IELTS 7 Plus

Complete IELTS Preparation (eBook)

Disclaimer

The information contained in this eBook "IELTS 7 Plus" is meant to serve current IELTS students as a study aid in their IELTS preparation. Summaries, strategies, tips and ticks are only recommendations by the author through experience in teaching IELTS.

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Introduction

Alongside the series of IELTS 7 Plus courses, this eBook will act as a further supplementary resource to help you prepare for your IELTS test, with a focus on IELTS Writing and Speaking. Before we begin looking at key strategies for each section of the IELTS test, let's take some time to review our understanding of exactly what the IELTS test is.

A Few Key Points

IELTS stands for "International English Language Testing System". It is an internationally accepted standardized test of English language proficiency designed to assess a person's ability in English writing, speaking, listening and reading. There are two kinds of IELTS test.

- **IELTS Academic** – Generally used for admission to foreign universities.
- **IELTS General** – Taken for admission to secondary education or for work permit reasons.

Both IELTS tests have the same 4 assessed sections: *Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing*. The two main differences between the Academic and General test format are the writing and speaking sections, which differ slightly.

The *"IELTS 7 Plus: Complete IELTS Preparation"* course focuses on the IELTS Academic test, as does this eBook.

IELTS is world's most popular English language test for university admission and immigration. In many Western countries (I.e. Australia, Canada or New Zealand) you will need to take a General Training IELTS test before your visa is approved. The IELTS Academic test is for those people who wish to study in Western universities.

The IELTS Academic Test

Each university and course of study has their own individual requirements and threshold for IELTS test band score. For example, The University of Manchester may accept students to a pharmaceutical degree with an IELTS Academic score of 7, whereas the same course at a different university in London may require a band score of 8. When researching university and courses you may wish to enroll in, it is important you also see the accepted minimum IELTS Academic score.

On completion of your IELTS test, you will receive a band score from 0 – 9, with the higher scores showing advanced fluency in English. Again, each university sets their own requirements for IELTS band score, but generally a band score of at least 6 is required. A very important point to remember is that upon entry to your university of choice, the course will most probably be conducted *entirely in English.* Even though you may have score the minimum band score of 6 and gained entry to a Western university, you may still struggle to comfortably understand key points in lectures. The higher your band score, the easier you will find your transition into English speaking university life. Students will often find that the lower their band score, the longer they need to spend re-learning and re-visiting their learning from university lessons and lectures. This can be time consuming and stressful, therefore aim to increase your fluency in preparation for this.

Many students and IELTS graduates will agree that studying and completing the IELTS test can be very challenging, with a lot of self-study and practice required. Many students take a course a language school, enroll in an online course and practice by themselves at home. Although it can take some time (weeks, months or even years), most students do reach their required score with a committed effort.

IELTS Preparation

How successful your IELTS studies are ultimately boils down to **two key factors:** Firstly, your level of fluency in English at the time of the test, and secondly, the quality of your IELTS preparation and studies,
As stated often in the IELTS 7 Plus online course series, increasing your levels of fluency in English will take some time. However, there are many strategies that can be used and applied to improve your score in IELTS. Having a thorough understanding of the IELTS test, how you are assessed and what kind of questions you may need to answer will help boost your score. The IELTS 7 Plus courses aim to both increase your fluency (vocabulary, phrases and key language) and understand the test (band descriptors, test format).

Super Quick IELTS Preparation Tips

Here are some quick and easy to use tips that if used correctly will help in your IELTS preparation.

- **Read (A LOT!)** – Reading is scientifically proven to be the most effective way in our boosting our language skills. It is shown to quickly widen vocabulary and aid in grammatical accuracy. There are many academic type texts that you can easily read both online and in a traditional format. Newspapers, websites such as BBC and National Geographic and books and journals are all excellent sources of reading resources.

- **Join a study group** – There are many excellent online groups you can use to aid in your IELTS preparation, including the IELTS 7 Plus Facebook and YouTube channels. Try searching on Facebook for "IELTS study groups". Join these groups and utilize the shared resources there.

- **Get a language exchange partner** – Specifically for speaking, I recommend all students try to find a language exchange partner. If you live in an area where there are many native English speakers, then maybe you could find a partner to meet in person. If not, using Skype can also be a big a help. Your language exchange doesn't have to be a native speaker (although it is useful if that's

possible). Google "language exchange" and use websites such as Facebook to find your English language study partner.

