

IELTS COMPLETE PRACTICE

LEVEL 4: Upper-Intermediate • Target band 5.5–6.5

CORRECTED EDITION: FULL READING, LISTENING SCRIPTS AND SPEAKING PARTS 1–3

Four complete units. Listening scripts are for a teacher or partner to read aloud twice; they are not audio recordings. Students should not look at the script during the listening exercise.

Suggested practice order: Listening → Reading → Writing → Speaking. Check the answer guide only after attempting the questions.

UNIT 1: URBANISATION

A. LISTENING — TEACHER SCRIPT

A regional team surveyed 600 workers who had moved to cheaper housing outside the city. Their average one-way commute had increased from 32 to 51 minutes. Lower rent helped household budgets, but fuel and transport costs absorbed some savings. The team compared more suburban buses, secure bicycle routes to rail stations and incentives for two days of remote work each week. Buses could help the most people but required a continuing budget. Officials planned a six-month trial before choosing a permanent option.

Questions 1–5. Answer in short phrases or sentences.

1. What is the main situation described?
2. Give one specific fact, figure or example from the script.
3. What benefit or positive result is mentioned?
4. What difficulty or concern is identified?
5. What action or recommendation is proposed?

B. READING

Urbanisation brings jobs, education and cultural opportunities within reach of larger populations. Businesses benefit from being near suppliers, customers and skilled workers, while residents may gain access to specialist hospitals and universities. When growth is managed well, public transport and shared infrastructure can serve people efficiently.

Rapid expansion also creates less visible costs. If housing near employment centres becomes unaffordable, workers move to the outskirts and spend more time commuting. Congestion increases, public transport becomes crowded and families lose time together. Development at the edge of a city may replace farmland or natural habitats, making later restoration difficult.

There is no single solution. Homes near transport hubs can reduce travel distances, but only if ordinary earners can afford them. Reliable trains and buses can make outer neighbourhoods practical, while flexible working may reduce peak-hour demand. Planning should consider who can afford housing, how people reach jobs and whether essential services keep pace with population growth.

Questions 6–12

6. Choose the best summary: A) The topic has one simple cause. B) The passage considers benefits, limitations and possible responses. C) No action is needed.
7. Identify one benefit or opportunity mentioned.
8. Identify one risk, limitation or unequal effect discussed.
9. True / False / Not Given: The writer suggests the same response works in every situation.
10. What practical response or principle does the writer recommend?
11. Find a word or phrase close in meaning to 'careful judgement'.
12. Summarise the passage in 25–35 words.

C. WRITING

What problems does rapid urbanisation create, and what measures can governments take to address them?

Suggested timing: 40 minutes. Develop a clear position, organise ideas logically, support claims with examples and check grammar.

D. SPEAKING — FULL IELTS FORMAT

Part 1: Short questions (4–5 minutes)

1. What do you like about where you live?
2. Has your area changed recently?

3. How do you usually travel to work or school?
4. Would you prefer a city or a small town?
5. What facilities should every neighbourhood have?

Part 2: Individual long turn

Describe a city or town that has changed significantly. Say what it was like before, what changed, why the changes happened, and whether you think they were positive.

Prepare for 1 minute; speak for 1–2 minutes. Aim for a connected answer with details and examples.

Part 3: Two-way discussion (4–5 minutes)

1. What causes rapid urbanisation?
2. How can cities remain affordable as they grow?
3. Should governments encourage people to live outside major cities?
4. How does commuting affect family life?
5. Can technology solve problems caused by urban growth?

Self-assessment: Rate fluency/coherence, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation from 1–5. Write one specific goal for your next attempt.

UNIT 2: CRIME AND REHABILITATION

A. LISTENING — TEACHER SCRIPT

A local employment charity evaluated a programme for people leaving prison. Participants received digital training, interview practice and six months of mentoring. Of the first 80 participants, just over half found paid work within a year. The charity warned that the result was not conclusive because participants had volunteered and there was no comparison group. Employers valued mentors' help during the first weeks of employment. The charity planned to compare results with a similar group and follow outcomes for two years.

Questions 1–5. Answer in short phrases or sentences.

1. What is the main situation described?
2. Give one specific fact, figure or example from the script.
3. What benefit or positive result is mentioned?
4. What difficulty or concern is identified?
5. What action or recommendation is proposed?

B. READING

Debates about crime often focus on punishment, but public safety also depends on what happens after a sentence ends. People leaving prison without housing, work experience or support may face pressure to return to illegal activity. Rehabilitation aims to reduce this risk by addressing practical barriers and developing skills for a stable life.

