

# IELTS BAND 7+

## Writing Master Reference

Vocabulary · Structures · Idioms · Synonyms

All four modules — Academic Writing Task 1 & Task 2, plus key Speaking boosts — packed into one quick-reference sheet. Use tonight. Walk in tomorrow ready.

## TASK 1 — Academic Writing

Graphs · Charts · Maps · Processes

### Universal 4-Paragraph Template

#### ¶1 — Introduction (Paraphrase prompt — never copy it!)

The [chart/graph/diagram/map] illustrates/depicts/presents [what] [where/when].

#### ¶2 — Overview (Most important trend — NO data here!)

Overall, it is evident that [main trend 1], while [main trend 2].

The most striking feature is that [key observation].

#### ¶3 — Body 1 (Key data group 1 with figures)

Turning first to [Category A], [specific data + figures].

This was followed by a [rise/fall] to [figure] in [year].

#### ¶4 — Body 2 (Key data group 2 with figures)

With regard to [Category B], [specific data + figures].

By contrast, [comparison with figures].

### Task 1 — Language Bank by Chart Type

Phrase / Structure	Function	Example
Line / Bar charts	Describing trends	rose sharply, declined steadily, remained relatively stable, peaked at, bottomed out, fluctuated slightly

<b>Pie charts</b>	Proportions	<i>accounted for, constituted, represented, made up nearly half, the largest share was attributed to</i>
<b>Tables</b>	Comparisons	<i>In contrast to, whereas, while the figure for X stood at Y, the corresponding figure for Z was</i>
<b>Maps</b>	Changes over time	<i>was replaced by, was converted into, a new X was constructed/built, the area was extended, previously/subsequently</i>
<b>Process diagrams</b>	Sequence	<i>firstly, the initial stage involves, this is followed by, subsequently, the final stage, is then fed into, is extracted</i>
<b>Mixed charts</b>	Grouping	<i>As can be seen from both charts, while the bar chart shows..., the line graph reveals...</i>

## High-Score Phrases for Task 1

Phrase / Structure	Function	Example
<b>It is noticeable that...</b>	Highlight overview	<i>It is noticeable that sales tripled over the decade.</i>
<b>...saw a dramatic increase of...</b>	Precise trend	<i>The UK saw a dramatic increase of 40% in 2019.</i>
<b>...experienced a marginal decline...</b>	Subtle fall	<i>Revenue experienced a marginal decline in Q3.</i>
<b>...accounted for approximately...</b>	Share/proportion	<i>Transport accounted for approximately 28% of emissions.</i>
<b>...remained relatively constant at...</b>	Stable	<i>Unemployment remained relatively constant at 5%.</i>
<b>The figure for X mirrored that of Y</b>	Comparison	<i>The figure for France mirrored that of Germany.</i>
<b>...with the exception of...</b>	Contrast	<i>All categories rose, with the exception of coal.</i>
<b>At its peak / At the lowest point</b>	Extreme value	<i>At its peak, exports reached £4 billion.</i>

### ■ Task 1 Examiner Tips

- Always write an OVERVIEW paragraph — this alone separates Band 5 from Band 7.
- Minimum 150 words; aim for 170–185 words only.
- Do NOT include personal opinion or recommendations in Task 1.
- Select and compare the most significant data — do not describe every number.
- Use a variety of grammatical structures: passives, relative clauses, participle phrases.

# TASK 2 — Essay Writing

Opinion · Discussion · Problem-Solution · Advantage-Disadvantage

## OPINION ESSAY

Question type: "Do you agree or disagree?" / "To what extent do you agree?"

### ¶1 — Introduction

In recent years/decades, [topic] has become a subject of considerable debate.

While some argue that [opposing view], I firmly believe that [your position] for the reasons outlined below.

### ¶2 — Main Reason 1 (+ example)

To begin with, [topic sentence — your first reason].

This is because [explanation]. For instance, [specific example/evidence].

Therefore, it is clear that [link back to thesis].

### ¶3 — Main Reason 2 (+ concession if needed)

Furthermore/In addition, [second reason].

Admittedly, [acknowledge counterargument]; however, [refute it].

