

IELTS Listening Part 3

Introduction & Essential Guide for Success



What is Part 3?

- An **academic conversation** among 2 to 4 speakers.
- Set in educational contexts (study, essays, course choices).
- Speakers include students, tutors, and professors.
- Tests your ability to identify **ideas, details, and opinions**.



Today's Learning Goals

- ✓ Understand the structure and position of Part 3.
- ✓ Identify speaker roles and academic topics.
- ✓ Master the 6 major question types.
- ✓ Learn techniques to handle distractors and synonyms.

Where Is Part 3 in the IELTS Listening Test?

Test Part	Audio Context	Questions
Part 1	Everyday social conversation (2 speakers)	10 questions (1–10)
Part 2	Social monologue (1 speaker)	10 questions (11–20)
 Part 3	Conversation about study or training (2–4 speakers)	10 questions (21–30)
Part 4	Academic lecture monologue (1 speaker)	10 questions (31–40)



Golden Rule of IELTS Listening:

You will hear the recording **ONE TIME ONLY**. Questions follow the recording in exact sequential order from beginning to end.

Who Is Speaking in Part 3?

Common Speaker Groups



Two Students

Planning a group presentation or project together.



Student & Tutor / Professor

Discussing essay feedback or academic progress.



Group of Students & Lecturer

Reviewing research survey data or field trips.

EXAMPLE SETUP

Identifying Names & Roles

 **Anna** — Student

 **Mark** — Student

 **Dr Lee** — Academic Tutor

Key Strategy Tip:

Listen carefully to the introductory audio prompt. Always ask yourself throughout the listening: *"Who is currently expressing this opinion?"*

What Topics Will You Hear?

All Part 3 topics focus on higher education, training courses, and university life:



Presentations

Preparing slides, dividing group speaking roles, or timing a talk.



Research & Surveys

Designing questionnaires, collecting data, or analysing results.



Course Selection

Choosing optional elective subjects or planning term schedules.



Reassurance: No Specialist Knowledge Needed!

You do **not** need to be an expert in the subject matter (e.g., marine biology, architecture). Every answer required is explicitly provided inside the audio recording.

International English Accents



British

RECEIVED PRON.



Australian

SOUTHERN PACIFIC



New Zealand

KIWI ENGLISH



North American

US & CANADIAN

Why Accents Matter

The same word sounds different across accents. Pay attention to vowel sounds in key words like: "water", "can't", "project", "schedule".

Daily Action Tip

Listen to podcasts and news clips from BBC (UK), ABC (Australia), and NPR (USA) daily to train your ears to smooth transitions between accents.

Part 3 Question Types Overview

Multiple Choice

Choose A, B, or C from given options.

Matching

Match names or opinions to listed options.

Sentence Completion

Fill in missing words in full sentences.

Note Completion

Fill in missing words in structured notes.

Summary Completion

Complete gaps in a condensed paragraph.

Choose from a List

Select 2 or 3 correct answers from options.

Pre-Listening Mindset:

Always determine beforehand: "What target info am I looking for?" (e.g., a reason, a number, an opinion, a date, or a decision).

Multiple Choice Questions Strategy

EXAMPLE FORMAT

Why did the students change their project idea?

- ☐ A. It was too expensive.
- ☐ B. It was too difficult.
- ☐ C. They had no time.

⚠Critical Warning: The recording will usually mention **ALL THREE OPTIONS** (A, B, and C). Do not pick an option simply because you hear the exact words!

How to Answer Multiple Choice

- 1 Read before listening:** Underline main keywords in the stem and options during reading time.
- 2 Track the narrative:** Listen for the initial idea, any problem discussed, and the final resolution.
- 3 Focus on Meaning:** Choose the option that reflects the overall **agreed conclusion**.

