

IELTS Listening Test 2

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SECTION 1

Speaker: You will hear a number of different recordings and you have to answer questions on what you hear.

There will be time for you to read the instructions and questions and you have a chance to check your work.

All the recordings will be played once only.

The test is in four sections.

At the end of the test, you will be given 10 minutes to transfer your answers to an answer sheet.

Now turn to Section 1.

Speaker: Section 1.

You will hear a conversation between a student and a housing advisor. First, you have some time to look at questions one to five. You will see that there is an example which has been done for you. On this occasion, only the conversation relating to this will be played first.

Housing Advisor: Good morning. How can I help you?

Female Student: Good morning. I understand you help international students find local housing.

Housing Advisor: That's correct. Please have a seat and I'll just take a few details.

Female Student: Thank you.

Housing Advisor: May I ask your full name?

Female Student: Wendy Garcia.

Housing Advisor: Could you spell your last name please?

Female Student: G-a-r-c-i-a.

Housing Advisor: I got it. Thank you. And what is your current address?

Speaker: The student's name is Wendy Garcia. So, Wendy Garcia has been written on the form. Now we shall begin. You should answer the questions as you listen because you will not hear the recording a second time. Listen carefully and answer questions one to five.

Housing Advisor: Good morning. How can I help you?

Female Student: Good morning. I understand you help international students find local housing.

Housing Advisor: That's correct. Please have a seat and I'll just take a few details.

Female Student: Thank you.

Housing Advisor: May I ask your full name?

Female Student: Wendy Garcia.

Housing Advisor: Could you spell your last name please?

Female Student: G-a-r-c-i-a.

Housing Advisor: I got it. Thank you. And what is your current address?

Female Student: Parklane Guesthouse, 14 Hill Rd.

Housing Advisor: I see. May I ask the phone number there?

Female Student: I believe it's 7-7-4-3-3-9-12. But I'm usually not there during the daytime.

Housing Advisor: Can you repeat that?

Female Student: 7-7-4-3-3-9-1-2 it's best to call me in the morning.

Housing Advisor: I understand. And can I ask you your age?

Female Student: I'm 19 next month.

Housing Advisor: And how long would you be planning to stay at your next accommodation?

Female Student: Currently my visa will expire in a month, but when I get my extension, I will be in the area another year, 12 months total.

Housing Advisor: You are under a student visa, is that right?

Female Student: Correct.

Housing Advisor: What are you currently studying?

Female Student: For now, I'm just studying English. I plan to study engineering after I improve my English.

Housing Advisor: From what I can tell, your English is top notch.

Female Student: Thank you. Yes, my speaking is advanced, but my writing and listening skills need a lot more development and practice.

Housing Advisor: Which area do you think you would prefer to live?

Female Student: Well, I'm studying at the local university, so I'd like to live within walking distance. I'd prefer somewhere that has a 10-to-20-minute walk to campus.

Housing Advisor: That shouldn't be difficult. There are often a lot of available rooms around this time of year.

Speaker: Before you hear the rest of the conversation, you have some time to look at Questions 6 to 10.

Now listen and answer questions 6 to 10.

Housing Advisor: Are you looking to live alone or have roommates?

Female Student: Of course, I'm hoping to live alone, but my budget may not allow that.

Housing Advisor: Do you prefer furnished or unfurnished housing?

Female Student: Furnished, including a fridge. As I do not have any of my own furniture.

Housing Advisor: What's your current budget?

Female Student: I can afford about £500 to £800 a month, including utilities and internet.

Housing Advisor: It may be difficult to find single fully furnished accommodations for that amount. For that amount, I'm afraid you'll have to live in shared housing if you want to live close to the university. Would it be possible to pay £900 a month?

Female Student: Unfortunately, that is outside my budget.

Housing Advisor: Would you be interested in living in town? You will be about 20 minutes away by bus.

Female Student: I'd really prefer just to walk every morning to my classes. But if I can only get shared housing, let's continue with that. I have lived with many wonderful people so far, so I'm not against having a roommate. But I'm really serious about improving my English, so I'd prefer any roommates to be native English speakers, or at least other students eager to improve their English.

Housing Advisor: I understand.

Female Student: I'd also like to mention that any roommate must be another woman. My family back home would never approve of me living with any man.

Housing Advisor: Yes, we only match roommates of the same gender.

Female Student: Oh, good.

Housing Advisor: And when would you want the room for?

Female Student: I'd like to move in in approximately 3 weeks.