- **Radio and TV** – utilizing radio, podcasts, TV and movies can also help to boost your English language proficiency. Try searching for media you have an interest in and play it often in the background at your home.

- **Complete the whole course** – Work through all the lessons in the IELTS 7 Plus course you are enrolled to. As stated throughout each course, it would be highly beneficial to make notes of key information and language that is focused on each lesson.

IELTS Writing Overview

Of all four sections of the IELTS test, students are often the most worried about the writing section. There are **two tasks** that the student must complete within the time frame of **one hour**

> **Task 1:** The student will be given some *visual information:* data in the form of *graphs, tables, charts, diagrams or maps.* Task 1 is worth around 33% of your final IELTS writing score and students should spend around 20 minutes on this task.

> **Task 2:** In task 2, the student must write a short essay on a common, global topic. You may need to *disagree or agree* with an opinion, or you might need to suggest a *solution to a problem* that you will read about. Task 2 is worth around 66% of your final IELTS writing score, therefore your time limit is recommended to be set at 40 minutes.

"What Do I Write About?"

This is one of the most frequent questions asked by students, along with *"What if I am unfamiliar with the topic or data?"*. You must remember that IELTS is only testing your fluency in the English language and not your understanding of current or global topics. If you are new IELTS, at first the IELTS Writing question types may be confusing or seem quite daunting. With practice, you will begin to feel more confident with the question types and writing test format and this will increase your chances of scoring a higher band score.

"How Do I Write My Answer?"

For both Task 1 and Task 2 in IELTS writing, there are writing structures to follow to help easily organize your answers. These are taught throughout the IELTS 7 Plus course and I highly recommend sticking to the structures taught there. In this section of the eBook I will again explain the structure for both Task 1 and Task 2 but recommend watching the course lessons for further examples and learning.
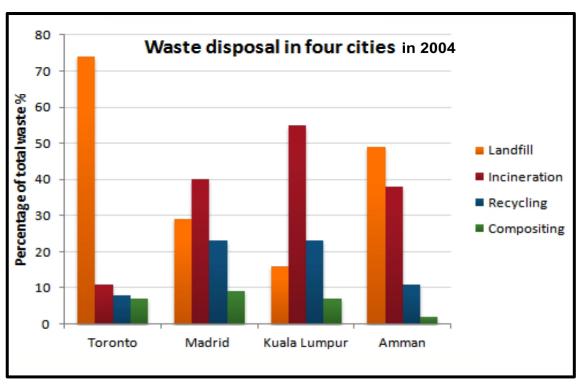
IELTS Writing – Task 1

Task 1 of the IELTS Academic Writing paper deals with writing a report about some visual information presented to you. This visual information is data in the from of graphs, charts, tables, maps or processes. It may also be that there are two or more different pieces of visual information to describe. For example, you may see a bar chart and a pie chart both showing data for electricity usage in the 1990's. Again, the format of this section of the test becomes a lot easier as you practice and see more Task 1 example questions.

You should write at least 150 words for this section of the IELTS writing test. If you should write less than this amount, you will incur a penalty to your score. On the other hand, needlessly writing 200 or more words will both waste time and won't score you any extra marks. Try to stay between 150-180 words if possible, although don't spend time counting everything.

Task 1 Example Question

> _"The bar chart shows types of waste disposal in 4 cities in the year 2004. Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features and make comparisons where relevant."_

There are two sentences in this question. The first sentence gives you the valuable information about what the data shows. The second sentence, "*Summarise the information by selecting and....*" appears in all Task 1 questions and won't help you answer the question.

There are *three key pieces of information* that you should describe in your report. These are…

1. **What is the key data shown?**
   i. *What is the data really showing you?*
2. **What are the trends?**
   i. *Does the data increase or decrease?*
3. **What are the differences and similarities?**
   i. *Where are big differences in data shown? Is anything similar?*

The examiner will be looking for a report that fully details the main features of the data shown. By answering these three questions, you will be able to report the key data in the visual information shown to you.

