



ESSENTIAL WORDS FOR IELTS

Complete List of Synonyms

Here is a complete list of the words in the course, with synonyms.

Note that a lot of synonyms do not have *exactly* the same meaning as the main word - some words can only be used in certain contexts; and some words only go with certain words.

For example, you can talk about “a vegetarian restaurant” but not “a herbivore restaurant”.

This means that, when writing or speaking, you cannot always substitute one word for its synonym.

Also, some words have a very **precise meaning** (e.g. *amphibian*), so they do not have any synonyms. In these cases I have left the synonyms box empty, or I have included examples of the word.

I hope you enjoy the course! Best wishes, Charlie!

WORD	SYNONYMS
<u>ANIMALS</u>	
amphibian	Examples: toad, frog, salamander
carnivore	meat eater, beast of prey, predator
herbivore	grazers, browsers, plant eater, vegetarian
omnivore	
predator	
prey	quarry, hunted, victim, game
parasite	
<u>CHANGES</u>	
acclimatize	adjust, get used to, adapt, conform
merge	unite, amalgamate, blend, join, combine
restore	rebuild, bring back, re-establish, put back, reinstate, recover
amend	correct, alter, change, enhance, modify
deviate	depart, veer, differ, vary, diverge
distort	alter, misrepresent, warp, twist, pervert
divert	deflect, redirect, pivot, switch

WORD	SYNONYMS
manipulate	exploit, handle, mould, control, shape, influence
refine	make, improve, hone, polish, perfect
transition	shift, change, changeover, passage, path, transformation
enlarge	boost, make bigger, extend, expand, grow
deteriorate	weaken, worsen, degenerate, degrade, decline, fall apart
diminish	shrink, lessen, lower, abate, decrease, reduce
eradicate	eliminate, destroy, wipe out, exterminate, erase, abolish
<u>CHEMISTRY</u>	
agent	
atom	
molecule	
compound	
soluble	
insoluble	
crystal	
<u>ENGINEERING</u>	
analogue	
automate	mechanize, robotize, make automatic
hydraulic	
hydroelectric	
laser	
prototype	model, precursor, mock-up
optical	visual
electronic	computerized, automated
engine	motor
engineering	
mechanical	
technical	mechanical, technological, specialized, high tech
user-friendly	accessible, easy to use, easy to understand, convenient, straightforward
vehicle	transport

WORD	SYNONYMS
<u>ENVIRONMENT</u>	
biodiversity	variety of animal / plant life, range of animal / plant life
ecosystem	environment, association, network, organization
fossil fuel	non-renewable energy, non-renewables
landfill	tip, rubbish dump, waste dump, dumping ground, garbage dump, disposal area
refuse	trash, rubbish, junk, garbage, waste
unspoiled	unblemished, untouched, natural, clean, pristine, unpolluted
green belt	
<u>FAMILY</u>	
infant	baby, kid, young child
adolescent	young person, teenager, juvenile, youth, young adult
maternal	sympathetic, protective, loving, caring, affectionate
paternal	vigilant, fatherly, loving, concerned, fatherlike, protective
sibling	
marital status	
upbringing	nurturing, childhood, training, background, preparation
<u>GEOGRAPHY</u>	
hemisphere	
equator	
longitude	
latitude	
tide	current, wave, flow
crater	hole, bowl, depression, hollow, pit, caldera
summit	peak, top, highest point, pinnacle
temperate	moderate, restrained, balmy, warm, mild, agreeable
arid	dry, parched, bone-dry, dusty, barren
marine	aquatic, salt water, deep sea, maritime, coastal, oceanic
glacier	ice, ice pack, snow
terrestrial	terrene, global, earthbound

