

# NET LANGUAGES

## IELTS GENERAL TRAINING Preparation Course Guide for tutors

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# A: Overview of course design and management

## 1. Introduction

The Net Languages IELTS Preparation Course is an intensive and comprehensive course designed to prepare candidates for the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) exam. It is aimed specifically at candidates taking the **IELTS General Training Module**. The General Training Module is for people who need to communicate in English in a wide range of social or work environments, including those studying secondary education, gaining work experience or doing training programmes in different countries, as well as for immigration purposes.

The aims of the course are as follows:

- To familiarise candidates with the structure, contents and procedure of the IELTS exam
- To practise essential strategies and skills needed for the exam
- To give candidates effective feedback, support and guidance in their preparation for the exam, and in preparation for future studies.

## 2. Course structure

The Net Languages IELTS Preparation Course follows closely the structure of the actual IELTS exam. The course consists of five preparation modules and a practice test:

- Introduction
- Listening module
- Reading module
- Writing module
- Speaking module
- Practice test

The practice test is self-marking in the listening and reading subtests and tutor-graded in the writing and speaking subtests. In addition, candidates receive detailed feedback on the two exam compositions, along with a live simulation of the speaking subtest itself and feedback on their performance.

In all parts of the course there are detailed explanations and discovery exercises, useful tips and strategies for candidates and a wealth of interactive practice material. This includes a variety of different reading and listening texts, and extensive use of video clips of sample interviews from the speaking subtest. A wide range of exercise types and authentic exam tasks aim at providing opportunities for genuine practice, while motivating candidates with

a high degree of participation at all stages. Tutor support is provided in the writing and speaking modules.

See below (and Part B) for a detailed breakdown of each module.

### 3. Course breakdown

Total study time: 20-25 hours.

<b>Introduction</b> An IELTS overview Study time: 30 minutes
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<b>Listening Module</b> 4 units; 14 extended listening texts Study time: 4-5 hours	<b>Reading Module</b> 5 units; 8 extended reading texts Study time: 4-5 hours
<b>Writing Module</b> 6 units Study time: 4-5 hours	<b>Speaking Module</b> 7 units Study time: 4-5 hours



<b>Practice Test</b> Study time: 2 hours 45 minutes
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As outlined above, **tutor-student contact takes place during the writing and speaking modules and during the practice test module.** During the writing module, students send two written tasks to their tutor, corresponding to the two parts of the writing subtest of the IELTS exam. During the speaking module, there are two phone tutorials (each lasting around 20 minutes) in which students practise the different sections of the speaking part of the exam.

As part of the practice test, students receive email feedback on the writing subtest and complete the oral interview for the speaking subtest with their tutor by phone or Internet phone. Students then receive written email feedback on their performance during the oral interview.

NB: Although the aim of the pedagogical guide is to provide tutors with an overview of the course and the information required to tutor students, it is strongly recommended that tutors take time to look carefully through the material online before beginning to tutor students.

#### **4. How are students graded?**

Feedback for the introduction, listening and reading modules is built into the course and does not require any tutor input. For the writing and speaking modules of the course, students receive detailed feedback from their tutor by email. This feedback focuses on students' ability to put into practice and apply what they have studied during the course. For coursework, students do not receive a score based on the IELTS test criteria.

Feedback for the listening and reading modules of the practice test is also built into the course and does not require tutor input. However, you can ask the students how they got on in these modules.

Students receive detailed tutor feedback for the writing and speaking sections of the practice test. In these sections they are also given an approximate grade according to the IELTS exam criteria.

#### **5. Sample marks and written work**

Sample answers to writing tasks 1 and 2 of the writing module of the IELTS exam.

## A. Writing task 1 – a sample question and answers with feedback

### WRITING TASK 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

**You have decided to apply for a job as a monitor at Nature World Adventure Park that was advertised online on the website Jobs Abroad. The advertisement was posted by Mr James Young, Activities Manager at Nature World Adventure Park, in Queensland, Australia. In your letter to Mr Young:**

**explain why you are writing  
describe your qualifications and experience**

**and explain how they can contact you.**

You DO NOT need to write any addresses.

Write at least 150 words.

### SAMPLE ANSWER 1:

Dear Mr Young,

I am writing to you to apply for a job that I saw advertised online on the site Jobs Abroad. The job is for a monitor at Nature World Adventure Park.

I am from Thessaloniki, in Greece, and am a university graduate with a high level of English, as I have studied English since primary school and also have family in Australia and have always communicated with them in English. I have trained as an adventure activities monitor here in Greece. In addition, for the past two years I have worked on summer camps for teenagers, supervising adventure activities and camping excursions. I enjoy this kind of work very much and have found that my training, experience and enthusiasm equip me very well for a job such as this.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you would like more information, or would like to organise a telephone interview. My email address is amisko@mail.gr.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Alexis Misko

(163 words)

### Marking criteria and feedback

## Band: high 9

**Task fulfilment:** Does the student follow the instructions and provide the required information?

*-Yes, this letter contains all the required information and is clearly organised. It is also written in an appropriate style and follows standard letter conventions.*

**Coherence and cohesion:** Is the writing well organised and logically linked?

*-Yes. The text is logical, cohesive and very easy to understand.*

**Vocabulary:** Does the student use a range of appropriate vocabulary?

*-Yes. The student has used a range of appropriate vocabulary effectively and correctly.*

**Grammar:** Are sentences formed appropriately and accurately?

*-Yes. The language used is appropriate and, in fact, there are no grammatical errors.*

## SAMPLE ANSWER 2:

Dear Mr Young,

I am writing about the work for a monitor at Nature World Adventure Park.

