IELTS Academic Listening Test 1

Time: Approximately 30 minutes (plus 10 minutes transfer time)

Total questions: 40

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**• Answer all questions.  
• You will hear each recording ONCE only.  
• Write your answers on this question paper while you listen.  
• At the end of the test, you will have 10 minutes to transfer your answers to an answer sheet.  
• Write your answers in the boxes next to the question numbers.

# SECTION 1 Questions 1-10

You will hear a conversation between a student and a housing officer about university accommodation.

## Questions 1-5

Complete the form below.  
  
Write NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER for each answer.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION REQUEST FORM  
  
Student name: Sarah Mitchell  
Student ID: 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Course: Master's in Environmental Science  
Preferred location: 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ campus  
Type of accommodation: Shared flat  
Maximum weekly rent: £3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Move-in date: 4 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ September  
Special requirements: 5 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ floor (due to knee injury)

## Questions 6-10

Choose the correct letter, A, B or C.

6. What is included in the rent?

A. electricity only

B. internet and electricity

C. all utilities and internet

7. How many people will Sarah share with?

A. two people

B. three people

C. four people

8. What does Sarah need to pay as a deposit?

A. one week's rent

B. two weeks' rent

C. one month's rent

9. The accommodation contract is for

A. 6 months

B. 9 months

C. 12 months

10. Sarah can collect her keys from

A. the housing office

B. the main reception

C. her landlord

# SECTION 2 Questions 11-20

You will hear a tour guide giving information about a historic castle.

## Questions 11-14

Choose the correct letter, A, B or C.

11. Bellingham Castle was originally built in

A. the 12th century

B. the 13th century

C. the 14th century

12. The castle was constructed primarily to

A. serve as a royal residence

B. defend against invasions

C. host important ceremonies

13. What happened to the castle in the 17th century?

A. It was completely destroyed

B. It was partially damaged by fire

C. It was sold to a wealthy family

14. The Great Hall is famous for its

A. stained glass windows

B. medieval paintings

C. carved wooden ceiling

## Questions 15-20

Label the map below.  
  
Write the correct letter, A-H, next to Questions 15-20.

[MAP DESCRIPTION: A site map showing various castle facilities]

15. Gift Shop \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

16. Tea Room \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

17. Chapel \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

18. Garden \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

19. Armory \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

20. Dungeon \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# SECTION 3 Questions 21-30

You will hear two students, Mark and Jennifer, discussing their research project on renewable energy.

## Questions 21-24

Choose the correct letter, A, B or C.

21. What aspect of renewable energy will their project focus on?

A. environmental benefits

B. economic viability

C. technological innovation

22. Mark suggests they should

A. conduct laboratory experiments

B. analyze existing data

C. interview industry experts

23. Jennifer is concerned about

A. the project deadline

B. access to resources

C. the complexity of the topic

24. Their tutor recommended they

A. narrow their research scope

B. extend their deadline

C. work with another group

## Questions 25-30

What opinion does each student express about the following energy sources?  
  
Write the correct letter, A, B or C, next to Questions 25-30.  
  
Opinions:  
A. Most promising for future development  
B. Currently too expensive to implement  
C. Has significant environmental drawbacks

25. Solar power (Mark) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

26. Wind energy (Jennifer) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

27. Hydroelectric (Mark) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

28. Biomass (Jennifer) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

29. Geothermal (Mark) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

30. Tidal power (Jennifer) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# SECTION 4 Questions 31-40

You will hear a lecture about the impact of social media on mental health.

## Questions 31-34

Complete the sentences below.  
  
Write NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS for each answer.

31. Social media platforms are designed to maximize user \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and engagement.

32. Research shows that excessive social media use is linked to increased \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ among teenagers.

33. The constant comparison with others can lead to feelings of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and low self-esteem.

34. However, social media can provide valuable \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for people feeling isolated.

## Questions 35-40

Complete the notes below.  
  
Write NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER for each answer.