WORD	SYNONYMS
fauna	animal life, wildlife, animal kingdom
flora	plant life, vegetation, plants, crops, verdure
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	
autonomy	self-rule, self-government, self-determination, freedom, independence, sovereignty
constitution	legislation, charter, code
coup	revolution, overthrow, plot
dictator	despot, autocrat, tyrant
monarch	sovereign, king, queen, emperor, empress
legislature	parliament, chamber, law-making body, house
regime	dictatorship, military government, government, administration
<u>HEALTH AND MEDICINE: TREATMENTS</u>	
therapy	treatment, remedy, cure, counselling
transplant	replace, transfer, graft, move
immune	unaffected, safe from, exempt, resistant
vaccine	
antibiotic	drug, medicine
dose	amount, shot, measurement, quantity, measure
remedy	fix, medicine, antidote, relief, drug, panacea
clinic	health centre, medical centre, hospital
cure	treat, heal, treatment, healing, drug, remedy
drug	medicine, medication, remedy, pill, narcotic, stimulant
injection	
medicine	drugs, medication, antibiotics, health care, medical career
patient	case, invalid, sick person, inpatient, outpatient
scan	x-ray, examine, examination
<u>HEALTH AND MEDICINE: HEALTHCARE</u>	
immunize	inoculate, protect, vaccinate
pathology	
pharmaceutical	drugs, medicine

WORD	SYNONYMS
physiotherapy	
practitioner	doctor, specialist, consultant, clinician
psychiatry	
anaesthetic	pain killer, soporific, gas, shot
<u>HEALTH AND MEDICINE: WELLBEING</u>	
blood pressure	
cognitive	mental, intellectual, thinking
pharmacology	
intake	consumption, take in
mental	intellectual, thought, cerebral, psychiatric, mad, psychotic
posture	position, stance, pose
recover	recuperate, heal, bounce back, rebound, convalesce, mend
<u>HEALTH AND MEDICINE: ILLNESS</u>	
acute	severe, sudden, sharp, intense
chronic	constant, protracted, incurable, persistent, continual, sustained
addict	
allergy	sensitivity, reaction, hypersensitivity, aversion
syndrome	problem, ailment, malady, disorder, sickness
epidemic	widespread disease, pandemic, plague
trauma	shock, injury, blow, wound, damage
<u>HEALTH AND MEDICINE: DISEASE</u>	
depression	despair, sadness, melancholy, despondency, distress, unhappiness
disorder	illness, complaint, affliction, ailment, malady, sickness
donate	give, give away, provide, bequeath
fatal	deadly, lethal, incurable, mortal, terminal
infectious	contagious, virulent, poisonous, toxic, communicable, pestilential
overweight	
obese	

WORD	SYNONYMS
<u>HEALTH AND MEDICINE: ANATOMY</u>	
bone	bony parts of the body, skeleton
brain	mind, grey matter, cerebrum
breathe	inhale, exhale, sniff, respire
heart	cardiac organ, vascular organ, ticker
muscle	
organ	Examples: heart, brain, kidneys, liver, lungs, skin
sight	vision, perception, eyesight
<u>HEALTH AND MEDICINE: MEDICAL SCIENCE</u>	
bacteria	germs, microbes, micro-organisms
cell	
germ	infection, disease, bug
hereditary	genetic, inherited, inborn
toxic	poisonous, dangerous, harmful, deadly, lethal
trial	test, experiment, investigation, examination, analysis
virus	disease, infection, germ, pathogen
<u>LAW</u>	
advocate (noun)	lawyer, solicitor, campaigner, defender, attorney, exponent
abide by	defer, accept, consent, acknowledge, tolerate
enforce	implement, apply, carry out, impose, invoke, accomplish
invoke	effect, resort to, enforce, use, apply
jurisdiction	area of authority, authority, district, power, administration, territory
litigate	prosecute, drag into court, institute proceedings, sue
prosecute	sue, try, arraign, litigate, indict
clause	paragraph, provision, section, article
comply	obey, observe, adhere to
exempt	not liable, excused, absolved, immune
ratify	sign, endorse, approve, confirm, affirm
sanction	ratify, certify, approve, allow, authorize