I am Greek and I am a university graduate. My English is good because I study since primary school and I have family in Australia, too. I have a training as an adventure activities monitor. As well for two years I have worked on summer camps for teenagers. I like this work and I am perfect for this job.

Please, you can email me if you would like more information. My email address is amisko@mail.gr. I am free for a phone interview if you like.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Alexis Misko

(113 words)

## Marking criteria and feedback

### Band: 6

**Task fulfilment:** Does the student follow the instructions and give a clear and relevant description of the information?

*-Yes, the required information is given and is clearly presented. However, the letter is under the required word limit, and more detailed information could be provided.*

**Coherence and cohesion:** Is the writing well organised and logically linked?

*-Yes. In general the text is logical, but there is minimal cohesion, linking sentences and information.*

**Vocabulary:** Does the student use a range of appropriate vocabulary?

*-The student has used a limited range of appropriate vocabulary and there is some inaccuracy in the choice of words.*

**Grammar:** Are sentences formed appropriately and accurately?

*-The language used is generally appropriate, though there are a number of grammatical errors, some of which make the message unclear.*

## **B. Writing task 2 – a sample question and answers with feedback**

### WRITING TASK 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

**The use of private cars dominates most large cities in the world, causing a negative effect on the quality of life for the majority of the people who live in these cities. Alternative forms of transport should be encouraged and international laws introduced to control car ownership and use.**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree?**

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

### **SAMPLE ANSWER 1:**

In my opinion, the use of private cars in large cities around the world is becoming less and less viable and is no longer a sustainable solution to the transport needs of people who live in or near large cities. There is a wealth of evidence showing that our cities are being choked by ever-increasing traffic, affecting our health, mobility and quality of life, not to mention the city building and the environment.

On one hand, it is argued that the use of private cars is a question of choice and that there is a lack of alternatives, such as efficient public transport that can cater for individual needs. However, on the other hand, this option is not viable in the long term, and governments must now take steps to reduce the use of cars in our cities. This has already happened to a certain extent in London and Paris, where the use of private cars is restricted in the inner city.

So, how can this change be brought on? Well, I believe that it must happen on multiple levels. First of all, investment should be made in public transport options, making them more viable and attractive to city residents. Then, the use of private cars should be discouraged by using restrictions and taxes and introducing

incentives to use public transport. Finally, ongoing development of alternative transport models should be encouraged, such as car-sharing, improved taxi services and environmentally friendly transport options. Ideally these changes would be effected at a local level, but each country also has a responsibility to reduce CO2 emission levels and pollution in general, so effective international law is also needed.

(275 words)

## Marking criteria and feedback

### Band: high 9

**Ideas, arguments and evidence:** Does the student evaluate different arguments and ideas and compare or contrast them effectively?

*-Yes. Evaluation is very concise and effective, as are the arguments and personalisation (speaking from experience and giving evidence).*

**Communicative competence:** Does the student organise the text logically and present his/her ideas clearly and coherently?

*-Yes. The text is very logical and coherent, both in terms of the development of the arguments presented and the language used to connect them.*

**Vocabulary:** Does the student use a range of appropriate vocabulary?

*-Yes. There is an excellent range of vocabulary here, and only the occasional inaccuracy. Errors do not, however, make it hard for the reader to understand the message at any point.*

**Grammar:** Does the writing demonstrate a variety of sentence structures that are reasonably accurate?

*-Yes. The text is highly accurate and demonstrates a wide range of language used with apparent ease.*

### SAMPLE ANSWER 2:

In short, yes I agree with this opinion, the use of private cars in large cities around the world is becoming a big problem for us all and not just the people who live in the large cities, which are noisy, contaminated and waste our times stuck in traffic congestions.

On one hand, people say that they should have the choose to use a private car or not. They say that it is their right. They say that there are no good alternatives, such as good public transport that can be used at all times of the day. On the other hand, there is the point of view that this choose is not possible in the long term, and that governments must now take steps to reduce the use of cars in our cities. This already happens in cities like London and Paris, where the use of private cars is restricted.

In my opinion, it is essential now to think about our children and plan for the future, plan for a cleaner, better world that doesn't depend in the automobiles and petrol.



There are many alternatives. Now governments and companies must invest in them and make them a reality, invest in public transport and not in bigger roads for more and more private cars. This will be better for the all community. The use of private cars must be discouraged, for example, with laws and taxes, and public transport should become cheaper. It could be free! If people have more mobility, they are happier and more productive and life is better. Other alternatives include car-sharing, improved taxi services and transport that doesn't damage the environs, like electric trams and buses. International laws are needed, because the countries like the United States, Australia and China, make the most pollution, have the most cars but don't do anything to change this situation.

