gives a second, more general piece of information, showing that he has thought about the nature of his country's industries.

He does the same thing in the answer to the third question about festivals, with a first piece of information (**our principal festivals**

Chapter One – Speaking Strategies

are religious...) supported by a further comment (**So, we need to plan these events carefully...**) showing that he understands the situation.

This is what we call the 2-step process for Part 1. This means that you give an initial piece of information, and then a further, more general piece of information showing that you understand the situation or that you have considered the situation. The answers are roughly 3 sentences in length. You don't need to give more than 3 sentences for a Part 1 answer.

IELTS Principles and Assessment has been compiled for candidates preparing for the IELTS test (Academic and General Training) in order to enter an academic course. It is designed both for independent/ self-study and for use as a classroom textbook.

Key features

- This book gives you a structural process to use with data essays, and It gives you some examples of Task 1 essays written to Band 9 standard, with examiners' comments explaining to you why the essays are so successful.
- This book shows you how to analyze the Task 2 question, and we explain the different types of essay you may be asked to write. Most importantly, this book provides you with some examples of Task 2 essays, all written to Band 9 standard. Each essay also has examiners' comments, which explain why the writing is Band 9 level.
- 10 Modules which explain the key concepts of Academic English. Each module has an IELTS Task 2 question, identical to the ones you will meet in the exam. Each module has a model essay written to Band 9 standard, and then three key grammar points to explain why the essay demonstrates a good use of Academic English.
- 10 IELTS vocabulary module topics that each of our ten modules summarises the various elements of a topic, and gives an example Academic Task 2 Writing Task exactly like the ones you will see in the exam. It also explains how to answer the writing Task. Each module then teaches a large amount of vocabulary related to the module topic, contained in a Band 9 model essay so that you see how the words are used in IELTS Writing.
- This book shows you our proven strategies for each part of the Speaking Test, plus transcripts of candidates giving spoken answers at a Band 9 standard, so you can see what is possible.
- This book gives you a structural process to use with Listening strategies, and It gives you some examples of 3 steps Listening to Band 9 standard, with examiners' comments explaining to you why the answers are so successful.
- The product you are reading now is much more than a study guide- it is a tactical weapon designed to exploit weaknesses in the test itself, and help you avoid the most common errors students make when taking the IELTS.