WORD	SYNONYMS
uphold	endorse, back, confirm, support, stand by, maintain
violate	breach, disregard, disobey, break, infringe, contravene
<u>POLITICAL BELIEFS</u>	
advocate (verb)	push, advance, support, promote, recommend, campaign for
dogma	ideology, creed, doctrine, belief
propaganda	indoctrination, disinformation, hype, misinformation, brainwashing
ideology	philosophy, values, doctrine, belief, theory
liberal	progressive, reformist, social democrat, radical
libertarian	autonomous, individualistic, self-ruling, free will
pluralism	diversity, inclusivity
<u>SOCIAL ISSUES</u>	
civil rights	
secular	civil, secular, non-religious, material, worldly, temporal
ethics	morals, beliefs, right and wrong, principles
feminism	women's lib, women's liberation
humanitarian	benevolent, charitable, humane, public-spirited, altruistic, philanthropic
refugee	asylum seeker, displaced person, emigre, migrant, emigrant
catastrophe	disaster, tragedy, devastation, calamity, cataclysm
inequality	inequity, disparity, injustice
deprived	underprivileged, disadvantages, needy, destitute
elite	establishment, oligarchy, ruling class
redistribute	reorganize, move, shift
privilege	benefit, entitlement, right, advantage
underprivileged	poor, disadvantages, needy, impoverished
multicultural	diverse, multiracial, inclusive, ethnically diverse
<u>SOCIAL ISSUES: POPULATION</u>	
civilian	citizen, noncombatant, non-military, private citizen
demography	
indigenous	native, homegrown, local

WORD	SYNONYMS
migrate	move, relocate, emigrate, immigrate
opinion poll	survey, poll
overpopulation	overcrowding
per capita	per head, per person, for each person
<u>TEXTS</u>	
abstract	summary, outline, precis, synopsis
bibliography	reading list, list of books, further reading
commentary	exposition, analysis, review, description, critique, explanation
footnote	
paper	research, thesis, essay, study, article, dissertation
periodical	journal, publication, magazine
précis	summary, outline, synopsis
<u>BIOLOGY</u>	
decay	rot, deteriorate, decompose
dormant	asleep, inactive, latent, insert, sluggish
exhale	breathe out, let out, give off, emit
inhale	breathe in, suck in, smell, sniff
fertilize	inseminate, pollinate, germinate, enrich
reproduce	breed, clone, recreate, replicate
suppress	stop, inhibit, contain, cut off
<u>BUSINESS</u>	
enterprise	business, company, firm, project, activity, undertaking
entrepreneur	businessman, business owner, businesswoman, solopreneur, proprietor
found	establish, begin, initiate, organize, start, form
franchise	
merge	amalgamate, unite, blend, join, combine
restructure	reorganize, reconstruct, reform, reshuffle
subsidiary	subordinate
audit	review, investigation, check, scrutiny, inspection, analysis

WORD	SYNONYMS
compensate	pay back, make up for, repay, reimburse
reimburse	compensate, repay, pay back, refund
revenue	earnings, income, proceeds, funds, profit, receipts
turnover	revenue, earnings, income
creditor	bank, lender, banker, loan shark
debtor	borrower

COMPARING AND CONTRASTING

complement	supplement, accompany, augment, add to, enhance
converse	on the other hand, opposite
differentiate	distinguish, point out differences
diverse	varied, distinct, differing, assorted
mirror	resemble, embody, seem like, reflect, epitomize, echo
resemble	look like, be similar to, be like, act like, echo
synonymous	the same as, equates with, interrelated, identified with, identical, interchangeable

HISTORY

archive	collection, repository, library, records office
artefact	antique, relic, heirloom
excavate	dig, uncover, unearth
heritage	history, culture, traditions, ancestry, customs, legacy
primitive	basic, backward, undeveloped
millennium	1000 years
Renaissance	

LINGUISTICS

analogy	comparison, resemblance, parallel, similarity
nuance	subtlety, hint
coin	create, come up with, invent
connotation	association, overtone, undertone, meaning
figurative	metaphorical, fanciful, figure of speech, descriptive
literal	exact, untarnished, authentic, actual