Education and employment support can help, although their effects are difficult to measure. A person who completes training may still struggle to find work because of discrimination, few local vacancies or unreliable transport. Programmes combining qualifications, mentoring and links to employers may therefore be more useful than courses that end when a certificate is issued.

Critics argue that rehabilitation can seem too generous to people who have caused harm. Victims need support, and serious offences may require restrictions. Yet accountability and rehabilitation are not opposites. A justice system can require offenders to face consequences while reducing the likelihood of future victims. Careful evaluation and public reporting are essential if rehabilitation is to be more than a well-intentioned promise.

Questions 6–12

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8. Identify one risk, limitation or unequal effect discussed.
9. True / False / Not Given: The writer suggests the same response works in every situation.
10. What practical response or principle does the writer recommend?
11. Find a word or phrase close in meaning to 'careful judgement'.
12. Summarise the passage in 25–35 words.

C. WRITING

Some people believe prison should mainly punish offenders, while others think rehabilitation should be the main goal. Discuss both views.

Suggested timing: 40 minutes. Develop a clear position, organise ideas logically, support claims with examples and check grammar.

D. SPEAKING — FULL IELTS FORMAT

Part 1: Short questions (4–5 minutes)

1. What rules are important in public places?

2. Do young people have enough positive activities?
3. What helps people learn from mistakes?
4. Are people in your community helpful?
5. What makes a neighbourhood feel safe?

Part 2: Individual long turn

Describe a social problem your community has tried to solve. Say what it was, who was affected, what action was taken, and how successful the response was.

Prepare for 1 minute; speak for 1–2 minutes. Aim for a connected answer with details and examples.

Part 3: Two-way discussion (4–5 minutes)

1. Should prison mainly punish offenders or rehabilitate them?
2. How can communities prevent youth crime?
3. What responsibilities do employers have towards people with difficult backgrounds?
4. How should governments balance safety and individual rights?
5. How can we tell whether a social programme works?

Self-assessment: Rate fluency/coherence, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation from 1–5. Write one specific goal for your next attempt.

UNIT 3: GLOBALISATION AND LOCAL BUSINESS

A. LISTENING — TEACHER SCRIPT

For thirty years, the Patel family ran a small bookshop. When a large online retailer began offering next-day delivery and lower prices, sales fell. The family considered closing but developed a website for local orders, hosted reading evenings and partnered with schools. Online sales did not replace lost walk-in trade, but events brought customers into the shop and built loyalty. The owner said the key was not beating large companies on price; it was offering advice, local knowledge and experiences a warehouse could not provide.

Questions 1–5. Answer in short phrases or sentences.

1. What is the main situation described?
2. Give one specific fact, figure or example from the script.
3. What benefit or positive result is mentioned?
4. What difficulty or concern is identified?
5. What action or recommendation is proposed?

B. READING

Globalisation connects markets, people and production across borders. Consumers may gain cheaper goods, businesses can reach new customers and countries can attract investment that creates jobs. Knowledge and technology can also help firms improve productivity. These gains, however, are rarely shared evenly.

Small businesses may struggle against international companies with large budgets, efficient distribution and recognisable brands. Workers exposed to cheaper imports may lose jobs before new opportunities appear. Communities can become dependent on a narrow range of employers or distant supply chains, so disruption abroad can quickly affect local prices and availability.

Governments cannot prevent all economic change, nor would doing so necessarily benefit consumers. They can help workers retrain, support small firms adopting technology and enforce fair competition. Businesses can specialise, improve service or offer products rooted in local knowledge. The question is not whether globalisation is wholly good or bad, but how societies can preserve its benefits while helping people who bear its costs.

Questions 6–12

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9. True / False / Not Given: The writer suggests the same response works in every situation.
10. What practical response or principle does the writer recommend?
11. Find a word or phrase close in meaning to 'careful judgement'.
12. Summarise the passage in 25–35 words.

C. WRITING

Globalisation benefits everyone. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Suggested timing: 40 minutes. Develop a clear position, organise ideas logically, support claims with examples and check grammar.

D. SPEAKING — FULL IELTS FORMAT

Part 1: Short questions (4–5 minutes)

1. Do you prefer online or physical shops?
2. What small businesses are common in your area?

3. Do you usually buy well-known brands?
4. What makes you return to a shop?
5. Have your shopping habits changed?

Part 2: Individual long turn

Describe a local business that matters to your area. Say what it provides, who uses it, what challenges it faces, and why it matters to the community.

Prepare for 1 minute; speak for 1–2 minutes. Aim for a connected answer with details and examples.