(294 words )

## Marking criteria and feedback

### Band: 7

**Ideas, arguments and evidence:** Does the student evaluate different arguments and ideas and compare or contrast them effectively?

*-The student's introductory paragraph is to the point and clear. She argues quite effectively and reflects on personal experiences and presents examples to illustrate her point.*

**Communicative competence:** Does the student organise the text logically and present his/her ideas clearly and coherently?

*- In general, the text is logically organised and easy to follow. Ideas are presented clearly with few points where slight reader confusion can occur.*

**Vocabulary:** Does the student use a range of appropriate vocabulary?

*- Yes. The student has used a range of appropriate vocabulary. There are some inaccuracies, but in general they do not lead to confusion.*

**Grammar:** Does the writing demonstrate a variety of sentence structures that are reasonably accurate?

*-Yes. The writing demonstrates a variety of sentence structures that are reasonably accurate. There are occasional mistakes, but these do not impede communication.*

## 6. How should records be kept?

It is important to keep detailed records of all student contact and progress. We recommend that each tutor keep the following:

1. A folder in their email inbox for each student, where they keep all email correspondence
2. A separate file for each student in Excel, Access or Word with the following information:

<b>Student name</b>	Ricardo Pons
<b>Registration date</b>	09/04/03
<b>Email address</b>	ricardo@telia.com
<b>Mail from tutor</b>	10/04/03 Introductory email
<b>Mail from student</b>	12/04/03 Reply

**Phone contact**  
**Test scores**  
practice test)

23/04/03 First phone tutorial  
(for the writing and speaking section of the

## **B: Module-by-module guide for tutors**

Each section of the module-by-module guide contains:

- A summary of the module contents
- Detailed information about tutorial contact
- Guidelines for marking students' written work

Although tutors interact with and provide feedback to students only during the writing and speaking modules of the course, this section of this pedagogical guide provides information related to the contents of *all* the modules that students complete.

The course material for the Net Languages IELTS General Training Preparation Course is divided into five modules:

- Introduction
- Listening module
- Reading module
- Writing module
- Speaking module

### **Introduction**

#### **Aims**

The aim of the introductory module is to provide students with key information about the IELTS exam. This includes:

- Background information about the rules and regulations of the IELTS test
- Information about what each of the four sections of the test entails
- Examples of typical task types students encounter in the IELTS test
- Information on how students are assessed

### **Listening module**

#### **Aims**

The aims of this section of the course are:

- To introduce and practise the different task types included in the listening subtest
- To practise the skills needed to approach the listening subtest confidently and effectively
- To provide students with basic strategies to enable them to complete this section of the test

## **Contents**

### **Unit 1**

- A: Predicting answers
- B: Revising numbers
- C: The alphabet and spelling aloud
- D: Note completion

### **Unit 2**

- A: Labelling a map
- B: Paraphrasing
- C: Table completion
- D: Anticipating what you are about to hear

### **Unit 3**

- A: Matching
- B: Making predictions
- C: Reading instructions carefully
- D: Common collocations

### **Unit 4**

- A: Summary completion
- B: Stages and signposts
- C: Labelling a diagram
- D: Opinions and facts

## **Module Test**

Test

## **Reading module**

### **Aims**

The aims of this section of the course are:

- To review general information and advice as to how to approach the reading subtest
- To introduce and practise the different task types included
- To practise the skills needed to approach the reading subtest confidently and effectively
- To provide students with basic strategies that will enable them to complete this section of the test

## **Contents**

### **Unit 1**

- A: General information about the reading module

B: Matching tasks  
C: Completion tasks  
D: Other tasks

### **Unit 2**

A: Matching information to advertisements  
B: Understanding notices

### **Unit 3**

A: Locating information (1)  
B: Practise True/False/Not given tasks  
C: Understanding job descriptions

### **Unit 4**

A: Reading longer texts  
B: Dealing with difficult or unknown vocabulary  
C: Locating information (2)

### **Unit 5**

A: Practise reading for gist  
B: Matching opinions to people  
C: How to approach table completion tasks

### **Module Test**

Test

## **Writing module**

### **Aims**

The aims of this section of the course are:

- To practise the skills needed to approach the writing subtest effectively
- To provide students with basic strategies to enable them to complete this section of the test
- To introduce and practise the different task types included
- For students to send written work to their tutor and to receive feedback

### **Contents**

The writing module of the course consists of six units.

#### **Unit 1**

A: An overview of the writing test  
B: Appropriate language for Task 1 and Task 2

#### **Unit 2**

A: Spelling and punctuation  
B: Words that are sometimes confused

C: Avoiding errors

### **Unit 3**

A: Answering the Task 1 question

B: Appropriate style

C: Organising your letter

D: Review useful language (**Task 1 tutorial**)

### **Unit 4**

A: Features of a successful Task 1 letter

B: Proofing and correcting a letter

### **Unit 5**

A: Analysing Task 2

B: Organising your ideas

### **Unit 6**

A: Text cohesion

B: Staging

C: More useful language (**Task 2 tutorial**)

### **Module Test**

Test

## **Tutorials**

There are two written tutorials that students complete during the writing module, one at the end of Unit 3 and another at the end of Unit 6.