Structuring Your Task 1 Report

You can follow this *four-part structure* to write your IELTS Writing Task 1 report. To use this structure, you will need to split the data you see into two groups. Each group will be discussed in its own short paragraph, making your report more organized and easier to understand.

- **Introduction**
  - Paraphrase the first sentence in the Task 1 question to introduce your report. Synonyms will be very useful here!

- **Overview**
  - Gives a very short "Big Picture" of what the data is showing. You should not contain any facts of figures but say what generally you can see from the graph. For example, "Overall, the data shows us that in all four cities more must be done to recycle waste. Typically, many cities use landfills to

dispose of their waste." In this overview, only the "Big Picture" is given and not specific numbers or data.

- **Detail Paragraph 1**
    - Group 1: Look at the specific facts, figures and trends that can be seen in group 1 of your data. Here you can go into detail about what happens in the data you can see.

- **Detail Paragraph 2**
    - Group 2: Repeat focused report of data for group 2.

As discussed in the writing section of IELTS 7 Plus, you **should not describe every feature of the data you see.** This would result in wasted time and a very long report. Only describe the *largest* points of interest in the visual information.

Splitting the Data into Two Groups

It is necessary to split the data you see into two groups. In doing so, you can write about each group in a separate detail paragraph (there are two detail paragraphs). This very much helps to keep your report logically organized, which the examiner will be looking for in your report.

How you split the data in two groups depends on which approach seems most logical to you. There is no definite right answer here therefore group by which seems most comfortable to you. For example, if the data shows European countries and Asian countries, it would be most logical to order into the two continents.

IELTS Writing – Task 1 Vocabulary

Key Vocabulary for IELTS Writing Task 1

It is essential to remember **not to repeat vocabulary too often,** as the examiner is looking for your ability to use a *range of vocabulary.* For this reason, a strong understanding of synonyms (words with similar meanings) is highly important. Reading, as stated earlier in this eBook, is an excellent strategy for increasing your vocabulary. Here is a list of highly useful vocabulary for inclusion in your Task 1 report.

Introduction Paragraph Vocabulary

Opener	Information Type	Verb
The given The preceding The supplied The shown	Bar chart / graph Table / diagram Map / pie chart	Shows / illustrates Compares / gives Describes / depicts Gives information *(emit the "s" if there is multiple types of data)*

Here are some example introduction sentences using this table.

- *"The supplied bar chart and table show the average consumption of fast food in Australian homes over a five-year period."*

- *"The given map illustrates the development of a town in two different time periods."*

Vocabulary for Describing Graphs, Charts and Tables

Indicating upward movement:

Nouns / Verbs

A rise / to rise… *"There was a sharp rise in…"*

An increase / to increase / to go up… *"An increase in participation between…"*
A climb / to climb… *"The amounted climbed over the next three years to…"*
A jump / to jump… *"A sharp jump from 60% to 85% occurred from 1985 to….."*

Indicating downward movement:

Nouns / Verbs
A fall / to fall… *"Public commuting by train fell to under…"*
A drop / to drop… *"A sudden drop of over 2000…"*
A decline / to decline… *"Numbers declined to over half the original…"*
A decrease / to decrease… *"Livestock decreased in Singapore over…"*

Indicating stability or no change

Nouns / Verbs
To level off at… *"This figure then levelled off at 45,000…"*
To remain stable at… *"Homes using solar power remained stable at…"*
To plateau… *"Subscription to the tennis club plateaued at 80 new members…"*

Time Connectives for Process Diagrams

Process diagrams are another type of visual information that you may be presented with in your IELTS writing test. Students are often confused when they begin practicing reporting the key features of a diagram. The main point to remember is that you need to **time order** what each process of the diagram is doing in the correct order. For this we can use "time connectives" to begin our sentences.

First Stage	Middle Stages	Final Stage
To begin with… In the beginning… Initially…	Next… After that… Then… Following this… At this point…	Finally… Ultimately…

It is not uncommon for a process diagram to have multiple stages shown (usually between 4 – 7 stages). Therefore, you will need to use several middle stage time

connectives. Below are examples of using time connectives to describe three stages of farming cows.

*"**To begin with**, we can see that grass is sewn into the field of the farm in order to feed cattle."*

*"**After that**, the cows are separated into boys and girls in order to change feeding amounts."*

*"**Finally**, the female cows give birth to live young, that are fed with milk until they are able to feed on their own."*

Key Vocabulary for Maps

When writing a report on maps, students need to **describe change**, usually on the same map in two different time periods.