RESEARCH FINDINGS ON SOCIAL MEDIA USE  
  
Study 1 (2019):  
• Participants who used social media for more than 35 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ hours per day showed higher anxiety levels  
• The effect was strongest among 36 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ users  
  
Study 2 (2021):  
• Found that taking a 37 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from social media improved wellbeing  
• Participants reported better 38 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ after the break  
  
Recommendations:  
• Set daily 39 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for social media use  
• Engage in more 40 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ activities  
• Practice mindful consumption of online content

# AUDIO SCRIPTS - ACADEMIC LISTENING TEST 1

## SECTION 1

Housing Officer: Good morning, Student Accommodation Office. How can I help you?  
  
Sarah: Hi, I'm calling about university accommodation. I'm a new master's student and I need to find somewhere to live.  
  
Housing Officer: Of course. Let me take down some details. Can I have your name, please?  
  
Sarah: Yes, it's Sarah Mitchell.  
  
Housing Officer: Thank you, Sarah. And your student ID number?  
  
Sarah: It's SM47892.  
  
Housing Officer: SM47892. Great. And what course will you be studying?  
  
Sarah: I'll be doing a Master's in Environmental Science.  
  
Housing Officer: Excellent. Now, do you have a preferred location? We have properties near both our North and South campus.  
  
Sarah: I'd prefer the South campus, please. That's where most of my classes will be.  
  
Housing Officer: No problem. And what type of accommodation are you looking for? We have single rooms in halls, shared flats, or studio apartments.  
  
Sarah: I think a shared flat would be best. I'd like to live with other students.  
  
Housing Officer: Perfect. And what's your budget? What's the maximum rent you can afford per week?  
  
Sarah: I can manage up to £180 per week.  
  
Housing Officer: That's good—we have several options in that price range. When would you like to move in?  
  
Sarah: I need to be there by the 15th of September, if possible. My course starts on the 18th.  
  
Housing Officer: That should be fine. Now, do you have any special requirements? Any allergies, accessibility needs?  
  
Sarah: Yes, actually. I injured my knee recently, so I'd really prefer a ground floor flat. Stairs are quite difficult for me at the moment.  
  
Housing Officer: No problem at all. We'll make sure we find you a ground floor property. Now, let me tell you a bit more about what's included. The rent covers all utilities—water, electricity, heating—and there's also high-speed internet included.  
  
Sarah: Oh, that's great. How many people would I be sharing with?  
  
Housing Officer: The flats we have available in your price range are typically shared among three people, so you'd have two flatmates.  
  
Sarah: That sounds ideal.  
  
Housing Officer: Now, regarding the deposit. You'll need to pay one month's rent as a security deposit. This is refundable at the end of your tenancy if there's no damage.  
  
Sarah: One month's rent—okay, I can manage that.  
  
Housing Officer: The standard contract is for 12 months, which covers the full academic year plus the summer. Is that suitable?  
  
Sarah: Yes, that's perfect.  
  
Housing Officer: Excellent. Once we've found you a suitable property and you've signed the contract, you can collect your keys from the main reception building. It's open Monday to Friday, 9 to 5.  
  
Sarah: Great. Main reception—got it. Thank you so much for your help!  
  
Housing Officer: You're welcome, Sarah. I'll email you some options later today.

## SECTION 2

Tour Guide: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to Bellingham Castle. My name is David, and I'll be your guide today. Before we begin our tour, I'd like to give you some background information about this magnificent building.  
  
Bellingham Castle was originally constructed in the 13th century—specifically in 1247—by Lord William Bellingham. At that time, this area was frequently subject to raids and invasions, so the castle was built primarily as a defensive fortress. The thick stone walls, which you can still see today, were designed to protect the local population during times of conflict.  
  
Over the centuries, the castle has undergone many changes. It served as a military stronghold for several hundred years, but in the 17th century, it was partially damaged by a devastating fire. The eastern wing was completely destroyed, but fortunately, the main keep and the Great Hall survived. The castle was then renovated and transformed into a family residence by the Bellingham descendants.  
  
One of the highlights of today's tour will be the Great Hall, which is famous throughout the region for its magnificent carved wooden ceiling. This ceiling dates from the 15th century and depicts scenes from medieval life, including hunting parties and royal banquets. It's truly a masterpiece of craftsmanship.  
  