### **Tutorial 1 (at the end of Unit 3)**

**Tutorial 1 practises Task 1** of the writing subtest. Students prepare and write their task in section 3.D of the writing module. Here is the tutorial:

---

#### **Write to your tutor**

Read a sample question for Task 1 of the writing test.

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

**A friend has agreed to look after your house and pet while you are on holiday.**

**Write a letter to your friend. In your letter**

- **give contact details for when you are away**
- **give instructions about how to care for your pet**
- **describe other household duties.**

You DO NOT need to write any addresses.

Write at least 150 words.

Remember, you have only about 20 minutes to complete the writing task. Incorporate language you have practised in this section. When you have completed the task, check your spelling and grammar.

Send the completed task to your tutor.

---

The aim of this tutorial is for students to practise the skills and language they have studied in the first half of the writing module, focusing on Task 1 of the writing test. Tutors should pay special attention to the following areas:

- Do students' answers meet the requirements of the task?
- Is their answer logically organised and coherent?
- Is the text cohesive? That is, have students linked ideas and information effectively?
- Does the letter follow standard letter conventions and is it in the appropriate style?
- Is language used accurately?

Tutor feedback should answer these questions. Error correction can focus on helping students with the language areas included above. Students have worked with a number of model letters in Unit 3 of the writing module. It is expected that they will use these sample answers as a model for their own Task 1 letter. **Give the student an indication of the band score that their letter would be awarded.**

Model answer

*Hi Laura,*

*How are you? I hope you are well. Thanks so much for your kind offer to look after my flat and Ginger, the cat.*

*I am writing to give you my contact details while I am away. As I'll be staying at a campsite, I won't have an internet connection. However, you can phone*

me at any time on my mobile: 644 345 929, or on the campsite landline: 0067 333 765.

*To look after Ginger you just have to make sure that he has fresh water each day and put more food in his bowl whenever it's empty. Apart from that, you'll need to change the sand in his toilet box every four or five days. Sorry! There is a sack of "Kitty Litter" in the cupboard next to the fridge.*

*Also, you'll need to take out the rubbish on Wednesday night, as they come to collect it on Thursday morning. If you could water the plants every few days, that would be great, too.*

*Thanks again for your help. I hope you have a nice stay in the flat.*

*All the best,*

*Jason*  
(181 Words)

## **Tutorial 2** (at the end of Unit 6)

Tutorial 2 practises Task 2 of the writing test. Students prepare and write their task in Unit 6C of the writing module. Here is the tutorial:

---

### **Write to your tutor**

Now you are going to practise Task 2 of the writing test. Remember the steps you will need to follow.

- **Analyse the question** and identify **key points**.
- Decide on your overall **response** and **approach**, including evidence and personal experience.
- **Organise your ideas** into paragraphs.
- When you write, remember to **link ideas** in sentences, between sentences and between paragraphs.

Look at the Task 2 question below.

Write about the following topic:

**A large proportion of the public health budget is spent on patients suffering from diseases caused by alcohol and tobacco consumption, while the companies that produce these products continue to make substantial profits.**

**To what extent do you think that these companies should be financially responsible for the cost of the diseases they cause?**



Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

Remember, you have only about 40 minutes to complete the writing task. Incorporate language you have practised in this module. When you have completed the task, check your spelling and grammar.

Send the completed task to your tutor.

---

As with the first writing task, the aim here is for students to practise the skills and language that they have studied during the module. Tutor feedback should again focus on the following areas:

- Do students' answers meet the requirements of the task?
- Is their answer logically organised and coherent?
- Is the text cohesive? That is, have students used linkers accurately and appropriately?
- Have students used language and vocabulary they have practised in the second half of the writing module?

Tutor feedback should answer these questions. Feedback should also include error correction, which can focus on helping students with the language areas included above, as well as providing feedback on other language the tutor thinks would improve the student's answer. Again, as with the first writing task there are sample essays in Units 5 and 6, which students can look at and use when they write their own task. **Give the student an indication of the band score an essay like this would be awarded.**

### Model answer

*It is common knowledge that the treatment of diseases caused by tobacco and alcohol consumption use up a large proportion of the public health budget and resources. However, it is not clear up to what point companies that produce and sell these products should be made financially responsible for this drain on the public health system.*

*Should these companies be made to contribute to the cost of the diseases that they cause? It is difficult to answer this question. Couldn't the same be argued about the loss of life and injuries caused by car accidents, that automobile manufacturers should pay the cost of treating road accident victims? And what about people who simply overeat? It is generally accepted that obesity and heart disease also cause a drain on medical services. Are food companies responsible for that? What's more, it could be argued that the*

*taxes collected from the sale of tobacco and alcohol are already contributing to the health system.*

*On the other hand, it could be said that all companies have a responsibility towards society. In the end, each person has the freedom to choose whether or not to smoke or drink to excess, but the companies that sell these products should make the possible dangers explicit, in both their advertising and in public health campaigns. In addition, what must be taken into consideration is the fact that these companies have been making large profits for decades – decades of not telling the truth about the products that they sell and not contributing fairly to the cost that these products impose on the public health system.*