Expanding	Removing	Additions	Change into something
Enlarged Expanded Extended Made bigger Developed	Demolished Knocked down Pulled down Removed Torn down Cut down *(trees and fauna)*	Constructed Built Erected Introduced Added Planted *(trees and fauna)* Opened up (facilities)	Converted Redeveloped Replaced Made into Modernised Renovated

Remember to look through *and* note down language shown in the Task 1 vocabulary lesson and model answer lessons in the IELTS 7 Plus course.

IELTS Writing – Task 2

During Task 2 of the IELTS writing section, students must write an essay about statement given to them. In contrast to the Task 1 report, which is very factual and figure-based, Task 2 often requires students to express their own opinions or ideas. The statement could be on several global topics, from rising population to technology in schools. Please remember, IELTS is not testing your knowledge of current events, only your fluency in English. As with Task 1, there is a suggested structure to help organise your Task 2 essay.

You should write at least 250 words for Task 2 in the suggested time limit of 40 minutes. Task 2 is worth 66% of your final IELTS writing band score. Again, if you write less than 250 words, the examiner will deduct points from your score. To help with time management, only aim to write a little over 250 words, although you won't have time to count as the 60-minute IELTS writing time limit is short.

Task 2 Example Question

> *"Some people believe that the best way to reduce crime is to increase the length of the prison sentence. Other people, however, believe there are better methods to reduce crime. **Discuss both views** and <u>give your opinion."</u>*

In this question, the statement is asking the student to discuss both sides of opposing ideas *(ways to reduce crime)* and express their own opinion on the matter. There are five question types that you may be presented with in the IELTS Writing Task 2 essay, all five of which are covered in depth in the IELTS 7 Plus course.

Structuring Your Task 2 Essay

Much like the Task 1 report, Task 2 also has a writing structure that can be applied to all question types. Again, this will help you to organise your ideas logically, making your essay easier to understand and read. In both Task 1 and Task 2, how well you organise your writing counts towards your final band score. Here is the 4-step structure for Task 2 essays:

- **Introduction**
  - The introduction paragraph contains three sentences only. You can remember each sentence as *Paraphrase, Plan, Outline*. Your first sentences will *paraphrase* the question given to you. Your second sentence will *plan* or state what your essay will discuss. And your *outline* sentence will give more detail about the information upcoming in your essay.

Example Question: "Some believe people now have to work longer hours in more stressful environments than before. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?"

*Example Introduction: "Many now feel that employees must work longer hours in more difficult conditions than previously **(paraphrase).** This essay will explore reasons for disagreeing with this popular opinion **(plan).** Firstly, I will discuss how in many countries the law protects workers' rights, and secondly I will compare current work conditions to those in the past **(outline)."***

- **Supporting Paragraph 1 + 2**
  - In the supporting paragraph, you will include all the detail and information you wish discuss in your essay. There are 3 main types of sentences that you can always include in your supporting paragraphs. **Topic sentence:** *The main idea you wish to discuss.* **Support sentence:** *Adds extra information about the topic sentence and states why it is important.* **Example sentence:** *Provides a real-life example.*

Example Question: "Some believe people now have to work longer hours in more stressful environments than before. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?"

*Example Supporting Paragraph 1: "In many modern societies that are economically and culturally developed, laws have been created to protect the rights of common workers **(topic sentence)**. These laws mean employers must have respect for their employees **(support sentence)**. For example, if a person's*

*working hours are set to 40 hours a week, any hours spent over this must legally be paid in overtime compensation (**example sentence**)."*

- o *This would only be around half of one full supporting paragraph.*

- **Conclusion**
  - To get a band score of 6 or higher, you must include a conclusion in your essay. This is made up of either 1 or 2 sentences and summarises the main ideas in your essay. It may also include your opinion depending on the question asked for it.

