

TOPIC: EDUCATION

Sample answers, useful
vocabulary and resources for
IELTS speaking exam

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References to teaching and authentic materials related to this topic: IELTS blogs, podcasts, videos and articles.

1. SAMPLE ANSWERS

PART 1

1. What kind of school did you go to as a child?

- I had studied in the best school of the region. It was a powerful **educational institute** inside and out – both the building was large and beautifully made of glass, as well as teachers were very talented and highly experienced in their sophisticated profession.

2. Did you go to different schools or a single one?

- I changed my school when transferred from grade 4 to 5 – this is the transition we make in my country from the **elementary** to the **secondary school**.

3. What was your favourite subject as a child?

- I liked **Math** a lot when I was at school. I'd always **get high scores in exams**. Plus, it's very practical.

4. Who was your favourite teacher?

- That was definitely my Math teacher. She not only made each lecture incredibly useful and exiting, she also was our **class-lady**, uniting me and my **classmates** in various group activities.

5. Which university/college did you attend?

- Actually, I went to 4 different universities. That's because I changed two during my **Bachelor's degree** and then had a **double-degree** abroad during **Master's**.

6. What your university was like?

- In **grad school** (my Master's degree), I studied at two universities that were the best **business schools** of Russia and Switzerland. They were huge in size and **insightful** in education.

7. What did you study at university?

- I studied Finance and Management. This **specialization** turned out to be perfect for me and I've never regretted my choice.

8. What is special about this subject?

- Basically, it is about managing money, assets, investments, people, production and strategy of any company, which is the basis of the world economy.

PART 2

**Describe a course you enjoyed at university.
You should say:**

- **When and where you took it**
- **What lessons were like**

- **What made the course different from others**
- **And explain why you enjoyed the course**

The course I'd like to describe is called "LEAN Startup Approach". It was offered to us at the St. Gallen University in Switzerland during my **Master's degree**. The course was specifically designed to help students understand the **theoretical approach** to managing startups, as well as try it out in practice.

The **syllabus** for this course, like for all the others, was distributed online via our digital system. It comprised the **outline of lectures** included in the course, the main topics, and **assignments** we would need to do. The curriculum of the course comprised at first some lectures on campus, where we were to learn more about the LEAN approach, and then – had to do a practical project with various companies. As an integral part of the course, we were **assigned** to groups, each having to choose a specific partnering organisation. My group ended up doing a project for PricewaterhouseCoopers, which is large international audit firm.

The course really stood out from the others, because it offered us a unique opportunity to work with professionals of the consulting industry, developing a practical solution to their business problem, which is the most valuable for any Master's programme.

PART 3

1. How are priorities in education today different from those in the past?

In such a fast-changing world we are in today, **priorities in education** have transformed as well. In our current society, education **opens more opportunities** and offers to obtain a wider **skill set** that was not attainable in the past. For example, colleges and universities decide to shift from **theoretical education** to practical one. Courses have become more and more digital, requiring students to learn how to be **proficient** with their computers early on.

2. Is a good education more important for a boy or a girl? Why?

Substantial education is important for anyone, regardless of their gender. Both should be given **equal rights** and **access to education**. In today's society, women have proven that they can do tasks and get jobs that only men used to have back in the day. Women have shown their **competency in various fields** such as politics, science, sports and many others. Men, on the other hand, have equally entered some new industries that had been considered female, such as cooking, housekeeping, fashion or make-up. I reckon, both sexes must be given **equal opportunities** in their education and **workplace**.

3. How well do you think schools should prepare young people for working life?

Schools are considered our second home when we are young. This is where we, as kids, learn almost everything, starting from the basics of reading and writing. Before the adulthood begins, this is the place where one **gets most of their training**. Sadly, middle and high schools rarely put emphasis on practical life skills, such as entrepreneurship, financial literacy or relationship management. In my opinion, schools must extend their courses by **guiding young people** to their future careers, step-by-step.

