

EXAM TIPS FOR STUDENTS FOR LANGUAGECERT INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH EXAMS

When taking the exam, make sure you read and follow each instruction carefully.

Read English books and newspapers, listen to English radio and TV programmes and watch films while you prepare for the examinations.

LISTENING

- Answer all questions even if you are not sure of the right answer.
- Don't worry about your spelling unless a word is spelt for you.
- In the time allowed before each recording, read through the questions to be prepared for what you'll hear.
- You'll hear the recording twice, so do not panic when you miss something in the first round.
- You are not expected to understand every word in the recording - just focus on your task and try to guess the meaning of unknown words from the context.
- Always read the questions before the recording begins. Underline/identify the key words - understand WHAT you are listening for.

READING

- Read each question carefully and follow the instructions exactly.
- Understand what the question is asking about.
- Do not write more than the word limit specified in the instructions.
- Read a lot for pleasure in the run-up to the exam.
- Practice reading an article and writing a summary of the main points.
- Look at each paragraph - what does each paragraph do? Explain? Argue for/against? etc.

WRITING

- Plan your piece of writing - pay attention to organisation, range and accuracy.
- Do not write more than the word limit specified in the instructions.
- Always read the instructions and the input text carefully.
- Underline the words in the instructions that tell you exactly what to do; then be sure to respond to these prompts.
- Write out a long list of words and phrases that you associate with the topic, then use the most attractive and appropriate ones for the purpose of your text.
- Use collocations rather than single words (e.g. adjective + noun).
- Replace simple general words like “good”, “bad”, “nice” with more specific synonyms (e.g. “perfect”, “horrible”, “pleasant”).
- Check your final version for spelling and punctuation.
- Plan your essay - list your main points, supporting evidence.
- Think about which connecting words you will use to move between ideas at sentence and paragraph level.
- Always answer the essay questions.
- Don't write in capital letters.
- Remember to make paragraphs and salutations if requested.

SPEAKING

- Listen carefully to what the interlocutor is saying.
- Don't be afraid to ask for clarification if you don't understand something.
- Be prepared to use various expressions for arguing, giving opinion, debating and agreeing.
- Don't panic when you realise you have made a mistake. Correct it quickly if you can, or just carry on speaking.
- Warm yourself up by speaking English with the other candidates several minutes before you enter the exam room.
- Make sure you know how to spell your personal details.
- Listen carefully - think before speaking - make sure you answer the question.
- Think of expressions you can use to help introduce a topic or to give you time to organise your thoughts (e.g. “Hmmm, let me see now...” or “That's an interesting idea; Well, I'd say...” or “Really? Well, I think...”).