  - *Example Question: "Some believe people now have to work longer hours in more stressful environments than before. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?"*

  - *Example Conclusion: "In conclusion, it's clear that different jobs in different times have mixed work conditions. However, in my opinion, working conditions overall have improved in comparison to the work environments of previous generations."*

IELTS Writing – Task 2 Vocabulary

Key Vocabulary for IELTS Writing Task 2

It is more difficult to predict the type of vocabulary we need to use in IELTS Writing Task 2. In Task 1, we know for certain we will have to describe trends, such as increases and decreases. Therefore, we can easily learn this language and apply it in our Task 1 report.

However, the topics in Task 2 are varied and will need an understanding of vocabulary and synonyms *relevant to the question's topic.* For example, if your Task 2 question is around the topic of "sport", having an understanding of sport specific vocabulary will be highly useful in writing your Task 2 essay. This type of topic relevant language is called *"topic specific vocabulary".*

Here is a list of some **general vocabulary** to be used in your supporting paragraphs.

Topic Sentence
To begin with
Firstly
First of all
To start with
Many people feel
In the first place

*Example Topic Sentence: "**Many people feel** that nowadays spend too much time playing on computers and computer games instead of spending quality time socialising with family and friends."*

Supporting Sentence
Furthermore

As a result of
Moreover
Consequently
What is more
As an effect

*Example Supporting Sentence: "**Consequently,** young children and adolescents are not developing their communication skills and can find it difficult to express their feelings to others."*

The following vocabulary lists will show some common IELTS Writing Part 2 **topic specific vocabulary.** This list is not extensive as there are many different topics that you could have to discuss in your Part 2 essay. For this reason, online resources such as BBC News, National Geographic and other current media outlets are useful for further reading around a range of topics.

Technology	Education	Health
Device	Educational system	Wellness
Social media	Social impact	Physical well being
Cutting edge	Attainment	Mental well being
Must have	Academic	Fitness
Intuitive	Graduate	Infection
Breakthrough	Hands-on	Obesity
Design	Welfare	Vitamins

Environment	Society	Arts
Pollution	Values	Creative
Conservation	Stereotype	Exhibition
Eco friendly	Globalization	Abstract

Endangered	Emigrate	Performance
Global warming	Contribute	Inspired
Habitat	Poverty	Acclaim
Fossil fuels	Culture shock	Festival

IELTS Speaking Overview

The IELTS Speaking section of the test is divided into **3 parts** and takes around **11 – 14 minutes** in total. Below is an overview of what each part requires from you.

> **Part 1:** *Greetings and introductions*
> **Part 2:** *Topic cue card – Extended speaking*
> **Part 3:** *Interview style questions*

Part 1 Basics *(4 – 5 minutes)*
In part 1 of the IELTS Speaking test, you will greet the examiner and make some short polite introductions. Then you will answer around 12 questions of familiar, common topics. Remember to give *extended answers* to questions; overly short answers will generally lose you marks. In part 1, questions will often be about *family, friends, work and studies.*

Part 2 Basics *(3 – 4 minutes)*
You will be given a cue card asking you to describe a common topic. On this card will be some prompts with ideas about what you could speak about. You have 1 minute to write notes to plan your answer. You must the talk uninterrupted for between 1 to 2 minutes about the cue card. There are a broad range of topics that could be presented to you, but they will be something that should be reasonably familiar, be it *sports, arts, education, family, books, holidays* or more. Here is an example of what the cue card will look like…

Describe a holiday that you enjoyed…
You should say
- Where this holiday was
- Who you went with
- When you went there
And explain why you enjoyed this holiday

Although it is recommended to cover the prompts given on the cue card, you can extend your speaking to more areas if they are relevant to the topic.

Part 3 Basics *(4 – 5 minutes)*
During part 3 of the Speaking test, you will answer more questions from the examiner. In this stage of the test, the examiner can react to your answer and change their question depending on your response. This makes part 3 less scripted and more like an informal interview or conversation. The questions in part 3 of the test will *relate to the topic discussed in part 2* of the test.

Pronunciation for the Speaking Section

A very common question of concern from students, is what type of accent or dialect is best to use in the IELTS Speaking test. *"Is an American accent better than an Australian accent?".* There is no favoured style of accent in the IELTS Speaking test. Concentrate on speaking clearly with expression so that the examiner can easily understand you and you are interesting to listen to. Using features of pronunciation, such as *contractions* (have not = haven't) will benefit your score in the IELTS Speaking test.