Now, before we begin the tour, let me orient you with the castle layout using this map you've all received. You'll see that the entrance where we're standing now leads to various areas of the castle. If you look at your map, you'll notice several facilities marked with letters.  
  
The Gift Shop, where you can purchase souvenirs and books about the castle's history, is located in position D on your map—that's just to the left of the main courtyard. Next to it, at position F, you'll find the Tea Room, which serves refreshments and light lunches. I highly recommend the homemade scones!  
  
For those interested in the spiritual history of the castle, the Chapel is at position B. It's a small but beautiful space where the Bellingham family attended services for generations. The stained glass windows there are original and date back to the 14th century.  
  
Nature lovers will want to visit the Garden, which is located at position H. The garden was designed in the 18th century in the formal English style and features rare plants from around the world. It's particularly beautiful in spring and summer.  
  
History enthusiasts shouldn't miss the Armory at position E, where we display an impressive collection of medieval weapons and armor, some of which were actually used in battles defending the castle. And for those brave enough, the Dungeon at position A offers a glimpse into the darker aspects of medieval justice. It's quite atmospheric down there, though perhaps a bit spooky for young children!  
  
Right, shall we begin our tour? Please follow me, and we'll start in the Great Hall...

## SECTION 3

Mark: Hi Jennifer, thanks for meeting up. We really need to finalize our approach for this renewable energy project.  
  
Jennifer: I know, the deadline's creeping up on us! So, Professor Davies said we should focus on one specific aspect. I'm thinking we should look at the economic viability of different renewable energy sources—you know, which ones make the most financial sense for large-scale implementation.  
  
Mark: That's a good angle. I agree. We could look at the costs of installation, maintenance, and the long-term return on investment for different technologies.  
  
Jennifer: Exactly. Now, how should we approach the research? Should we try to get interviews with people in the industry?  
  
Mark: I'd love to, but I don't think we have time. I think we should focus on analyzing existing data—there's tons of research already published. Government reports, academic papers, industry analyses. We can synthesize all that information.  
  
Jennifer: You're right, that's more realistic. My main concern is whether we can access all the resources we need. Some of the best industry reports are behind paywalls.  
  
Mark: True, but the university library has subscriptions to most of the major databases. We should be able to get what we need.  
  
Jennifer: Good point. You know what Professor Davies told me last week? She said our initial proposal was too broad. She recommended we narrow our research scope—maybe focus on just three or four energy sources rather than trying to cover everything.  
  
Mark: That makes sense. Okay, so let's talk about which ones to include. I think we should definitely cover solar power. From what I've read, it's the most promising for future development. The costs have dropped dramatically in the last decade, and the technology keeps improving.  
  
Jennifer: I agree solar should be in there. What about wind energy? I think it has some significant environmental drawbacks we need to consider. Birds and bats are killed by turbines, and there's the noise pollution issue for people living nearby.  
  
Mark: Fair points. But we should still include it since it's one of the major renewable sources. What about hydroelectric? I'm a bit skeptical about that one—it can be really expensive to build dams, and there are all those environmental concerns about disrupting river ecosystems.  
  
Jennifer: Hmm, I see what you mean. What about biomass? I think that's currently too expensive to implement on a large scale. The infrastructure costs are high, and you need a reliable supply of organic material.  
  
Mark: Agreed. Geothermal is interesting though. I think it's the most promising for future development in areas with the right geology. Once you've drilled the wells, the operating costs are very low.  
  
Jennifer: True, but it's only viable in certain locations. What about tidal power? I think that's also currently too expensive to implement. The technology is still relatively new, and the costs of marine equipment and maintenance are really high.  
  
Mark: Yeah, tidal is still in early stages. Okay, so I think we have a good framework now. Let's start gathering our data and then we can meet again next week to review what we've found.  
  
Jennifer: Sounds like a plan. Thanks, Mark.

## SECTION 4

Lecturer: Good afternoon, everyone. Today's lecture focuses on a topic that affects most of us directly: the impact of social media on mental health. As you're all aware, social media platforms have become integral to modern life, but research increasingly suggests that our relationship with these technologies may have significant psychological consequences.  
  