Housing Advisor: Let me see. It's the 5th today. I do have a great room available on Monday the 27th. It will be shared with one female roommate from Germany. Would you like to take a look at it?

Female Student: Yes, that sounds great.

Speaker: That is the end of section one. You now have half a minute to check your answers.

Now turn to Section 2.

SECTION 2

Speaker: Section 2. You will hear an admissions officer from a UK university talking to a group of potential students about applying for a place at his university.

First, you have some time to look at Questions 11 to 15.

Now listen carefully and answer questions 11 to 15.

Admissions Officer: As I mentioned earlier, Outland University is located in one of the most scenic areas of the country. Although it's 2 hours from London, the natural surroundings provide an excellent environment to focus on your studies.

At Outland, we have a strong research capability. We came eighth out of 100 universities in last year's research assessment carried out by an international university ranking agency. We placed very well in subjects such as engineering and science. Actually, we got a top research grade of 10 for engineering, biochemistry, and computer sciences.

I would like to mention at this time, as many of you have asked me privately, is that we do our best to get our graduates internships immediately after they graduate. We are able to place many students, especially in the science and engineering fields, as our research departments have extremely close relationships with top companies in their respective industry.

Anyway, I think it's time to start discussing the admission process. If you do decide to apply to our university, what you need to do is to start your initial application on our website. Once I receive the initial application, I will then immediately send a confirmation e-mail and the application process begins. I personally review all applications and will notify you when more information or documents are needed. I would like to say that you must be patient during the application process. As we get hundreds of new applications weekly, it does take some time to process and review them.

We also check references listed in your application, so if we have problems contacting your references, this will also cause a delay. It's absolutely normal for this process to take four to five months. Again, during this period I may request additional documents, and of course, I'm always available to answer any questions or concerns you may have, plus reassure you that things are moving along.

A new program we have started to help new students who decide to apply, is to connect all potential new international students with current international students. If possible, from the same country. We'll give you their contact information, like a phone number or e-mail, and you are free to connect with them to ask questions and learn about the realities of campus life at Outland University.

It's important to know what to expect when you live and study at our university, plus important details about the campus atmosphere, level of education, facilities, food and even the weather. We understand there are so many aspects a new student must consider in making such a big decision. We are certain that once you connect and share information with current students, you will be more confident in making your decision to apply to our university. Once you arrive on campus, we have many volunteers students show you around and help you to adjust to campus life.

Speaker: Before you hear the rest of the talk, you have some time to look at questions 16 to 20.

Now listen and answer questions 16 to 20.

Admissions Officer: At this time, I'll address other concerns international students have expressed to me in one-to-one chats and emails. Almost 45% of our student body are international students like yourselves. We are fully aware of how difficult it is to

come to a new country, meet new people and get adjusted to the independent learning style of our college.

As you are all at different levels of English, we believe it is critical to continue to improve your English level to ensure a comfortable adjustment to campus life. From time to time, some students may feel a sense of isolation due to language and cultural differences. So, in addition to campus volunteers and support organisations, the local town also offers several organizations to help international students with any problems they may have. Our goal as a university and a community is to ensure that your time with us is enjoyable and useful.

A few of you inquired about student housing earlier, so I'll just give some details about that now. It's the university policy to give priority in the allocation of residence places to visiting students, exchange students, and new postgraduate students. However, demand exceeds supply, so there is still a need to put your name down early for campus accommodation. This means that the earlier you decide to enroll in our university, the more likely you can get into the dormitory. It's better for all to submit your application, get it processed and then your housing sorted as quick as possible. If you'd prefer to live off campus, or you were too late to get student housing, there are a multitude of options for inexpensive housing around the university or in town.

I must warn you that the good accommodations get snapped up months before the beginning of term. In other words, if you're starting in September, you need to be thinking about it in May or at the very latest June. So, you do need to think very carefully about what you need and how much you can afford to pay. Please think about these issues now. I stress that you should not delay on any housing issue. It can be quite stressful trying to obtain suitable accommodation a few days before the start of term.

The agencies in town are pretty good, it's just a matter of contacting them in good time. Of course, we have a full-time accommodation officer available to help all students. He'll contact you immediately after you have been accepted to our university. Our university housing staff is used to helping international students with lower levels of English, but there can be some communication issues with the agencies in town. Our accommodation officer will gladly deal with the agencies on your behalf.