*To sum up, I believe that the question to be addressed here is one of ethics, one of doing the right thing for society, placing the health and well-being of the population over the blind quest for profit at all cost.*

## **Speaking module**

### **Aims**

The aims of this section of the course are:

- To practise the skills needed to approach the speaking subtest effectively
- To provide students with basic strategies to enable them to complete this section of the test
- To introduce and practise the different task types included
- To prepare students for two tutorials designed to practise for the test

### **Contents**

The speaking module of the course consists of seven units:

#### **Unit 1**

A: The structure and assessment

B: Sample interviews (Part 1 of the speaking test)

#### **Unit 2**

A: Answering questions

B: Appropriate responses (**Speaking Tutorial 1**)

#### **Unit 3**

A: Descriptions

B: Sample interviews (expressing likes and dislikes)

#### **Unit 4**

A: The second part of the speaking test

B: Planning what you will say

### **Unit 5**

A: Compare and contrast

B: Narratives

### **Unit 6**

A: The third part of the speaking test

B: Language of opinions

C: Describing change

### **Unit 7**

A: Speculating

B: Discussing problems and solutions (**Speaking Tutorial 2**)

## **Module Test**

Test

## **Tutorials**

There are two telephone tutorials during the speaking module, one in Unit 2 and one at the end of Unit 7. They take place at the following points:

### **Speaking Tutorial 1:**

In Unit 2, Part A, exercise 7

### **Speaking Tutorial 2:**

This is prepared during Units 4, 5, 6 and 7, and takes place at the end of Unit 7, Part B.

### **Phone Tutorial 1**

Tutorial 1 focuses on the first part of the speaking subtest – the introduction and interview. To follow up (see additional questions below), the tutor can give feedback on the student's initial performance and tips on areas to practise. Finally, the student has the opportunity to ask any questions s/he has about the course or the exam.

Here is the tutorial:

---

### **First tutorial**

Now you are going to practise Part 1 of the speaking test. In this part you have four to five minutes to talk about familiar topics. Prepare your answers to the following questions:

1. Where do you come from?
2. What is it like?

3. Do you have a big family?
4. What do you do?
5. What do you like best about your job?
6. What did you study (are you studying) at university?
7. Did (Do) you enjoy it?
8. What was (is) the most interesting part of your studies?

Now contact your tutor to arrange your speaking tutorial.

### (Additional questions)

1. Why are you interested in doing the IELTS exam?
2. When would you like to take the exam?
3. Do you have any questions about the exam or the Preparation Course?

The aim here is for students to practise the skills and language that they have studied so far during the speaking module. Tutor feedback should focus on the following areas:

- Does the student provide full and appropriate answers to the tutor's questions?
- Does the student show grammatical accuracy and a good range of vocabulary?
- Fluency – do the student's responses ever strain the patience of the questioner?
- Does the student's pronunciation ever strain intelligibility of his/her utterances?
- How well does the student manage the interaction with the tutor? That is, can s/he negotiate meaning or ask for clarification as required?

Tutor feedback should answer these questions. Feedback should be given orally at the end of the telephone tutorial, and more detailed feedback should be sent to the student by email. Feedback should also include some error correction, providing feedback on language areas the tutor thinks could improve the student's performance in the speaking test. Give the student **an approximate grade** according to the IELTS exam criteria. (See the table of approximate equivalences of Net Languages courses and a summary of the IELTS criteria below.)

### Table of approximate equivalences of Net Languages courses

General English courses	IELTS band scores	Council of Europe framework
Pre-Elementary	0 - 2.0	A1
Elementary	2.5 - 3.5	A2
Lower Intermediate	4.0 - 4.5	B1

Mid Intermediate	4.5 - 5.0	B1+
Upper Intermediate	5.5 - 6.0	B2
Pre-Advanced	6.0 - 6.5	B2+
Advanced	7.0 - 8.0	C1
Proficiency	8.5 - 9.0	C2

**The IELTS 9-band scale:**

<b>9:</b>	<b>Expert user</b> Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
<b>8:</b>	<b>Very good user</b> Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
<b>7:</b>	<b>Good user</b> Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
<b>6:</b>	<b>Competent user</b> Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
<b>5:</b>	<b>Modest user</b> Has partial command of the language. Copes with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.
<b>4:</b>	<b>Limited user</b> Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
<b>3:</b>	<b>Extremely limited user</b> Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
<b>2:</b>	<b>Intermittent user</b> No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty in understanding spoken and written English.
<b>1:</b>	<b>Non-user</b> Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few

isolated words.

## Phone Tutorial 2

Tutorial 2 focuses on the other sections of the speaking test: the long individual turn and the two-way discussion. Students prepare the tasks for this tutorial at the following points of this module:

**Unit 4, Part B, exercise 2** (Using prompt cards)

**Unit 5, Part B, exercise 7** (Narratives)

**Unit 6, Part C, exercise 2** (Describing changes)

**Unit 7, Part A, exercise 5** (Speculating)

Here are the details for each task:

---

- **Unit 4, Part B, exercise 2** (Using prompt cards – Part 2 of the test.)