### ¶4 — Conclusion

In conclusion, while [acknowledge other side], I maintain that [restate thesis].

It is hoped that [future projection / recommendation].

## DISCUSSION ESSAY

Question type: "Discuss both views and give your own opinion."

### ¶1 — Introduction

The question of whether [topic] is a matter of ongoing debate.

Whilst some people contend that [View A], others are of the opinion that [View B].

This essay will examine both perspectives before presenting my own viewpoint.

### ¶2 — View A (those who support...)

Those who advocate [View A] often argue that [reason 1].

Moreover, [reason 2 + example]. Consequently, [result].

### ¶3 — View B + Your Opinion

On the other hand, proponents of [View B] maintain that [reason].

Personally, I am more persuaded by this view because [your reason].

### ¶4 — Conclusion

In conclusion, although [View A] has its merits, I believe [View B] is more compelling.

## PROBLEM-SOLUTION ESSAY

Question type: "What are the causes? What solutions can be suggested?"

### ¶1 — Introduction

[Topic] has emerged as one of the most pressing challenges facing [society/governments/individuals] today. This essay will identify the principal causes of this phenomenon and propose viable solutions.

### ¶2 — Causes

The primary cause of [problem] is [cause 1]. This can be attributed to [explanation]. A further contributing factor is [cause 2], particularly in [context].

### ¶3 — Solutions

In order to tackle this issue, [solution 1] would be highly effective. Additionally, [solution 2]. If implemented, this could significantly reduce [problem].

### ¶4 — Conclusion

To conclude, while [problem] poses a serious threat, a combination of [Sol.1] and [Sol.2] could substantially alleviate the situation.

## ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES

Question type: "Discuss the advantages and disadvantages."

### ¶1 — Introduction

[Topic] is an increasingly prevalent phenomenon in modern society. This essay will examine the key benefits and drawbacks associated with this trend.

### ¶2 — Advantages

The principal advantage of [topic] is that [benefit 1]. Furthermore, [benefit 2], which ultimately leads to [positive outcome].

### ¶3 — Disadvantages

Despite these benefits, there are notable disadvantages to consider. Firstly, [drawback 1]. In addition, [drawback 2], which may result in [negative consequence].

### ¶4 — Conclusion

On balance, while [topic] offers [key benefit], the [key drawback] must not be overlooked. It is ultimately up to [individuals/society/governments] to weigh these factors carefully.

### ■ Task 2 Examiner Tips

- Never start with 'Nowadays' or 'In this modern era' — both are overused Band 5 openers.
- Each body paragraph: Topic sentence → Explanation → Example → Link back.
- Use complex sentences: 'Although...', 'Despite the fact that...', 'Not only...but also...'
- Minimum 250 words; aim for 270–290 words.
- Avoid contractions (don't → do not) and informal phrases.

# COHESION & LINKING WORDS

Connecting Ideas with Variety

## Adding Information

Furthermore, | In addition, | Moreover, | What is more, | Besides this, | Not only that, but also...

## Contrast & Concession

However, | Nevertheless, | Nonetheless, | On the other hand, | Despite this, | Notwithstanding... |  
In spite of the fact that... | While it is true that..., it cannot be denied that...

## Cause & Effect

As a result, | Consequently, | Therefore, | Hence, | This leads to... | This can be attributed to... |  
Owing to this, | As a consequence of...

## Examples & Evidence

For instance, | For example, | To illustrate, | A case in point is... | This is exemplified by... |  
Evidence suggests that...

## Emphasis

Indeed, | In fact, | It is worth noting that... | Significantly, | Notably, | Above all, | What is particularly striking is that...

## Conclusion

In conclusion, | To conclude, | To summarise, | On balance, | All things considered, | Taking everything into account, | It can therefore be concluded that...

# SYNONYMS

Normal → Academic → Sophisticated

Replace overused words with these alternatives. Start normal, go academic, stretch to sophisticated when confident.

