# International Legal English Certificate

# Examination Report Test of Listening

May 2007

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# **International Legal English Certificate**

Examination Report	Test of Listening
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### INTRODUCTION

This report provides a general view of how candidates performed on the Listening paper in the May 2007 session, and offers guidance on the preparation of candidates for the Test of Listening.

The four ILEC papers total 200 marks, after weighting. Each paper (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking) represents 25% of the total marks available. It is important to note that candidates do not 'pass' or 'fail' in a particular paper or component, but rather in the examination as a whole. A candidate's overall ILEC grade is based on the aggregate score gained by the candidate across all four papers.

The overall grades are set using the following information:

- statistics on the candidature
- statistics on the overall candidate performance
- statistics on individual questions, for those parts of the examination for which this is appropriate (Tests of Reading and Listening)
- the advice of the Principal Examiners based on the performance of candidates, and on the recommendation of examiners where this is relevant (Test of Writing)
- comparison with statistics from previous years' examination performance and candidature.

ILEC has three passing grades: 'C1 Pass with Merit', 'C1 Pass' and 'B2 Pass', and two failing grades: 'Narrow fail' and 'Fail'. The overall pass rate for the May 2007 examination was 97.09%. In total, 26.94% of candidates were awarded a grade 'C1 Pass with Merit', 41.75% were awarded a grade 'C1 Pass' and 28.4% were awarded a 'B2 Pass'.

Feedback on this report is very welcome. Please use the feedback form at the end of this report.

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### **TEST OF LISTENING EXAMINATION REPORT**

The Test of Listening is designed to test a range of listening skills. The test lasts approximately 40 minutes and contains 30 questions, with one mark awarded for each correct answer. There are four parts to the test and a range of text and task types is represented. All parts of the recording are heard twice. All instructions, rubrics and pauses are recorded onto the CD, as is the five minutes transfer time at the end of the test.

Candidates write their answers on the question paper. In Part 3 of the test, they are required to write a word or short phrase (of up to three words) in response to the written prompt. In Parts 1, 2 and 4, they must choose the correct answer from those provided: A, B, C, etc. At the end of the test, candidates have five minutes to transfer their answers on to the separate answer sheet.

### **ILEC Test of Listening**

1 Gist, detail, function, purpose, topic, attitude, feeling, opinion, inference, etc.  2 Listening for gist, specific information, opinion, and attitude  3 Locating and recording specific information  4 Listening for gist. For example, function, attitude, feeling, opinion, inference, identification of speaker, topic, etc.  5 Three short monologues or dialogues and 3-option multiple choice  3 A dialogue set in the context of an interview, a meeting, a hearing, a consultation, a social situation, etc. between two or more people  5 Locating and recording specific (training seminars, presentations, lectures, etc.)  6 Gap-filling requiring limited written responses (i.e. no more than 3 words)  7 Short monologues linked by theme or topic, from 5 different speakers  8 Multiple matching  10	PART	Main Skill Focus	Input	Response	Number of questions
information, opinion, and attitude interview, a meeting, a hearing, a choice  interview, a meeting, a hearing, a choice  consultation, a social situation, etc. between two or more people  Locating and recording specific information  A monologue set in a legal context (training seminars, presentations, lectures, etc.)  Listening for gist. For example, function, attitude, feeling, opinion, inference, identification of speaker,  interview, a meeting, a hearing, a choice  Choice  Gap-filling requiring limited written responses (i.e. no more than 3 words)  5 short monologues linked by theme or topic, from 5 different speakers	1	attitude, feeling, opinion, inference,			6
information (training seminars, presentations, lectures, etc.) limited written responses (i.e. no more than 3 words)  4 Listening for gist. For example, function, attitude, feeling, opinion, inference, identification of speaker, 5 short monologues linked by theme or topic, from 5 different speakers 10 Multiple matching 10	2	0 0 1	interview, a meeting, a hearing, a consultation, a negotiation, a social situation, etc. between two or more		5
function, attitude, feeling, opinion, inference, identification of speaker,	3		(training seminars, presentations,	limited written responses (i.e. no	9
	4	function, attitude, feeling, opinion, inference, identification of speaker,	,	Multiple matching	10

Part 1 features three unrelated short extracts with two three-option multiple-choice questions on each text. These extracts may be self-contained monologues or dialogues. There is an introductory sentence to each extract on the question paper which gives information to contextualise what is heard. The extracts are set in a range of legal contexts and each question focuses on a different aspect of each text. Each text is approximately one minute in length and is heard twice.

Part 2 features discussions and interviews of 3-4 minutes in length. Tasks are designed to test the understanding of gist, attitude and opinion as well as specific information from the text. There are five three-option multiple-choice questions. The questions follow the order of information presented in the text.

Part 3 features an informational text of 3-4 minutes in length. Tasks in this part are designed to test the retrieval of detailed information from the text. Candidates are required to write a word, or words, in response to a written prompt. In such tasks, candidates copy the target words only onto the answer sheet.