In the tutorial at the end of this section, you will practise speaking about these cards with your tutor. For each of the cards, plan a short talk.

### CARD 3

Describe your experience of education.

You should say:     where you went to school/university  
                              what a class you took was like  
                              what subjects you have studied in your education

and explain whether you liked school and why/why not.

#### *Rounding-off questions*

- Did you learn useful skills during your education?
- Did your education prepare you for work or further studies?

## CARD 4

Talk about a person that you admire.

You should say:    who the person is  
                              where you met this person  
                              what characteristics you most like about them

and explain why you admire this person.

### *Rounding-off questions*

- What did you learn from this person?
- How do you apply what you learnt in what you do?

In the tutorial at the end of this section, you will practise speaking about these cards with your tutor. For each of the cards, plan a short talk. For Card 3, try the linear approach to note-making, and for Card 4, try the mind map approach.

While making the notes, think about which method you prefer; and during the tutorial, again, reflect on which notes gave you a more effective basis for your talk.

Card 3

NOTES

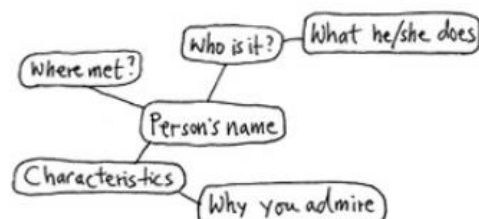
Where? (school/university)

Kinds of schools?

Subjects?

Liked? Why?

Card 4



- **Unit 5, Part B, exercise 7** (Narratives)

Now think of a favourite pet that you had (or, if you haven't had any pets, a favourite object). Try to remember a few details about the pet (how you decided to have a pet, where you got it, what it was like, one or two events...).

Write down five to ten verbs that you might use to tell the story of your pet.

Now write the story, ensuring that you use a combination of the **past simple**, **past continuous** and **past perfect**.

At the end of the unit, you will have a tutorial and your tutor will ask you to tell your story.

- **Unit 6, Part C, exercise 2** (Describing changes)

Think about the following topics and make some notes about the changes you could discuss.

- A capital city you know well
- Ways of spending leisure time
- Forms of entertainment
- The working world
- Eating habits
- Families now

You will need your notes for the second tutorial with your tutor. Before the tutorial, work out what you think of these developments – in the exam, you may be expected to describe changes and also to express an opinion about them.

- **Unit 7, Part A, exercise 5** (Speculating)

Now let's think about the IELTS exam. The examiner might ask you to speculate about many different things. Look at the following questions and think about what you might be able to say in response.

Why do you think people continue to drive their cars everywhere, even though they know it causes pollution?  
(Example: It might be because...)

Why are there so many more universities today than in the past?  
(Example: It could be because...)

In France, people are starting to move out of the cities and back to the villages. Why do you think this is?  
(Example: Perhaps they...)



Make notes of your answers. Your tutor might ask you these questions in the second tutorial at the end of this section.

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As in the first telephone tutorial, the aim here is for students to practise the skills and language that they have studied so far during the speaking module.

### **Tutor guide to phone tutorial 2**

The phone tutorial should be structured in the following way:

1. Greetings ask if the student is ready and prepared
2. Practise part 2 of the test (individual long turn) 2 prompt cards 1-2 minutes for each point and ask a few questions at end of turn:
  - a) Describe your experience of education.
  - b) Talk about a person that you admire.
3. Practise parts 3 of the test – further questions on topic of task 2 (2-way discussion). In this case students get the opportunity to practise the topics they have prepared:
  - a) tell me your story about your favourite pet or object
  - b) what do you think about the changes in:
    - A capital city you know well
    - Ways of spending leisure time
    - Forms of entertainment
    - The working world
    - Eating habits
    - Families now

Why do you think people continue to drive their cars everywhere, even though they know it causes pollution? Question that gives rise to speculation.

(Example: It might be because...)

Tutor feedback should focus on the following areas:

- Does the student provide full and appropriate answers to the tutor's questions?
- Does the student show grammatical accuracy and a good range of vocabulary?
- Fluency – do the student's responses ever strain the patience of the questioner?
- Does the student's pronunciation ever strain intelligibility of his/her utterances?
- How well does the student manage the interaction with the tutor. That is, can s/he negotiate meaning or ask for clarification as required?

Tutor feedback should answer these questions. Feedback should be given orally at the end of the telephone tutorial, and more detailed feedback should be sent to the student by email. Feedback should also include some error correction, providing feedback on language areas the tutor thinks could

improve the student's performance in the speaking test. Give the student **an approximate grade** according to the IELTS exam criteria. (See the table of approximate equivalences of Net Languages courses and a summary of the IELTS criteria below.)