Common Word	Synonyms (Normal → Academic → Sophisticated)
big / large	<i>significant, considerable</i> → <i>substantial, extensive</i> → <i>monumental, profound, far-reaching</i>
small / little	<i>minor, slight</i> → <i>marginal, negligible</i> → <i>inconsequential, imperceptible</i>
show / prove	<i>reveal, indicate</i> → <i>demonstrate, illustrate</i> → <i>corroborate, substantiate, attest to</i>
think / believe	<i>feel, consider</i> → <i>argue, maintain, contend</i> → <i>postulate, assert, propound</i>
say / tell	<i>state, note</i> → <i>suggest, claim, assert</i> → <i>posit, contend, expound</i>
important	<i>key, major</i> → <i>significant, critical, crucial</i> → <i>paramount, indispensable, pivotal</i>
increase	<i>grow, rise</i> → <i>surge, escalate, expand</i> → <i>burgeon, proliferate, skyrocket</i>
decrease	<i>fall, drop</i> → <i>decline, diminish, shrink</i> → <i>plummet, dwindle, taper off</i>
problem	<i>issue, trouble</i> → <i>challenge, concern, difficulty</i> → <i>predicament, impediment, quandary</i>
help / support	<i>aid, assist, facilitate, endorse, foster</i> → <i>bolster, catalyse, underpin</i>
use	<i>employ, apply</i> → <i>utilise, harness, leverage, exploit, deploy</i>
change	<i>alter, modify</i> → <i>transform, reshape, shift</i> → <i>revolutionise, redefine, overhaul</i>
need	<i>require, demand</i> → <i>necessitate, warrant</i> → <i>mandate, compel, entail</i>
affect	<i>impact, influence</i> → <i>shape, alter</i> → <i>permeate, impinge upon, bear upon</i>
make	<i>create, produce</i> → <i>generate, develop</i> → <i>cultivate, precipitate, engender</i>
bad / negative	<i>harmful, poor</i> → <i>detrimental, adverse</i> → <i>pernicious, deleterious, inimical</i>
good / positive	<i>beneficial, helpful</i> → <i>advantageous, favourable</i> → <i>propitious, conducive, salutary</i>
many / a lot	<i>numerous, several</i> → <i>a considerable number of</i> → <i>a proliferation of, an abundance of</i>
fast	<i>quick, rapid</i> → <i>swift, accelerated</i> → <i>expeditious, precipitous</i>
hard / difficult	<i>tough, tricky</i> → <i>challenging, demanding</i> → <i>arduous, formidable, onerous</i>
obvious	<i>clear, apparent</i> → <i>evident, visible</i> → <i>manifest, conspicuous, indisputable</i>
new	<i>recent, modern</i> → <i>contemporary, current</i> → <i>cutting-edge, novel, unprecedented</i>
old	<i>ancient, traditional</i> → <i>conventional, longstanding</i> → <i>archaic, time-honoured, entrenched</i>
global / worldwide	<i>international, universal</i> → <i>worldwide, widespread</i> → <i>pervasive, ubiquitous</i>
government	<i>authorities, officials</i> → <i>administration, policymakers</i> → <i>governing bodies, regulatory bodies</i>
society	<i>people, community</i> → <i>the public, citizens</i> → <i>populace, the wider demographic</i>

# HIGH-BAND VOCABULARY

By Topic — Ready to Drop In

## Environment & Climate

greenhouse gas emissions, carbon footprint, biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation, renewable energy transition, sustainable development, deforestation, habitat destruction, climate mitigation, ecological imbalance, irreversible environmental damage, carbon-neutral policies, fossil fuel dependency, reforestation initiatives.

## Technology & Society

digital proliferation, technological advancement, artificial intelligence, automation, data privacy breaches, cybersecurity threats, digital divide, surveillance capitalism, social media pervasiveness, algorithmic bias, disruptive innovation, technological determinism, over-reliance on technology, ethical implications of AI.

## Education

pedagogical approach, curriculum reform, holistic development, critical thinking skills, rote learning vs. analytical thinking, socioeconomic disparity in access to education, vocational training, academic rigour, standardised testing, knowledge economy, lifelong learning, STEM education, teacher-student ratio, financial literacy.