IELTS Speaking – Vocabulary

There are lots of phrases and vocabulary that could be taught in preparation for the IELTS Speaking test. Below is a list of highly useful vocabulary that can easily be used on the day of your test.

Opinion Openers

The examiner will be listening to how well you have organised your speaking into logical, easily understood parts. For example, *you wouldn't start with the end of a story* as this would be confusing to understand. By using opinion openers, you organise your language into parts and signal to the examiner you are beginning your speaking.

Opinion Openers
Well, it seems to me…
In my opinion…
Personally speaking, I fell that…
I believe…

Conversation Fillers

In informal conversation, people often use phrases such as *"err"* and *"uh"* when they are considering what to say next. It is important that you don't use these phrases in your IELTS Speaking test. The examiner wants you to be able to express yourself with confidence and only a few pauses. In place of the above, more

natural fillers, you can use the following conversation fillers to buy some thinking time whilst speaking.

Conversation Fillers
That's a really good question…
Well, let me think about that…
It's difficult to say really…
To be honest, I've never really thought about that…

Connectives

As with opinion openers, connectives can help you to organise your speaking and add relevant information. Connectives will help you to extend your speaking and discuss ideas in detail.

Connectives
Therefore…
For this reason…
So…
As a result…

Idiomatic Language

Idiomatic language has **a meaning that seems very different** to what you hear or read. A common example is *"raining cats and dogs"*. This doesn't mean that animals are falling from the sky, but in fact the rain is very heavy. It is often very

difficult to understand idioms without an explanation of their true meaning. Idiomatic language can be an excellent addition to your speaking skills. However, *students often make these common mistake:* Using idioms native speakers don't understand. Using idioms incorrectly or out of context. Adding too many idioms to their speaking, therefore sounding unnatural. Therefore, I recommend being careful in your use of idiomatic language. Below is a list of common, widely understood idioms and their meanings.

Idiom	Meaning
Piece of cake	Something that is easy to do. *"That IELTS lesson was a piece of cake!"*.
Lost touch	Someone you no longer speak to. *"We're still friends but kind of lost touch."*
Play it by ear	Not having a clear plan. *"We can play it by ear and decide later."*
Cost an arm and a leg (British)	Something very expensive. *"That concert ticket cost an arm and a leg!"*
Over the moon	Being very happy. *"I was over the moon about my lottery win."*
Warm hearted	Describing a person as kind. *"My mother is so calm and warm hearted."*

IELTS Speaking – Example Cue Cards

Describe a person who makes you laugh…
You should say
who the person is
how you know him/her
how she/he makes you laugh
And explain how important laughing is in your life

Describe a person you know who can speak two languages…
You should say
who the person is
how long you have known them
what languages they can speak
And explain why it is helpful to speak more than one language

Describe a book that had a major influence on you...
You should say
What the book is
How you heard about it
When you first read
And explain why this book has influenced you

Describe a childhood memory…
You should say
What this memory is
When it happened
How it affected you
And explain why this memory is important to you now

Describe a museum you enjoyed visiting…
You should say
where the museum is
when you visited it
what exhibits the museum contains
And explain why you enjoyed visiting that museum

Describe a team you have been a member of…
You should say
what the team was
when you joined it
what your role in the team was
And explain why you enjoyed being a member of that team

Describe a recent happy experience…
You should say
when it was

Describe an activity you do to keep fit…
You should say
what it is

what happened who you shared the experience with And say why that event made you so happy	how often you do it where you do it And explain why you chose to do that exercise

Describe a photograph you remember… You should say when it was taken who took it what was in the photograph And explain why you remember that photograph	Describe a time in your life you were very busy… You should say Why you were busy When this was How you managed And explain why you were so busy

Describe a time when you have had a disagreement… You should say when it happened who you disagreed with what you disagreed about And explain what happened because of your argument	Describe an important historical event… You should say when it happened what happened who were the most important people involved And say why you think it was important

IELTS Listening Overview

There are 4 sections in the IELTS listening test. In total you will be asked 40 questions that assess your listening skills in *understanding topics and factual information*, as well as *recognising opinions or attitudes*. You will have 30 minutes to complete the test and an extra 10 minutes to transfer your answers to an official answer sheet. It's important to note that the audio will not repeat and will only be played once.

Here is a quick explanation of each of the 4 sections in the IELTS listening test.