### Table of approximate equivalences of Net Languages courses

General English courses	IELTS band scores	Council of Europe framework
Pre-Elementary	0 - 2.0	A1
Elementary	2.5 - 3.5	A2
Lower Intermediate	4.0 - 4.5	B1
Mid Intermediate	4.5 - 5.0	B1+
Upper Intermediate	5.5 - 6.0	B2
Pre-Advanced	6.0 - 6.5	B2+
Advanced	7.0 - 8.0	C1
Proficiency	8.5 - 9.0	C2

### The IELTS 9-band scale:

<b>9: Expert user</b>	Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
<b>8: Very good user</b>	Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
<b>7: Good user</b>	Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
<b>6: Competent user</b>	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
<b>5: Modest user</b>	Has partial command of the language. Copes with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.
<b>4: Limited user</b>	Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex

language.

**3: Extremely limited user**

Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.

**2: Intermittent user**

No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty in understanding spoken and written English.

**1: Non-user**

Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.

# **C: Practice test**

## **General information**

Section C contains:

- Details of student tasks for writing and speaking subtests
- Feedback for the practice tests
- Marking guidelines and criteria

Practice Test 1 is included in the Preparation Course package and should be done after completing the course. There is one additional IELTS General Training practice test available: Practice Test 2. This can be done independently from or before or after the Preparation Course. The practice tests consist of the following parts:

- Listening test
- Reading test
- Writing test
- Speaking test

Both the listening and reading subtests are self-correcting. This means that there is no tutor involvement in these parts of the practice exam. However, during the speaking tutorial for the speaking subtest, it would be appropriate for the tutor to ask students how well s/he scored in these tests.

## **Practice Test 1**

### **Writing test**

There are two tasks in the writing test. See the tasks below for the word limits, content and timing. Here are the instructions that students are given for the writing test:

## **WRITING TASK 1**

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

**You have decided to apply for a job as a monitor at Nature World Adventure Park that was advertised online on the website Jobs Abroad. The advertisement was posted by Mr James Young, Activities Manager at Nature World Adventure Park, in Queensland, Australia. In your letter to Mr Young:**

**explain why you are writing  
describe your qualifications and experience  
and explain how they can contact you.**

You DO NOT need to write any addresses.

Write at least 150 words.

## **WRITING TASK 2**

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

**The use of private cars dominates most large cities in the world, causing a negative effect on the quality of life for the majority of the people who live in these cities. Alternative forms of transport should be encouraged and international laws introduced to control car ownership and use.**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree?**

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

## **Marking criteria**

### **Task 1**

Task 1 texts should be assessed using the following criteria:

- **Task fulfilment:** Do students' answers meet the requirements of the task? Does the letter follow standard letter conventions and is it in the appropriate style?
- **Coherence and cohesion:** Is the writing well organised and logically linked?
- **Vocabulary:** Does the student use a range of appropriate vocabulary?
- **Grammar:** Are sentences formed appropriately and accurately?

## Task 2

Task 2 texts should be assessed using the following criteria:

- **Ideas, arguments and evidence:** Does the student evaluate different arguments and ideas and compare or contrast them effectively?
- **Communicative competence:** Does the student organise the text logically and present his/her ideas clearly and coherently?
- **Vocabulary:** Does the student use a range of appropriate vocabulary?
- **Grammar:** Does the writing demonstrate a variety of sentence structures that are reasonably accurate?

The overall result is translated into a score on the IELTS 9-band scale. (See the 9-band scale below, at the end of the speaking test section.)

## Speaking test

Here are the instructions that students are given for the speaking test (the time allowed for this practice test corresponds to the duration of the third speaking tutorial included in the IELTS Preparation Course):

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### SPEAKING TEST

**TIME ALLOWED: 20 to 25 minutes**

The speaking test interview between the candidate and the examiner takes from **11 to 14 minutes**.

Remember, there are three parts to the speaking test:

- Part 1: the introduction and interview
- Part 2: the individual long turn, using a task card
- Part 3: the two-way discussion

Your performance is rated according to four different criteria:

- Fluency and coherence
- Lexical resource
- Grammatical range and accuracy
- Pronunciation

All criteria have equal weighting. The final result of the test is given as one score, or band.

Familiarise yourself with the part-by-part description below. Then contact your tutor to arrange your test simulation.

### **Part 1: Introduction and interview.**

This part of the test lasts **4 to 5 minutes**. The examiner will ask general questions to which you should give full, expansive answers.

#### **Step-by-step approach to interview:**

**Step 1**        The examiner introduces him/herself and the candidate does the same.

**Step 2**        The examiner will ask the candidate questions about her/himself, his/her home, work or studies and other familiar topics. (Only one topic is chosen.) For example:

#### Your home

- Where do you live?
- What is your town or city like?
- Who do you live with?
- What type of building do you live in?
- How long have you lived there?
- What interesting things are there to see where you live?

#### Free time

- How much free time do you have?
- How do you spend your free time?
- Do you prefer to spend free time alone or with other people?
- Do you think that people have enough free time these days?
- What do you usually do at the weekend?
- What did you do last weekend?

#### Computers

- Do use a computer at work or at home?
- What do you use a computer for?
- Do you like using computers?
- When did you start using a computer?
- How important are computers these days?
- What jobs do computers do better than people?

#### Education

- What subjects did you study at school/university?
- Did the style of teaching suit the way you learn?