2. KEY VOCABULARY

a qualification

a quality or accomplishment that makes someone suitable for a particular job or activity

These **qualifications** are just like a ticket for entry into the corporate world.

a graduation

the completion of a university degree course

I went to England to work right after my **graduation**.

to enroll

officially register as a member of an institution or a student on a course, school, university

In many areas, it is possible to **enroll** for archaeology classes taught for adults.

to study

to apply the mind to learning and understanding a subject

She **studied** biology, although her major was math.

a course

a series of lessons or lectures in a particular subject

He took a **course** in basket weaving.

discipline

the practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behaviour

One should never forget about **discipline**, especially when studying.

a degree

qualification or an academic rank that is given after successful completion of a course of study

He has no **degree** in engineering, because he is an accountant.

a tuition

training or instruction provided by a teacher or tutor, especially in small groups

We want to support them by providing free **tuition** in core subjects.

primary (elementary) school

institution in which children aged between 5 and 11 receive the first stage of academic learning

Some articles may not be appropriate for children of **primary school**.

secondary school

classes for children aged from 11 to 16 (or 18 in the UK)

The project will involve two primary schools and a **secondary school**.

to pass

to go through any inspection or test successfully, to succeed in exam

I recently **passed** my exams to become a chartered structural engineer.

to conduct

to organize or carry out something

They **conducted** a survey to study people's attitudes to local environmental issues.

to receive

to get something

Managers who have **received** no formal training will find the course of particular benefit.

to acquire

to get or gain something

There are regular classes where you can **acquire** new expertise or improve existing skills with professional tuition.

to attend

to be present at meetings, church services, university, etc.

The three children are now **attending** the local village school.

to leave

to stop doing something, go away from place or situation

Both of my parents had **left** school at fourteen.

compulsory

something that must be done because of a rule or law

The majority of the age cohort attend beyond the end of **compulsory** schooling.

comprehensive school

a state school that does not select its intake on the basis of academic achievement or aptitude

The **comprehensive high school** provides students with holistic education that allows them to become well-rounded adults.

private education

paid classes run in a private school, funded by a wealthy individual or company

In fact, the percentage of secondary school pupils in England in **private education** has dropped since comprehensives were introduced.

to make progress

someone who makes progress moves forward, improves, becomes closer to goals

Why do some people **make progress** and others don't?

a dropout

a student who fails to complete a course of study

Years ago the official label for the **dropout** was changed to the premature school leaver.

a coursework

work done during a course of study, especially that contributes to one's mark

Approximately 50 per cent of the overall marks each year are obtained from continuously assessed **coursework**.

a research

the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions

While the **research** reveals many overlaps and similarities, there are also some interesting differences.

a subject

an area of knowledge taught in an educational institution

Maybe you want to study a **subject** you particularly enjoy.

industrious

hard-working (person)

Industrious students will look for opportunities on their own, not waiting for help.

3. WORD FORMATION

a qualification

noun

Colonel Spratt highlighted the importance of the **qualification** for people planning a career in marketing.

to qualify

verb

When medical students **qualify** for doctors, they face a trouble finding work.

qualified

adjective

The English Department employs well-**qualified** and experienced tutors, and as a result has always enjoyed a high success rate in examination results.

a graduation

noun

I went to England to work after my **graduation**.

to graduate

verb

Sadly, a number of high-school students are inarticulate when they **graduate** and cannot properly word a sentence.

to enroll

verb

Failure to **enroll** for a full academic load does not alter the residency requirement.

an enrollment

noun

Today's women make up 70 percent of professional school **enrollment**.

a study

noun

Another **study** showed that 26 %of schools in the country fail to comply with state regulations for PE.

to study

verb

This course is designed for complete beginners who are eager to **study** the language, as it provides an excellent opportunity to understand and feel the language.

studied

adjective

He stops what he's doing and stares in my direction with a **studied** indifference leaning on his broom.