WORD	SYNONYMS
metaphor	analogy, allegory, symbol, image
<u>MATERIALS</u>	
dense	compressed, heavy, thick, overcrowded
porous	absorbant, permeable, penetrable
permeable	porous, absorbant, spongelike
fibre	thread, strand, tissue
constituent	element, ingredient, component, part
raw	natural, untreated, basic, unprocessed, crude
debris	junk, waste, rubble, wreckage, rubbish, remains
<u>MATHS</u>	
constant	
deduct	subtract, withdraw, remove
integer	whole number, digit
fraction	portion, part, chunk
median	central, average, middle, midpoint
mean	average
theorem	axiom, rule, law
<u>OPINIONS</u>	
assertion	contention, statement, pronouncement, argument, allegation
conjecture	supposition, surmise, hunch, guesswork, hypothesis
contention	hypothesis, argument, idea, opinion, assertion, position
dogma	tenet, ideology, creed, doctrine, teachings, gospel
stance	position, posture, attitude, viewpoint
sceptic	critic, questioner, dissenter, dissident, cynic, devil's advocate
speculation	opinion, guess, hypothesis, belief, prediction, thought
<u>POSITIVE QUALITIES</u>	
compelling	strong, irresistible
constructive	effective, positive, usable, practical, useful, productive

WORD	SYNONYMS
credible	trustworthy, believable, conceivable, plausible, honest
groundbreaking	revolutionary, original, cutting edge, trailblazing, radical, innovative
integrity	honesty, sincerity, virtue, principle
optimum	ideal, perfect, most favourable, maximum, peak
rigorous	thorough, uncompromising, tough, strict, meticulous
<u>NEGATIVE QUALITIES</u>	
abnormal	strange, aberrant, irregular, odd, deviant, unusual
adverse	negative, disadvantageous, unfavourable
deficient	faulty, inadequate, insufficient, impaired, lacking, weak
deprived	underprivileged, poor, destitute, impoverished
negligent	neglectful, remiss, careless
shortcoming	imperfection, failing, defect, deficiency, weakness, flaw
volatile	erratic, unstable, unsettled, unpredictable, fickle
<u>RESEARCH METHODS</u>	
collate	assemble, gather, collect
correlate	tie in, equate, link, compare, interact
empirical	evidence-based, observational, factual, experimental
hypothesis	proposition, idea, conjecture, theory, thesis, assumption
theory	proposition, law, idea, philosophy, rule, argument
qualitative	Examples: case study, interview, observation, focus group, action research
quantitative	statistical, numerical, measurable
<u>TRENDS: UPWARD</u>	
rise	go up, climb, increase
soar	ascend, shoot up, rocket
increase	go up, climb, rise
leap	surge, soar, rocket
rocket	surge, soar, leap
climb	grow, increase, go up, rise
peak	highest point, top, maximum, greatest point

WORD	SYNONYMS
<u>TRENDS: DOWNWARD</u>	
fall	drop, decrease, decline
decrease	depreciate, fall, decline, go down, drop, depreciation
plunge	plummet, dive, drop, sink, tumble
plummet	plunge, nose-dive, crash, tumble, collapse
decline	decrease, fall, go down, drop
drop	go down, decline, decrease, fall
dip	drop, fall
<u>TRENDS: ADJECTIVES & ADVERBS</u>	
dramatic	sudden, rapid, huge
steady	constant, regular, even, stable
sharp	sudden, steep, acute
rapid	quick, fast, brisk, swift
steep	rapid, sharp, precipitous
modest	limited, moderate, small
sudden	unusual, immediate, rapid
<u>TRENDS: MORE VOCABULARY</u>	
fluctuate	hover, shifted, change
remain steady	stayed the same, stabilized
stabilize	remain steady, is sustained, is maintained, fixed
stagnate	languish, stall, stand still
overall	in general, general, generally speaking
upwards	
downwards	
<u>CAUSE AND EFFECT</u>	
attribute	credit, blame, connect, associate, trace
chain reaction	
derive	received, gets, acquire, infer, extract, obtain