- What was your favourite subject? Why?
- What would you like to study in the future?
- Do you think that your education has prepared you for the world of work?
- How is education changing?

#### Holidays

- Are there many public holidays where you live?
- Do you think there are enough public holidays?
- Do you like going away on holidays?
- Where did you go on your last holiday?
- What interesting place would you like to visit on your holidays?
- Do you think it is important to have holidays?

#### Shoes

- What shoes do you like wearing?
- Do you have different shoes for different activities?
- What type of shoes do you buy?
- Do you buy shoes online?
- What shoes are comfortable?
- What shoes do you never wear?

#### Music

- What music do you listen to?
- When do you usually listen to music?
- How do you listen to music?
- Do you buy music?
- Do you listen to live music?
- Has your taste in music changed?

#### Weather

- What type of weather do you like?
- What was the weather like at the weekend?
- What do you do in rainy weather?
- Do you dress differently for different types of weather?
- What is the weather like in autumn where you live?
- What season do you prefer?

#### Friends

- Do you have a large circle of friends?
- Where did you first meet these friends?
- How often do you see your friends?
- What things do you like doing together?
- How important is it to have close friends?
- What makes a good friend?

### **Part 2: Individual long turn.**



You will be given a card and will have 1 minute to prepare a talk of **1 or 2 minutes**, using the card as a guide. You are permitted to make notes during the minute preparation time. At the end of this time, the examiner will ask one or two questions to begin your long turn.

### **Part 3: Two-way discussion.**

After the talk in Part 2 is over, the examiner will ask further questions related to the topic of the talk. The questions will relate to the personal experiences discussed in Part 2, and to more general aspects of the topic.

Now contact your tutor to arrange your test simulation. After the simulation, your tutor will give you your score and feedback on your performance.

---

### **Speaking test procedure:**

- The student will contact the tutor and arrange a time for the test interview.
- The day before the interview the tutor sends the student by email the sample card below, with strict instructions that the student must not look at the card until 1 minute before the phone interview. (See standard email below.)
- The student phones the tutor and after checking that the student is ready, the interview begins:
  - Part 1 (4-5 minutes of general questions)
  - Part 2 – individual long turn (1-2 minutes)
  - Part 3 – 2-way discussion around theme (5 minutes)
- At the end of the interview (15 to 20 minutes) give the student some feedback (5 minutes) and follow this up with detailed written feedback and a mark using the IELTS band score criteria.

### **STANDARD EMAIL**

Dear [student's name],

Here is the card we are going to use in the speaking test. **DO NOT READ BELOW THIS LINE UNTIL 1 MINUTE BEFORE YOUR PHONE INTERVIEW!**

Regards,

[tutor's name]

---

### **1 MINUTE BEFORE THE PHONE INTERVIEW:**

You will have 1 minute to prepare a talk of **1 or 2 minutes**, using this card as a guide. You are permitted to make notes during the minute preparation time. At the end of this time, you must phone your tutor and begin the tutorial.

[Copy and paste the text of the following card here. **Do not** send the **SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS**.:]

---

**Interview card:**

[Copy this card and email it to your student the day before the phone interview/speaking test. Do not send the **SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS**. You will ask the student these questions in Part 3 of the speaking test.]

**CARD**

Describe a house or an apartment where you once lived.

You should say:    the location of the house/apartment (urban, rural, suburban...)  
                             a physical description of the house/apartment  
                             who you shared it with, if anyone

and explain whether or not it was a good place to live and why.

*Rounding-off questions*

- What neighbours did you have?
- What public transport could you use to get to the house or apartment?

**SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS:**

**Houses and apartments**

Do most people in your country live in houses or apartments?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of each type of accommodation?

How are houses and apartments different from the way they were in the past?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of renting or buying a home?

**Housing in your country**

At what age do young people in your country tend to leave their parents' home?

Is it difficult for young people to find somewhere to live? What kind of support is there?

Some people say that rents should be controlled and affordable for everybody. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?

For Parts 2 and 3, the tutor should use the card above. The speaking subtest is graded according to the following four criteria:

- Fluency and coherence
- Lexical resource
- Grammatical range and accuracy
- Pronunciation

All criteria have equal weighting. The final result of the test is given as one score, or band. Here are descriptions of the bands according to which students are graded:

### The IELTS 9-band scale:

<b>9:</b>	<b>Expert user</b> Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
<b>8:</b>	<b>Very good user</b> Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
<b>7:</b>	<b>Good user</b> Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
<b>6:</b>	<b>Competent user</b> Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
<b>5:</b>	<b>Modest user</b> Has partial command of the language. Copes with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.
<b>4:</b>	<b>Limited user</b> Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
<b>3:</b>	<b>Extremely limited user</b> Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.

- |  |
|--|
| <p><b>2: Intermittent user</b><br/>No real communication is possible expect for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty in understanding spoken and written English.</p> <p><b>1: Non-user</b><br/>Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.</p> |
|--|

This should be followed up by written feedback sent to the student as an email. This should include some error correction for the student as well as a score for the oral based on the criteria above and given as a band score. It should be mentioned that this in no way guarantees that students would score in the same band in the IELTS exam itself.