Part 3: Two-way discussion (4–5 minutes)

1. How has globalisation changed local businesses?
2. Should people pay more to support independent shops?
3. What are the risks of relying on global supply chains?
4. Can small firms compete with online giants?
5. How should governments respond when an industry declines?

Self-assessment: Rate fluency/coherence, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation from 1–5. Write one specific goal for your next attempt.

UNIT 4: PUBLIC TRANSPORT

A. LISTENING — TEACHER SCRIPT

Norchester introduced a bus-only lane on a busy road for a three-month trial. Average bus journeys became eleven minutes shorter during the morning peak, and passenger numbers rose by eight percent. Some drivers complained that other lanes became slower near a large intersection. Researchers found the effect varied by time of day and recommended adjusting traffic signals before judging the trial. The council planned to collect data on cars, buses and cyclists and survey residents before deciding whether to make the lane permanent.

Questions 1–5. Answer in short phrases or sentences.

1. What is the main situation described?
2. Give one specific fact, figure or example from the script.
3. What benefit or positive result is mentioned?
4. What difficulty or concern is identified?
5. What action or recommendation is proposed?

B. READING

Transport policy shapes how people work, study and use public services. When most journeys depend on private cars, people gain flexibility, but roads become crowded and parking consumes valuable space. Traffic contributes to air pollution and makes streets less pleasant for pedestrians. Asking people to drive less is unlikely to succeed if alternatives are unreliable.

Public transport moves large numbers of people using less road space per passenger. Frequent services, clear information and safe connections between buses, trains and walking routes make it easier to leave a car at home. Cycling infrastructure can support short journeys, particularly when workplaces provide secure parking. However, improvements require investment, and central routes may not serve people working early or late shifts.

A fair transport system considers different needs. Older people, passengers with disabilities and families may require accessible stations and predictable services. Rural communities face different challenges from dense urban areas, so one policy will not work everywhere. Authorities should combine passenger data with public feedback and test changes before expanding them. The goal is to make lower-impact choices practical, not to eliminate cars in every situation.

Questions 6–12

6. Choose the best summary: A) The topic has one simple cause. B) The passage considers benefits, limitations and possible responses. C) No action is needed.
7. Identify one benefit or opportunity mentioned.
8. Identify one risk, limitation or unequal effect discussed.
9. True / False / Not Given: The writer suggests the same response works in every situation.
10. What practical response or principle does the writer recommend?
11. Find a word or phrase close in meaning to 'careful judgement'.
12. Summarise the passage in 25–35 words.

C. WRITING

Should governments invest more in public transport than in roads for private cars?

Suggested timing: 40 minutes. Develop a clear position, organise ideas logically, support claims with examples and check grammar.

D. SPEAKING — FULL IELTS FORMAT

Part 1: Short questions (4–5 minutes)

1. What transport do you use most often?

2. Is public transport convenient where you live?
3. Do you enjoy walking or cycling?
4. When is your area busiest?
5. What would make travelling easier?

Part 2: Individual long turn

Describe a journey you remember well. Say where you went, how you travelled, what happened, and why you remember it.

Prepare for 1 minute; speak for 1–2 minutes. Aim for a connected answer with details and examples.

Part 3: Two-way discussion (4–5 minutes)

1. Should governments invest more in public transport than roads?
2. How can cities encourage people to drive less?
3. Should public transport be free?
4. How should planners serve rural communities?
5. What transport changes may become common in the future?

Self-assessment: Rate fluency/coherence, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation from 1–5. Write one specific goal for your next attempt.

ANSWER GUIDE & TEACHER ASSESSMENT

Listening: Q1 the main situation in the script; Q2 any accurate detail or figure stated; Q3 the stated benefit; Q4 the stated concern; Q5 the proposed action. Accept equivalent wording supported by the script.

Reading: Q6 B. Q7 accept a benefit stated in the passage. Q8 accept a risk or limitation stated in the passage. Q9 False, because the passages discuss context, trade-offs or differing needs. Q10 accept a supported response or principle. Q11 accept a contextually appropriate synonym. Q12 assess whether the summary accurately captures the central idea and a supporting point in 25–35 words.

Speaking rubric

Fluency and coherence: sustained speech, logical organisation and natural linking. **Lexical resource:** precise vocabulary, paraphrasing and limited repetition. **Grammar:** varied structures with control and accuracy.

Pronunciation: clear speech, effective word stress, pacing and intonation.

Teacher note: Use Part 3 to encourage reasons, examples, comparisons, consequences and alternative viewpoints. These are original IELTS-style practice materials, not official IELTS tests.