Before I wrap up, I would just like to say a word about your level of spoken English. To be listening to me now, it is obvious that all of you have already achieved a lot. Having said that though, I'm afraid the lecturers will make little or no allowance for the presence of non-native speakers in the audience. It is vital that you continue to improve your English speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills even beyond the high levels most of you have already reached. If you feel your English is still lacking, and you're not fully prepared yet, I highly suggest you start getting some extra practice in the upcoming months before you arrive. After you start your semester, you'll find the coursework can be pretty intensive and you won't really have time to just focus on your English skills.

Thank you for listening to me today. I will open it up to questions at this point. If you have any questions, now is the time to ask.

Speaker: That is the end of Section 2. You now have half a minute to check your answers.

Now turn to Section 3.

SECTION 3

Speaker: Section 3. You will hear a discussion between a college teacher and two students, Valerie and Monty.

First, you have some time to look at Questions 21 to 26.

Now listen carefully and answer questions 21 to 26.

Professor: To begin with, I'd just like to say, Valerie and Monty, that I really enjoyed watching your in-class presentation about international student life in yesterday's class. I think the whole class enjoyed it as they asked a lot of questions afterward. You did really well, and I hope that you got a lot out of it. I'd like to take time now and help you reflect on the experience of doing this great presentation. So, Valerie, I was wondering what did you enjoy most about doing the presentation?

Valerie: I liked researching the topic.

Professor: Was it your first time to research such a large project?

Valerie: Yes, it was. It took me over three weeks to find and collect all the data.

Professor: Do you feel you had enough time to do the research?

Valerie: Yes, I had an ample amount of time.

Professor: OK. Valerie, thanks. What about you, Monty? What did you enjoy about the presentation?

Monty: Well, for me it was a very good chance to get to know international students from around the world. It was my first time to truly interact with them and hear their stories. I learned a lot about their lives, and I hope I relayed that well in my presentation.

Professor: Yes, you did well. Your passion for the project did come across during your presentation. Do you think you'll maintain contact with some of those students?

Monty: Well, I hope so. Unfortunately, a lot of the students I interviewed for the project have already returned to their home country. On the other hand, I've invited two of them over to have dinner with me next week.

Professor: That's great to hear, Monty. Valerie, were there any skills you learned from this project?

Valerie: I had to improve my public speaking skills before I presented to the class. I was very nervous in the weeks leading up to the presentation, so I practiced every single evening with Monty.

Professor: The both of you showed that you did a lot of preparation. You both looked well prepared. What about you, Monty? What was the most useful thing you learned?

Monty: I think it was how to talk to English learners.

Professor: What do you mean?

Monty: At first it was hard to understand their accents and their English. I kept asking them to repeat themselves and they asked the same of me. They had trouble when I spoke in my natural speed, so I slowed my English down so it was easier for them to understand. Over time, once I got used to different accents and ways of speaking English, communication became easier.

Professor: Did you teach them any English?

Monty: Yes, I taught them a lot of slang. And I even picked up a few words of other languages along the way.

Professor: I'm happy to hear you had such a positive experience with the international students. What else did you feel you'd learn from the project? Was it useful in other ways?

Valerie: Yes, I think I learned a lot about teamwork. Working with Monty was difficult at first because our styles are so different, but we managed to figure out how to work well with each other about a week into the project. We found ways of cooperating and compromising with each other that I think just made our presentation stronger and better.

Monty: I agree with you. But I would like to also add that I learned about time management.

Professor: Yes, working with others is a very useful experience.

Speaker: Before you hear the rest of the discussion, you have some time to look at Questions 27 to 30.

Now listen and answer questions 27 to 30.

Professor: During your interviews with the international students, did you find the students open about their experiences or a little shy to express themselves?

Monty: At first, they wouldn't open up. I think that was our fault because we didn't really have good questions prepared.

Professor: How did you improve?

Monty: Well, we filmed a few interviews and then rewatched them thinking of ways of how we can improve our interview techniques.

Valerie: Once we realized that we were part of the problem, we rewrote a few questions and tried more to make our interviewees comfortable before we started the interview.

Monty: We offered them water and just had a few minutes chit chat to get to know each other before the interview.

Professor: If you had to do the project all over again, is there anything you do differently?

Valerie: Yes, I would have sat down with Monty earlier and planned the whole project from interview to presentation in greater detail. I think we would have had a better project if we had planned it better. Also, I think we were too ambitious. We had planned to interview 30 people, but in the end, we managed to interview only 11 international students.

