

## IELTS Speaking assessment criteria (band descriptors – public version)

| Band | Fluency and coherence   | Lexical resource   | Grammatical range and accuracy  | Pronunciation   |
|------|---|--|---|---|
| 9    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaks fluently with only rare repetition or self correction; any hesitation is content-related rather than to find words or grammar</li> <li>Speaks coherently with fully appropriate cohesive features</li> <li>Develops topics fully and appropriately</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses vocabulary with full flexibility and precision in all topics</li> <li>Uses idiomatic language naturally and accurately</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a full range of structures naturally and appropriately</li> <li>Produces consistently accurate structures apart from 'slips' characteristic of native speaker speech</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a full range of pronunciation features with precision and subtlety</li> <li>Sustains flexible use of features throughout</li> <li>Is effortless to understand</li> </ul>  |
| 8    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaks fluently with only occasional repetition or self-correction; hesitation is usually content related and only rarely to search for language</li> <li>Develops topics coherently and appropriately</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a wide vocabulary resource readily and flexibly to convey precise meaning</li> <li>Uses less common and idiomatic vocabulary skilfully, with occasional inaccuracies</li> <li>Uses paraphrase effectively as required</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a wide range of structures flexibly</li> <li>Produces a majority of error-free sentences with only very occasional inappropriateness or basic/unsystematic errors</li> </ul>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a wide range of pronunciation features</li> <li>Sustains flexible use of features, with only occasional lapses</li> <li>Is easy to understand throughout; 1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility</li> </ul>   |
| 7    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaks at length without noticeable effort or loss of coherence</li> <li>May demonstrate language-related hesitation at times, or some repetition and/or self-correction</li> <li>Uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with some flexibility</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses vocabulary resource flexibly to discuss a variety of topics</li> <li>Uses some less common and idiomatic vocabulary and shows some awareness of style and collocation, with some inappropriate choices</li> <li>Uses paraphrase effectively</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a range of complex structures with some flexibility</li> <li>Frequently produces error-free sentences, though some grammatical mistakes persist</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows all the positive features of band 6 and some, but not all, of the positive features of band 8</li> </ul>   |
| 6    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is willing to speak at length, though may lose coherence at times due to occasional repetition, self-correction or hesitation</li> <li>Uses a range of connectives and discourse markers but not always appropriately</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a wide enough vocabulary to discuss topics at length and make meaning clear in spite of inappropriateness</li> <li>Generally paraphrases successfully</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a mix of simple and complex structures, but with limited flexibility</li> <li>May make frequent mistakes with complex structures, though these rarely cause comprehension problems</li> </ul>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a range of pronunciation features with mixed control</li> <li>Shows some effective use of features but this is not sustained</li> <li>Can generally be understood throughout, though mispronunciation of individual words or sounds reduces clarity at times</li> </ul> |
| 5    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usually maintains flow of speech but uses repetition, self-correction and/or slow speech to keep going</li> <li>May over-use certain connectives and discourse markers</li> <li>Produces simple speech fluently, but more complex communication causes fluency problems</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manages to talk about familiar and unfamiliar topics but uses vocabulary with limited flexibility</li> <li>Attempts to use paraphrase but with mixed success</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produces basic sentence forms with reasonable accuracy</li> <li>Uses a limited range of more complex structures, but these usually contain errors and may cause some comprehension problems</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows all the positive features of band 4 and some, but not all, of the positive features of band 6</li> </ul>   |
| 4    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cannot respond without noticeable pauses and may speak slowly, with frequent repetition and self-correction</li> <li>Links basic sentences but with repetitious use of simple connectives and some breakdowns in coherence</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is able to talk about familiar topics but can only convey basic meaning on unfamiliar topics and makes frequent errors in word choice</li> <li>Rarely attempts paraphrase</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produces basic sentence forms and some correct simple sentences but subordinate structures are rare</li> <li>Errors are frequent and may lead to misunderstanding</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a limited range of pronunciation features</li> <li>Attempts to control features but lapses are frequent</li> <li>Mispronunciations are frequent and cause some difficulty for the listener</li> </ul>   |
| 3    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaks with long pauses</li> <li>Has limited ability to link simple sentences</li> <li>Gives only simple responses and is frequently unable to convey basic message</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses simple vocabulary to convey personal information</li> <li>Has insufficient vocabulary for less familiar topics</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attempts basic sentence forms but with limited success, or relies on apparently memorised utterances</li> <li>Makes numerous errors except in memorised expressions</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows some of the features of band 2 and some, but not all, of the positive features of band 4</li> </ul>  |
| 2    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pauses lengthily before most words</li> <li>Little communication possible</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only produces isolated words or memorised utterances</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cannot produce basic sentence forms</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speech is often unintelligible</li> </ul>  |
| 1    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No communication possible</li> <li>No rateable language</li> </ul>   |  |   |   |
| 0    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not attend</li> </ul>   |  |   |   |