There are nine questions. The questions follow the order of information presented in the text, and keys focus on the actual words heard on the recording. Candidates who paraphrase the information may still get the mark, but only if their answers are fully meaningful in the context of the question prompts. Keys generally focus on concrete pieces of information or stated opinions and are designed to be short and to fit comfortably into the space on the answer sheet. Correct spelling is expected at this level, although some minor variations may be allowed. Care is taken, however, not to focus on words that cause undue spelling difficulties as keys, and both US and British English spellings are accepted.

Part 4 features five thematically-linked short extracts, each of which has a different speaker. This part of the test involves two tasks, each consisting of five questions from which candidates choose the correct option from a list of six. The whole sequence is heard twice.

### • Comments on candidate performance

### Part 1

Candidates coped well with this section which included a formal lecture, an informal discussion between lawyers and part of a less formal meeting. Candidates had few problems with getting the correct answer to question one, whereas the questions on extracts two and three proved more challenging. All the questions discriminated well between weaker and stronger candidates with Question 2, which focused on the purpose of an example and question 5 which required gist understanding, being the most challenging.

### Part 2

This part, which focused on a consultation between a lawyer and her client, was generally well answered. Candidates had few problems with questions 7, 8 and 10, whereas questions 9 and 11 proved more challenging. Weaker candidates may have missed the force of the speaker's argument in these questions, for example in Question 11 where she talks about various sources of further guidance, but makes it clear with the words: 'but in your case the most detailed is in this file provided by the Business Training Council' that this is her recommendation.

### Part 3

This part, which featured the opening session of a conference on Competition law, was generally well answered, although some questions proved more challenging than others. For example candidates at this level had little difficulty with questions 16, 17, 18, whereas questions 13, 14 and 15 proved more challenging. Some weaker candidates failed to get the mark due to clear weaknesses in their listening skills, for example those who wrote 'fusion' for question 15, 'murders' for Question 17 and 'legislation' for Question 20.

Other candidates may not have read the sentence carefully enough and so repeated information which had already been provided; for example candidates who wrote 'session on competition law' for Question 15 had clearly located the correct section of text, but had not retrieved the targeted information. Candidates should be reminded that they risk losing the mark if the sentence they create no longer makes sense or becomes ambiguous, e.g. where the answer 'train' was given for Q18. Spelling was not generally an issue with minor variations being accepted, as long as the intended meaning was clear. The candidate who wrote 'practice' for question12 did not get the mark, however, as clear understanding of the text had not been demonstrated.

### Part 4

This part of the test, in which five people commented on how information technology (IT) affected their firms, proved the most challenging part of the test, and there was good discrimination between weak and strong candidates. Task One was generally well answered, although candidates had some difficulty with questions 23 and 24, whilst Task Two was more challenging, especially questions 27 and 30. Candidates needed to successfully understand the gist of what each person was saying and related this to the task rubric in order to answer the questions in both tasks. For example, Speaker Four is clearly talking about databases from government agencies which can help you locate things 'much more efficiently'. This gives the key E for question 24. Candidates who chose option C, however, had seen the word 'effectively' in that option and had incorrectly matched this with the notion of 'efficiently' mentioned in the text. Although the two words are similar in meaning, nothing that Speaker Four says supports the idea of 'panning ahead' which is the main point in option C. Similarly, in Task Two, the answer to question 29 is option D – candidates needing to match the idea of 'varying quality of information' with 'data is not always accurate' and the supporting reasons in the text.

### Recommendations for candidate preparation

### Part 1

Remind students that there is a range of task focus in these questions, and they are not necessarily being tested on a detailed understanding of the text alone.

Questions may be focused on, for example, speaker purpose, attitude, opinion or agreement in dialogues. Some questions may focus on one specific piece of text, for example one speaker's turn, or may be focused on a gist understanding of the whole text.

Students can be encouraged to concentrate on the question stems, rather than the options in their preparation – so that they can listen for the answer in the text and then match this to the closest option.

### Part 2

This is one of the longest parts of the Test of Listening, and students should be given plenty of exposure to longer interviews and discussions.

Students need to follow the line of development in these texts and recognise when the conversation has moved on from one particular aspect of the issue being discussed to another. For example, on a first listening in class, students can listen simply for the number of issues discussed, what they are, and where the natural breaks in the dialogue come, as well as each speaker's general attitude towards those issues.

As in Part 1, students can be encouraged to concentrate on the question stems, rather than the options in their preparation – so that they can listen for the answer in the text and then match this to the closest option.

The questions in this part will use language that paraphrases and reports ideas from the text. As the texts often focus on the attitudes and opinions of speakers, which are discussed at length, students need to have a good command of the meaning and use of the type of language used to report these ideas succinctly in the questions. They will, for example, need to understand such words as reporting verbs (e.g. regrets, admits, recommends, etc.), adjectives and adverbs describing attitudes and feelings (e.g. disappointed, frustrated, unexpected, etc.) and words used to report opinions (e.g. insists, suggests, denies, etc.) and degrees of certainty, (e.g. doubtful, convinced, etc.).