First, let's consider how these platforms are designed. Social media companies engineer their products to maximize user attention and engagement. Features like infinite scrolling, push notifications, and reward mechanisms—those little hearts and likes—trigger dopamine releases in our brains, creating habit-forming behaviors that keep us scrolling.  
  
Now, what does research tell us about the mental health effects? Several large-scale studies have found concerning correlations. For example, research shows that excessive social media use is linked to increased depression among teenagers. A 2019 study found that young people who spend more than three hours per day on social media have significantly elevated rates of mental health issues.  
  
One particularly problematic aspect is social comparison. The constant comparison with others—seeing their seemingly perfect lives, accomplishments, and experiences—can lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. We're essentially comparing our behind-the-scenes with everyone else's highlight reel, which creates an unrealistic and damaging standard.  
  
However, it's important to note that social media isn't entirely negative. The research also shows some positive aspects. For instance, social media can provide valuable social support for people feeling isolated. It can connect individuals with others who share similar experiences or challenges, creating communities that wouldn't otherwise exist. This is particularly important for people in remote areas or those with rare conditions or experiences.  
  
Let me share some specific research findings with you. In a 2019 study conducted at the University of Pennsylvania, researchers recruited 143 undergraduate students. Participants who used social media for more than three hours per day showed significantly higher anxiety levels compared to those with more moderate usage. Interestingly, the effect was strongest among younger users—those between 16 and 21—suggesting that adolescence may be a particularly vulnerable period.  
  
A follow-up study in 2021 took a different approach. Researchers asked participants to take a one-week break from all social media platforms. The results were striking: participants reported better sleep quality after the break. They also showed improvements in mood, concentration, and overall wellbeing. What's particularly interesting is that these benefits persisted even after participants returned to social media, suggesting that periodic breaks might be beneficial.  
  
So, what can we do about these issues? Based on the research, I'd like to offer some evidence-based recommendations. First, consider setting daily time limits for social media use. Most smartphones now have built-in features that allow you to monitor and restrict your app usage. Aim for no more than two hours per day.  
  
Second, engage in more face-to-face activities. Real-world social interactions provide benefits that online connections simply cannot match. Join clubs, take classes, or simply spend more time with friends and family in person.  
  
Third, and this is crucial, practice mindful consumption of online content. Be aware of how different types of content make you feel. If certain accounts or types of posts consistently trigger negative emotions, consider unfollowing or muting them. You have control over your feed.  
  
It's also worth noting that age matters. The research suggests that younger users are more vulnerable to negative effects, so parents and educators need to be particularly mindful of children's and adolescents' social media exposure.  
  
In conclusion, social media is neither wholly good nor bad—it's a tool, and like any tool, its impact depends on how we use it. The key is developing a healthy, balanced relationship with these platforms. Be conscious of your usage, take regular breaks, and prioritize real-world connections. Remember that life behind the screen is just as important—if not more so—than life on the screen.  
  
In our next lecture, we'll explore specific interventions and digital wellness strategies that can help maintain mental health in our increasingly connected world...

# ANSWER KEY - ACADEMIC LISTENING TEST 1

**1.** SM47892

**2.** South

**3.** 180 / £180 / 180 pounds

**4.** 15th / 15

**5.** ground

**6.** C (all utilities and internet)

**7.** A (two people)

**8.** C (one month's rent)

**9.** C (12 months)

**10.** B (the main reception)

**11.** B (the 13th century / 1247)

**12.** B (defend against invasions)

**13.** B (partially damaged by fire)

**14.** C (carved wooden ceiling)

**15.** D

**16.** F

**17.** B

**18.** H

**19.** E

**20.** A

**21.** B (economic viability)

**22.** B (analyze existing data)

**23.** B (access to resources)

**24.** A (narrow their research scope)

**25.** A (most promising for future development)

**26.** C (significant environmental drawbacks)

**27.** B (currently too expensive)

**28.** B (currently too expensive)

**29.** A (most promising for future development)

**30.** B (currently too expensive)

**31.** attention

**32.** depression

**33.** inadequacy

**34.** social support

**35.** three / 3

**36.** younger

**37.** one-week break / week break / one week

**38.** sleep quality

**39.** time limits

**40.** face-to-face