education	noun	Polish system of education failed during the 1990s to train enough skilled workers, including engineers and craftsmen.
to educate	verb	Le Quement was educated at a public school in England.
well-educated	adjective	Well-educated Catholics, meaning those with university education, did not suffer any disadvantage in occupational achievement compared with their Protestant peers.
educational	adjective	The larger issue, though, is whether such schools can provide better educational benefits.
an innovation	noun	In recent years the value of innovation has been demonstrated in many sectors.
to innovate	verb	Advertisers and websites try to innovate to engage users through marketing campaigns that align across multiple media.
innovative	adjective	Magazines and the Internet open a huge range of innovative designer options.
attendance	noun	Laforge's life in Germany at the court of the Empress Augusta was steeped in music: it involved regular attendance of concerts and operas.
attend	verb	On Saturday, talent scouts will attend the graduate show of the fashion college Central Saint Martins, the alma-mater to McQueen, Chalayan and numerous other stars.
average	noun	The figure of 119.4 indicates that GDP per capita in the South East was 19.4% above the average in 1988.
to average	verb	For the past year, Leno has averaged 5.71 million viewers each night to Letterman's 4.16, according to Nielsen Media Research.

average

adjective

Most students, by definition, will be of **average** ability, with a lower grade.

on average

phrase

On average, American children watch over three hours of television each day.

a master

noun

This is your opportunity to learn from a **master**.

to master

verb

Once you've **mastered** the basics of Photoshop Elements, this is the book to further develop your skills to get professional results!

mediocre

adjective

No one is **mediocre** in this world.

mediocrity

noun

Mediocrity is more often a matter of choices than inherited ability.

concentration

noun

Importantly, the lectern is never operated by the speaker who needs full **concentration** on the speech and presentation.

concentrate

verb

His later works **concentrates** on the topic of world peace.

4. COLLOCATIONS

academic
educational
formal

adjective+

qualification

acquire
gain
get
have

verb +

qualification

adult
further
higher
pre-school
primary
secondary

adjective +

education

have
receive
continue
complete

verb +

education

one-year, two-year, etc.
Intensive
Advanced
intermediate, etc.
introductory
vocational

adjective +

course

do
take
complete
enrol on
join
sign up for

verb +

course

in
on

preposition +

course in
course on

college, university
first
undergraduate
higher
master's
postgraduate
business
medical
history
law

adjective +

degree

economics
marketing
engineering
art

degree + in +

degree in

have
hold
awarded
gain
get
obtain
receive
acquire

verb +

knowledge

in-depth
general
background

adjective +

knowledge

go to
attend
leave

verb +

school

teacher
pupil
uniform

adjective +

school

elementary
high
secondary
comprehensive
comprehensive
co-educational

adjective +

school

mixed
mixed-sex
single-sex
summer local
rural
village art
business
dance
drama
film
language

adjective +

school

attend
go to
study at
apply for
enter
finish (at)
graduate from
leave

verb +

university

teacher
graduate
student
undergraduate
course degree
education
term
year
vacation

university + noun

university

5. USEFUL RESOURCES

THIS TOPIC ON IELTS BLOGS

- [IELTS topic vocabulary for speaking test: Travel \[thetesttaker.com\]](#) [[ielts-simon.com](#)]
- [IELTS Speaking Part 2: educational TV programme \[ielts-simon.com\]](#)
- [IELTS SPEAKING part 1, 2 and 3 sample questions \[ipassielts.com\]](#)
- [IELTS Education vocabulary \[ieltsspeaking.co.uk\]](#)

PODCASTS

- [Podcast 50 – Universities in Australia \[slowenglish.info\]](#)
- [Sugata Mitra: How Much Can Children Teach Themselves? \[npr.org\]](#)
- [Can Schools Exist In The Cloud? \[npr.org\]](#)

ARTICLES

- [Which countries have the best education system and why? \[quora.com\]](#)
- [Schools: How should schools prepare for the future? \[quora.com\]](#)

VIDEOS

- [Ken Robinson: How to escape education's death valley \[TED TALKS\]](#)
- [Shuka Bose: Teaching one child at a time \[TED TALKS\]](#)

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