### Part 3

Remind your students that the task rubric and the set of sentences on the page provide a lot of information about what they are going to hear. Encourage them to use the preparation time wisely. One way of doing this is to give them pre-listening tasks in the classroom that will help them to activate likely vocabulary and other language features associated with the topic and context. For example, they can look at the information in the rubric and try to visualise the speaker and the situation; to imagine the kind of information that might be given, and the type of language that might be used.

Encourage students to read through the set of sentences and think about the type of information that is missing. Remind them that most keys will focus on concrete pieces of information (e.g. nouns, proper names, etc.) and will generally be single words or very short noun groups (e.g. adjective plus noun), and that usually no more than three words are required.

Tell students not to try and write long answers and not to repeat information which is already on the page. Some students try to paraphrase the information they hear rather than using the actual words on the tape. This is not a good idea. Remind students that the set of sentences will be a summary or paraphrase of the information in the text, but that the words they write in the gaps should be those they hear on the tape.

In this task, the word(s) students write must complete the sentence logically and grammatically. By using the actual words on the recording, students can complete the sentences without worrying too much about the grammar. They should, however, check that they have heard the correct form of the word. For example, if students do not hear clearly whether a word is singular or plural, they should check the rest of the sentence to see which is required.

### Part 4

Remind students that they will hear five different speakers, but that the texts will have a thematic link. In this part of the test, the whole series of texts is heard once and then the whole series is repeated.

Encourage students to think about the theme of the texts and to think about the kinds of attitudes and ideas that they expect to hear in connection with these topics.

Remind students that they will be listening for gist meaning rather than detail in these texts, so although they may not understand every word, they should be able to pick out the speaker's main point, feeling, attitude or opinion – or to identify the speaker from what they say.

This part of the test can appear daunting to students, because there are two tasks, so remind them that they are listening for gist and that they should attempt one task each time they listen. Students need to practise this kind of task and develop the confidence to choose an option as they listen, even if they are not absolutely sure of what they have heard.

Reassure students that whilst they are listening, they will often be understanding more than they think, and will probably pick up the correct gist from the text and therefore choose the correct option, even if they can't explain why afterwards.

If you want students to develop this skill of gist listening, it may not always be helpful to go through the text with them afterwards, as close analysis of the language of the texts will not necessarily help them to develop the most appropriate listening strategies.

As in Part 3, a sound knowledge of the type of words used to report attitudes and feelings in the questions will help students in this part.

Online teaching resources for ILEC are now available (visit the website: <a href="https://www.cambridgeesol.org/teach/ilec">www.cambridgeesol.org/teach/ilec</a>). Included are sample tasks, tips for teachers and students, and a range of familiarisation and practice activities.

### • DOs and DON'Ts for the Test of Listening

DO	listen to, and read, the instructions to understand what you have to do.			
DO	think about the topic, the speaker(s) and the context as you read the questions.			
DO	use any pauses to read the questions and try to predict the answer.			
DO	remember that the information/questions on the page follow(s) the order of information in the recording in Parts 2 and 3.			
DO	try to use the actual words you hear on the tape in Part 3.			
DO	use the pause between the first and second listening to check your answers.			
DO	check that your answer makes sense in the gap in Part 3. Check the wording both before and after the gap when checking your answer.			
DO	check that your answer is correctly spelled in Part 3.			
DO	copy only the missing words onto the answer sheet in Part 3.			
DO	read through both tasks in Part 4 in the pause before you hear the recording for the first time.			
DO	remember that there are two questions for each speaker in Part 4.			
DO	copy your answers carefully onto the answer sheet and check that you have followed the numbering correctly.			
DON'T	try to write very long answers in Part 3.			
DON'T	repeat information which is already in the sentences in Part 3.			
DON'T	panic in Part 3. There is plenty of time to write your answers as you listen.			
DON'T	worry if you miss a question. Continue with the next question then listen again for the missing information when you hear the recording for the second time.			
DON'T	leave a blank space on the answer sheet. If you're not sure, guess.			

### **FEEDBACK FORM**

### **ILEC Listening Examination Report – May 2007**

We are interested in hearing your views on how useful this report has been.

We would be most grateful if you could briefly answer the following questions and return a photocopy of this page to the following address:

University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations ILEC Subject Manager 1 Hills Road Cambridge CB1 2EU

CDIZ	:EU	
Fax:	+44 1223 460278	
1.	Please describe your situation (e.g. EFL/ESOL teacher, Director of Examinations Officer, Local Secretary).	of Studies,
2.	Have you prepared candidates for ILEC?	YES/NO
3.	Do you plan to prepare candidates for ILEC in the future?	YES/NO
4.	How have you used this report (e.g. to provide feedback to other to examination practice, etc.)?	eachers, for
5.	Which parts of this report did you find most useful?	
6.	Which parts are not so useful?	
7.	What extra information would you like to see included in this report	rt?
8.	(Optional) Your name  Centre	

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Thank you.