WORD	SYNONYMS
initiate	trigger, start, commence, begin, set up, launch
interdependent	interconnected, reciprocal, complementary, mutually dependent
interrelate	affect, link, connect
repercussion	side effect, backlash, fallout, reverberation, negative effect
<u>TIME</u>	
consecutive	sequential, one after another, successive
successive	consecutive, one after another, sequential
penultimate	second to last, last but one
intermittent	occasional, infrequent, patchy, fitful, sporadic, periodic
periodic	regular, annually, recurrent, repeated, at fixed intervals, weekly
concurrent	at the same time, coincident, simultaneous
coincide	concurrent, coexist, correspond, go along with
<u>SCIENTIFIC PROCESSES</u>	
boil	
burn	heat, incinerate, combust
cool	chill, reduce temperature
freeze	harden
heat	warm, raise temoerature, make hot, warmth
melt	
process	procedure, course, system
accelerate	step up, stimulate, advance, hasten, increase, quicken
activate	trigger, initiate, start, stimulate
condense	
conduct	transport, carry, send, administer, carry out, handle
contaminate	pollute, poison, harm, infect
contract	shrink, get smaller, decrease, narrow, decline
deplete	reduce, consume, use up, drain, empty, diminish
dissolve	break up, liquify
evaporate	dry out, dissipate, vaporize, disappear
filter	strain, clean, refine, sift, purify

WORD	SYNONYMS
extract	pull, remove, derive, elicit, draw out, glean
harness	tame, make use of, exploit, channel, utilize, control
synthesize	combine, bring together, make whole, make
dilute	weaken, lessen, water down, temper
circulate	flow, go around, move around, travel around
emit	give off, release, discharge, secrete, spew
flow	move, circulate, proceed, glide, pour
form	develop, grow, appear, build
generate	produce, create, cause, make, bring about
rotate	revolve, turn, spin, circle
vaporize	evaporate, destroy
<u>FORCES</u>	
force	
dynamic	changing, active, energetic, vigorous
motion	
friction	
kinetic	
momentum	impetus, acceleration, push, impulse, thrust, propulsion
propel	drive, launch, thrust, move, push, shoot
<u>SCIENTIFIC PHENOMENA</u>	
current	
nuclear	atomic
phenomenon	occurrence, experience, incident, aspect
power	energy, electricity, operate
pressure	strength, strain, load, compression
property	characteristic, feature
solar	
<u>SUBSTANCES</u>	
chemical	

WORD	SYNONYMS
fuel	energy source, combustible
gas	
liquid	fluid
metal	
oil	
substance	material, stuff, item, object
<u>SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH</u>	
device	machine, instrument, gadget, contraption, mechanism
instrument	tool, device, mechanism, apparatus, equipment,
law	principle, rule
pioneer	innovator, leader, developer, founder, inventor
sample	specimen, example, fragment, piece
specimen	sample, example, exemplar, illustration
trial	test, investigation, pilot, analysis
<u>EDUCATION</u>	
curriculum	syllabus, educational programme
syllabus	curriculum, course outline, programme of study
scholar	academic, student, researcher, specialist, expert, pupil
literate	well-informed, learned, cultured, lettered, educated, knowledgeable
vocational	specialized, professional, hands-on
apprentice	pupil, novice
pedagogy	teaching methods, educational techniques, teaching approach
<u>ART</u>	
aesthetic	artistic, pleasing, creative, artful
depict	portray, describe, illustrate, represent, characterize, show
genre	style, type, family, brand, kind, class
icon	symbol, idol, legend
vivid	colourful, intense, detailed, memorable, powerful, brilliant
portrait	characterization, painting, depiction, likeness, representation, account

WORD	SYNONYMS
sculpture	shape, carve, chisel, fashion, form, model
<u>ECONOMICS</u>	
boom	upsurge, expansion, soar, upturn, growth, spurt
slump	recession, bust, decrease, depression, decline, downturn
GDP	
deficit	shortfall, arrears, lack of, shortage
surplus	excess, unused, left over
macroeconomic	
microeconomic	
<u>THOUGHT PROCESSES</u>	
anticipate	wait for, expect, forecast, await, predict, foresee
appreciate	understand, acknowledge, recognize
comprehend	understand, appreciate, grasp, realize
conceive	come up with, believe, realize, create, perceive, accept
envisage	visualize, envision, consider, picture, imagine, see
infer	guess, deduce, assume, reckon, conclude, speculate
recall	remember, think of, remind