1. **Section 1** – A conversation between 2 people *(social)*
2. **Section 2** – A monologue which could be a speech *(social)*
3. **Section 3** – 2 to 4 people discussing an *academic* subject
4. **Section 4** – Monologue on an *academic* subject

Each section of the test has their own individual piece of audio. Each section will have 10 questions in total.

"What types of question will I need to answer?"

There are **5 main question types** that you may need to answer in your IELTS Listening test. There are…

1. Matching – *Matching possible answers correctly*
2. Fill in the blank – *Fill in missing information heard in the audio*
3. Map/Diagram – *Complete and label a map or diagram*
4. Multiple choice – *Choose the correct answers from given options*
5. Short answer – *Answer a question in up to 3 words*

IELTS Listening Tips

Here is a collection of important tips and hints to help you with your IELTS Listening preparation. It is also highly recommended you complete *all Listening practice tests* in the IELTS 7 Plus course, as this will help familiarise you with the test format and question types.

The IELTS Listening Answer Sheet

You will be given an IELTS Listening answer sheet to fill in by the end of the listening test. You have 10 minutes to do this after hearing all audio from the test. You must make sure you accurately transfer your answers from the *test booklet* to the *answer sheet,* as if your answers are not recorded correctly you could lose marks. Make sure your grammar is correct in your answer. For example, if you answer "america" instead of "America" you will lose a point due to missing capitalization. Also make sure your spelling is accurate, as incorrect spelling will lose you marks.

The IELTS Listening General Tips

1. **Complete practice tests**
    i. As previously stated, it's very important you complete the practice test from the IELTS 7 Plus course. See the IELTS Listening section for these tests.

2. **Read upcoming questions**
    i. You will be given some time to read the questions before each recording is played. It's very important you do this to families yourself with the questions before hearing the audio.

3. **Don't panic!**
    i. When first practicing IELTS listening tests, you may feel worried you don't understand everything that you hear. Remember the questions given and concentrate your listening for key words. For

example, if the question asks for an address, a *road name* would signal a possible answer.

4. **Word count**

    i. As part of the instructions for a short answer question, you will be given a strict word count to follow in writing your answer. You *must not* go over this instructed word count, as doing so will lead to an incorrect answer.

IELTS Reading Overview

The IELTS Reading test assesses your ability to read in English, by locating information quickly and understanding parts of a text. Overall, the IELTS reading test is judging your *overall fluency in reading.* The test takes 60 minutes to complete in total and there are 3 sections in the test. Much like the IELTS Listening test, IELTS reading also has a mix of different question types. In total, you will need to answer 40 questions about the texts provided to you within the 60-minute time limit.

Time Management

At first, 60 minutes seems a generous amount of time to complete only 40 questions. However, many students struggle to complete the IELTS reading test within this time frame. There are many strategies for time management shared within the IELTS 7 Plus course, but here are a few more ideas to help you answer all questions. Remember, *it will not be possible to read every word in all texts*. You will need to *skim and scan* to locate key information or passages. Another key tip is take practice reading tests with a set time limit of 60 minutes.

Skimming, Scanning and Reading for Detail

The three skills of skimming, scanning and reading for detail will help you achieve a higher score in the IELTS Reading test. Here is a brief overview of what each skill is…

- **Skimming** – This is a way to read a text very quickly. When skimming, we don't read every word carefully and is a type of speed reading. Skimming can also mean reading the *first and last* sentence in a paragraph to gain simple understanding of passage's meaning or purpose.

- **Scanning** – Scanning is also a type of speed reading. Hardly any words are read, but our eyes zoom over the entire text to locate key information such as keywords or figures (dates, numbers).

- **Reading for Detail** – This core reading skill means reading word for word in order to understanding the full meaning of the text. You will not have time to read all texts carefully in your IELTS reading test, so will need to use all three core reading skills to succeed.

"What types of question will I need to answer?"

There are 10 IELTS reading questions that you may need to answer in your test. Some question types are more popular than others, so you may not need to answer all question types.

1. Short answer questions
2. True, false, not given
3. Label a diagram
4. Matching sentence endings
5. Matching names
6. Multiple choice
7. Sentence completion
8. Summary completion
9. Matching heading
10.   Matching information to paragraphs