Matching Questions Guide

MATCHING LAYOUT

Match the person (21–23) to their opinion (A–C):

Numbered List (21–23)	Options Box (A–C)
21. Anna	A. Survey was too long
22. Mark	B. Data was unreliable
23. Dr Lee	C. Results were clear

Key Rules for Matching

- ✓ The numbered questions (21–23) follow the **audio order**.
- ✗ The options box (A–C) are **NOT** in audio order.
- ⚠ Watch for speaker mind changes:
"At first I thought A, but now I prefer B."

Completion Questions & Spelling Rules



Notes Completion

Fill in missing words in bulleted outline notes.



Sentence Completion

Complete gaps within full grammatical sentences.



Summary Completion

Fill in gaps in a short summary paragraph.

Example Question:

"The students will collect data from _____ people."

Target Prediction: A specific number or quantifier.



Strict Spelling Rule:

Incorrect spelling = **0 marks**. Always check the required **word limit** (e.g., *NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS*).

Predicting Answers Before You Listen

Use the preparation time to analyze words surrounding each gap and predict the required word type:

EXAMPLE 1

"The students need to interview _____ people."

Predict: A Number

EXAMPLE 2

"The main problem with the survey was _____."

Predict: Noun / Concept

EXAMPLE 3

"They decided to use a _____ method."

Predict: Adjective

Purpose of Prediction:

Prediction does not give you the answer automatically — it primes your brain so you know exactly **what target sound to listen for**.

Distractors: Avoiding Wrong Information

AUDIO DISTRACTOR SAMPLE

"We first planned to interview 20 students. But that was too many, so we decided to interview 12."

Initial mentioned: 20 **Final Answer: 12**

Key Takeaway: The first answer mentioned in Part 3 is rarely the final correct answer!

Common "Change Words"

Change Word	Audio Context Example
but / however	"It was good, but too long."
actually	" Actually , we prefer option B."
instead	"They used interviews instead ."
in the end	" In the end , they chose online."
we decided to	" We decided to use a survey."

Synonyms & Paraphrasing

The recording will **rarely** use the exact same words as the question paper. Listen for synonyms:

Word on Question Paper	Word in Audio Recording
difficult	hard / challenging / complex
choose	select / decide on / pick
change	modify / adjust / update
finish	complete / wrap up / conclude
important	key / significant / essential



Mastery Strategy: Train yourself to listen for **matching meaning**, not matching sound!

Recognising Opinions & Agreement

Giving Opinions

- “ "I think / I believe..."
- “ "In my opinion..."
- “ "I'd say that..."
- “ "I feel that..."

Agreeing

- ✓ "I agree." / "Exactly."
- ✓ "That's true."
- ✓ "Good point."
- ✓ "Definitely."

Disagreeing

- ✗ "I'm not sure about that."
- ✗ "I see your point, but..."
- ✗ "Actually, I disagree."
- ✗ "But don't you think...?"

Mind Change Warning:

Speakers frequently shift their position during discussion. Listen to the entire exchange before selecting an answer.

6 Common Mistakes & How to Fix Them

✗Mistake 1

Matching isolated words.

✓Fix:

Listen for overall meaning.

✗Mistake 2

Forgetting speaker names.

✓Fix:

Annotate initials (A, M, L).

✗Mistake 3

Choosing the first answer heard.

✓Fix:

Wait for change words.

✗Mistake 4

Ignoring negative words.

✓Fix:

Underline *not*, *except*, *never*.

✗Mistake 5

Getting stuck on missed items.

✓Fix:

Move on immediately; guess later.

✗Mistake 6

Translating every word.

✓Fix:

Focus only on key questions.

Step-by-Step Part 3 Exam Strategy

BEFORE the Recording

1. Read Carefully:

Underline key terms and note the exact word limit.

2. Predict Targets:

Anticipate word types, grammar, and potential synonyms.

DURING & AFTER

3. Active Listening:

Track order, identify speakers, and watch for change words.

4. Final Quality Check:

Verify exact spelling and ensure no answer is left blank.

Golden Mindset Goal:

Do not try to understand every single word. Focus on capturing the exact information required by the questions.

READY TO PRACTICE