

## IELTS Speaking band descriptors (public version)

| Band     | Fluency and Coherence   | Lexical Resource   | Lexical Resource  | Pronunciation   |
|----------|---|--|---|---|
| <b>9</b> | <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>  |
| <b>8</b> | <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 inappropriacies or basic/non-systematic 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; L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility</li> </ul>  |
| <b>7</b> | <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>   |
| <b>6</b> | <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 inappropriacies</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> |

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| <b>5</b> | <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>   |
| <b>4</b> | <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> |
| <b>3</b> | <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>  |
| <b>2</b> | <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>  |
| <b>1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ no communication possible</li> <li>▪ no rateable language</li> </ul>   |   |   |   |
| <b>0</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ does not attend</li> </ul>   |   |   |   |