## Health & Lifestyle

sedentary lifestyle, mental health awareness, chronic disease prevalence, preventive healthcare, healthcare infrastructure, pharmaceutical accessibility, work-life balance, psychological well-being, obesity epidemic, healthcare inequality, telemedicine, evidence-based medicine, nutritional awareness, burnout culture.

## Economy & Employment

economic disparity, income inequality, financial instability, job displacement, labour market, gig economy, entrepreneurship, economic recession, GDP growth, wage stagnation, consumer behaviour, fiscal policy, economic mobility, globalisation, outsourcing, supply chain disruption, productivity.

## Cities & Urbanisation

urban sprawl, infrastructure development, overpopulation, affordable housing crisis, gentrification, smart cities, public transportation networks, green spaces, urban heat island effect, waste management, suburban migration, civic amenities, traffic congestion, urban planning, sanitation infrastructure.

## Media & Communication

media literacy, misinformation, sensationalism, freedom of press, echo chamber effect, propaganda, digital journalism, editorial bias, mass media influence, social media algorithms, online radicalization, information overload, civic discourse.

## Crime & Justice

criminal justice system, rehabilitation, recidivism, deterrence, restorative justice, incarceration rates, cybercrime, organised crime, judicial reform, capital punishment, socioeconomic roots of crime, law enforcement, corruption, white-collar crime.

# IDIOMS & SOPHISTICATED PHRASES

Use sparingly — 1 or 2 per essay max

## ■ IELTS Idiom Rule

- Use idioms ONLY in Task 2 — NEVER in Task 1.
- 1-2 per essay maximum; overuse signals you memorised them.
- Best placed in body paragraphs, not the introduction.
- Ensure the idiom fits naturally — forced use costs marks.

Idiom	Meaning	IELTS-style Example
<b>A double-edged sword</b>	Something with both advantages and disadvantages	<i>Social media is a double-edged sword, fostering connection while propagating misinformation.</i>
<b>At the forefront of</b>	Leading in / pioneering	<i>Many tech companies are at the forefront of developing renewable energy solutions.</i>
<b>A vicious cycle</b>	A self-reinforcing negative loop	<i>Poverty and poor education create a vicious cycle that is difficult to break.</i>
<b>Bear the brunt of</b>	Suffer the worst consequences	<i>It is often the most vulnerable communities that bear the brunt of climate change.</i>
<b>Gain the upper hand</b>	Obtain an advantage	<i>Nations investing in AI may gain the upper hand in the global economy.</i>
<b>The tip of the iceberg</b>	A small visible part of a larger problem	<i>The reported cases are merely the tip of the iceberg.</i>
<b>Take its toll on</b>	Have a damaging effect	<i>Long working hours inevitably take their toll on mental health.</i>
<b>Turn a blind eye to</b>	Deliberately ignore	<i>Governments that turn a blind eye to corruption risk long-term instability.</i>
<b>A blessing in disguise</b>	Something that seems bad but is actually good	<i>The pandemic was, in many ways, a blessing in disguise for remote working culture.</i>
<b>Bridge the gap</b>	Reduce or eliminate a difference	<i>Education is the most powerful tool to bridge the gap between rich and poor.</i>
<b>In the long run</b>	Over an extended period	<i>Although costly initially, green energy is more economical in the long run.</i>
<b>Pave the way for</b>	Create conditions for something to happen	<i>This policy could pave the way for greater gender equality in the workplace.</i>
<b>The lesser of two evils</b>	The less harmful of two bad choices	<i>Critics argue that nuclear power is merely the lesser of two evils.</i>
<b>Come at a price</b>	Have a significant cost/consequence	<i>Rapid industrialisation has come at a price for the natural environment.</i>

<b>Cast doubt on</b>	Make something seem uncertain	<i>Recent findings cast serious doubt on the effectiveness of the initiative.</i>
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# GRAMMAR STRUCTURES FOR BAND 7+

