

# IELTS Reading: Lesson 3



## ARTICLE: Beneficial Work Practices for the Keyboard Operator

Instructions:

- 1) Read the article below as fast as you can. Try to remember as much detail as possible without slowing down.  
\*\*If it is too difficult remember this: "Don't worry, that is why you are taking this class. No one is an expert the first try."\*\*
- 2) Read the article again slowly. Compare how much you understand this time.
- 3) Read the article a third time, translate words you don't know and write them down. How is your understanding different?

(A) Sensible work practices are an important factor in the prevention of muscular fatigue; discomfort or pain in the arms, neck, hands or back; or eye strain which can be associated with constant or regular work at a keyboard and visual display unit (VDU).

(B) It is vital that the employer pays attention to the physical setting such as workplace design, the office environment, and placement of monitors as well as the organisation of the work and individual work habits. Operators must be able to recognise work-related health problems and be given the opportunity to participate in the management of these. Operators should take note of and follow the preventive measures outlined below.

(C) The typist must be comfortably accommodated in a chair that is adjustable for height with a back rest that is also easily adjustable both for angle and height. The back rest and sitting ledge (with a curved edge) should preferably be cloth-covered to avoid excessive perspiration.

(D) When the keyboard operator is working from a paper file or manuscript, it should be at the same distance from the eyes as the screen. The most convenient position can be found by using some sort of holder. Individual arrangement will vary according to whether the operator spends more time looking at the VDU or the paper – whichever the eyes are focused on for the majority of time should be put directly in front of the operator.

(E) While keying, it is advisable to have frequent but short pauses of around thirty to sixty seconds to proofread. When doing this, relax your hands. After you have been keying for sixty minutes, you should have a ten minute change of activity. During this spell it is important that you do not remain seated but stand up or walk around. This period could be profitably used to do filing or collect and deliver documents.

(F) Generally, the best position for a VDU is at right angles to the window. If this is not possible then glare from the window can be controlled by blinds, curtains or movable screens. Keep the face of the VDU vertical to avoid glare from overhead lighting.

(G) Unsatisfactory work practices or working conditions may result in aches or pain.

Symptoms should be reported to your supervisor early on so that the cause of the trouble can be corrected and the operator should seek medical attention.

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### VOCABULARY & PHRASES

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unsatisfactory  
working conditions  
glare  
overhead lighting  
visual display unit (monitor)

vital  
work related health problems  
walk around  
during this spell  
right angles

keying  
advisable  
back rest  
aches or pains  
medical attention

# IELTS Speaking: Lesson 3



## QUESTIONS: Beneficial Work Practices for the Keyboard Operator

Questions 1-7

The text on the next page has seven sections, A–G.

Choose the correct heading for each section from the list of headings below.

Write the correct number, i–x, next to questions 1-7 below.

List of Headings

- I. How can reflection problems be avoided?
- II. How long should I work without a break?
- III. What if I experience any problems?
- IV. When is the best time to do filing chores?
- V. What makes a good seat?
- VI. What are the common health problems?
- VII. What is the best kind of lighting to have?
- VIII. What are the roles of management and workers?
- IX. Why does a VDU create eye fatigue?
- X. Where should I place the documents?

- 1. Section A
- 2. Section B
- 3. Section C
- 4. Section D
- 5. Section E
- 6. Section F
- 7. Section G

## ARTICLE (2): Workplace Dismissals

Before the Dismissal

If an employer wants to dismiss an employee, there is a process to be followed.

Instances of minor misconduct and poor performance must first be addressed through some preliminary steps.

Firstly, you should be given an improvement note. This will explain the problem, outline any necessary changes and offer some assistance in correcting the situation. Then, if your employer does not think your performance has improved, you may be given a written warning. The last step is called a final written warning which will inform you that you will be dismissed unless there are improvements in performance. If there is no improvement, your employer can begin the dismissal procedure.

The dismissal procedure begins with a letter from the employer setting out the charges made against the employee. The employee will be invited to a meeting to discuss these accusations. If the employee denies the charges, he is given the opportunity to appear at a formal appeal hearing in front of a different manager. After this, a decision is made as to whether the employee will be let go or not.

Dismissals

Of the various types of dismissal, a fair dismissal is the best kind if an employer wants an employee out of the workplace. A fair dismissal is legally and contractually strong and it means all the necessary procedures have been correctly followed. In cases where an employee's misconduct has been very serious, however, an employer may not have to follow all of these procedures. If the employer can prove that the employee's behaviour was illegal,

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dangerous or severely wrong, the employee can be dismissed immediately: a procedure known as summary dismissal.

Sometimes a dismissal is not considered to have taken place fairly. One of these types is wrongful dismissal and involves a breach of contract by the employer. This could involve dismissing an employee without notice or without following proper disciplinary and dismissal procedures. Another type, unfair dismissal, is when an employee is sacked without good cause.

There is another kind of dismissal, known as constructive dismissal, which is slightly peculiar because the employee is not actually openly dismissed by the employer. In this case the employee is forced into resigning by an employer who tries to make significant changes to the original contract. This could mean an employee might have to work night shifts after originally signing on for day work, or he could be made to work in dangerous conditions.

## QUESTIONS: Workplace Dismissals

Complete the sentences below.

Choose NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in the spaces for 8-9 below.

8. If an employee receives a \_\_\_\_\_, this means he will lose his job if his work does not get better.
9. If an employee does not accept the reasons for his dismissal, a \_\_\_\_\_ can be arranged.

Questions 10–14

Look at the following descriptions and the list of terms in the box below.

Match each description with the correct term A–E.

Write the appropriate letter A–E in boxes 10–14 on your answer sheet.

- A. Fair dismissal
- B. Summary dismissal
- C. Unfair dismissal
- D. Wrongful dismissal
- E. Constructive dismissal

10. An employee is asked to leave work straight away because he has done something really bad.
11. An employee is pressured to leave his job unless he accepts conditions that are very different from those agreed to in the beginning.
12. An employer gets rid of an employee without keeping to conditions in the contract.
13. The reason for an employee's dismissal is not considered good enough.
14. The reasons for an employee's dismissal are acceptable by law and the terms of the employment contract.

## ANSWERS

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. vi                    | 9. Formal appeal hearing |
| 2. viii                  | 10. B                    |
| 3. v                     | 11. E                    |
| 4. x                     | 12. D                    |
| 5. ii                    | 13. C                    |
| 6. i                     | 14. A                    |
| 7. iii                   |                          |
| 8. Final written warning |                          |