Monty: For me, I would have started finding interviewees earlier. It took anywhere from a few days to a week to finally arrange a meeting time and place with each student. It would have helped our schedule if we acted sooner. Also, I would've asked less questions. I wasted a lot of time asking unnecessary questions.

Valerie: I'm sure if we did the whole project again, we could do it in half the time.

Professor: You will get another chance next semester. We will be doing another presentation project with different content. Of course, you'll have an opportunity to put into practice what you've learned this time. Now, do you have any ideas about a different topic for next semester?

Speaker: That is the end of Section 3. You now have half a minute to check your answers.

Now turn to Section 4.

SECTION 4

Speaker: Section 4. You will hear part of a presentation given by a professor about philosophy. First, you have some time to look at Questions 31 to 40.

Now listen carefully and answer questions 31 to 40.

Professor: Ancient philosophy is not just about talking, lecturing, or even reading long complicated books. In reality, it is something people have used throughout history to solve their problems and to achieve their goals in life. To be more precise, I am referring to the philosophical movement known as Stoicism, which many people view today as the most practical type of philosophy as it is still relevant.

Stoicism originated in Ancient Greece and was created by Zeno of Citium in the early 3rd century BC, but was practised by the likes of Cato, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius. It is quite surprising that we still have access to these ideas due to the fact that the most famous Stoic philosophers never wrote anything down and did not expect for their work to be published. Cato definitely didn't. Marcus Aurelius never intended his Meditations to be anything more than personal reflection, and Seneca's letters were simply letters.

Stoic principles were formulated around the idea that people could have an unwavering happiness in this life, and the key to achieving this happiness was virtue. The road to virtue lay in understanding that negative emotions, like anger and jealousy, are under our control - they don't have to control us because we can learn to control them. In the words of Epictetus, "External events I cannot control, but the choices I make with regard to them, I do control."

The contemporary philosopher and writer, Nassim Nicholas Taleb, defines a Stoic as someone who has a different outlook on life experiences which most of us would see as being entirely negative. A Stoic "transforms fear into caution, pain into transformation, mistakes into initiation, and desire into undertaking." Using this definition as a model, we can see that throughout time, Stoicism, has been practised by many world leaders, businesspeople, artists, writers, and academics.

The founding fathers of the United States were heavily inspired by the philosophy. George Washington was introduced to Stoicism at age seventeen and later helped develop a play based on the life of Cato. Thomas Jefferson was also a follower of the Stoic movement and was known to keep a copy of Seneca beside his bed. A number of writers and artists have also been heavily influenced by this form of philosophy. Eugène Delacroix, the celebrated French Romantic artist, (known best for his painting, Liberty Leading the People), was an avid Stoic, referring to it as his "consoling religion".

The economist Adam Smith's theories on capitalism were significantly influenced by Stoicism, which he had studied as a schoolboy, under a teacher who had translated the works of Marcus Aurelius. Modern day political leaders have also been influenced by

the works of the Stoics, with many of them finding their inspiration from the ancient texts.

Former US president, Bill Clinton, rereads Marcus Aurelius every single year, and there have been comparisons made between former President Obama's calm leadership style and that of Cato.

The former prime minister of China, Wen Jiabao, claims that he has read Meditations more than one hundred times during his lifetime.

Albert Ellis is another figure that has been influenced by the Stoics. His work on Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, which is used to help people manage their problems by changing the way that they think and behave, is firmly rooted in Stoicism. These days, it is most commonly used to treat depression, with the overarching idea being that we can take control of our lives by challenging the illogical beliefs that create our damaged ways of thinking and behaving by using logic instead.

Stoicism has also seen its popularity rise in the world of business. Stoic values can help build the spirit and state of mind required to overcome setbacks in business. This is mainly because Stoics teach how to turn obstacles into opportunity, which is essential for every entrepreneur to learn.

I believe that studying Stoicism is still relevant in this day and age even though its origins are over two thousand years old. This is mainly down to the clear insights it gives on how to lead a good life. The source of its thinking is that there is always a simple way of living - control what you can and try to accept what you can't. Obviously, this is not as easy as it sounds and requires a significant amount of practice - it can take a lifetime to master.

A fundamental belief in Stoicism, is that happiness will not be found by searching for money, fame, power, or pleasure, but having a disciplined and principled character - something which seems to correlate with many people's thoughts today.

Speaker: That is the end of Section 4. You now have half a minute to check your answers.

That is the end of a listening test.

In the real IELTS test, you would now have 10 minutes to transfer your answers to the answer sheet.

Please spend a few minutes to check your answers.