Sentence Variety = Higher GRA Score

## Complex Sentence Starters

Phrase / Structure	Function	Example
<b>Although / Even though / Whilst</b>	Contrast clause	<i>Although governments have implemented policies, the results remain inconclusive.</i>
<b>Given that / Considering that</b>	Reasoning premise	<i>Given that urbanisation is accelerating, sustainable planning is imperative.</i>
<b>Not only... but also...</b>	Emphasis + addition	<i>Not only does pollution harm wildlife, but it also poses risks to human health.</i>
<b>It is widely acknowledged that...</b>	Reporting stance	<i>It is widely acknowledged that early childhood education yields long-term benefits.</i>
<b>There is little doubt that...</b>	Certainty expression	<i>There is little doubt that climate change represents an existential threat.</i>
<b>What is particularly concerning is...</b>	Focused emphasis	<i>What is particularly concerning is the rate at which biodiversity is declining.</i>
<b>Were it not for...</b>	Hypothetical Condition	<i>Were it not for technological innovation, many diseases would remain untreated.</i>
<b>It could be argued that...</b>	Balanced hedging	<i>It could be argued that stricter regulations would curtail economic growth.</i>
<b>The extent to which...</b>	Degree qualifier	<i>The extent to which social media contributes to anxiety remains debated.</i>
<b>By + -ing...</b>	Means clause	<i>By investing in renewable energy, nations can dramatically reduce emissions.</i>
<b>Despite + noun / -ing</b>	Concession	<i>Despite significant progress, gender inequality persists in many sectors.</i>
<b>Unless...</b>	Conditional warning	<i>Unless drastic action is taken, the situation will continue to deteriorate.</i>

## Passive Voice — Formal Academic Register

Phrase / Structure	Function	Example
<b>It has been suggested that...</b>	Distanced claim	<i>It has been suggested that screen time impairs attention spans.</i>
<b>This can be attributed to...</b>	Cause explanation	<i>This can be attributed to a lack of adequate funding.</i>
<b>It is generally accepted that...</b>	Consensus view	<i>It is generally accepted that exercise improves mental health.</i>

...is considered to be...	Classification	<i>Nuclear energy is considered to be a low-carbon source.</i>
It is estimated that...	Quantified claim	<i>It is estimated that 70% of jobs could be automated by 2040.</i>

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# INTRODUCTION & CONCLUSION BANKS

## Plug-and-Play Sentences

### Strong Introduction Openers (Band 7–9)

- In contemporary society, [topic] has emerged as a subject of considerable debate.
- Over recent decades, [topic] has become an increasingly prominent concern for governments and individuals alike.
- Few issues in modern society generate as much debate as [topic].
- The rapid advancement of [technology/globalisation] has fundamentally transformed the way [people/societies]...
- It is an undeniable reality that [topic] has had a profound impact on [area of life].
- The question of whether [topic] is beneficial or harmful continues to divide opinion.
- [Topic] is a multifaceted issue that warrants careful examination from multiple perspectives.
- With [topic] becoming ever more prevalent, the need for informed discussion has never been greater.

### Powerful Conclusion Starters (Band 7–9)

- In conclusion, while [opposing view] has merit, I firmly believe that [your position].
- To conclude, it is evident that [summary of argument].
- On balance, the advantages of [topic] outweigh the disadvantages, provided that [condition].
- All things considered, [restate thesis in different words].
- In summary, although [acknowledgement], the evidence strongly suggests that [conclusion].
- Taking everything into account, it is clear that [topic] requires a concerted, multi-faceted approach.
- It can therefore be concluded that [key takeaway], and it is incumbent upon [who] to act accordingly.

### Thesis Statement Formulas

Essay Type	Thesis Formula
<b>Agree</b>	<i>I firmly believe that [position], primarily because [reason 1] and [reason 2].</i>
<b>Disagree</b>	<i>I strongly disagree with this view, as [reason 1] and [reason 2] clearly demonstrate.</i>
<b>Partly agree</b>	<i>Whilst [partial agreement], I contend that [main position] for several key reasons.</i>
<b>Both views</b>	<i>This essay will examine arguments on both sides before presenting my own conclusion.</i>
<b>Problem-sol</b>	<i>This essay will identify the root causes of this issue and suggest practical, effective solutions.</i>
<b>Adv-Disadv</b>	<i>This essay will weigh the potential benefits against the inherent drawbacks of this trend.</i>

# EXAM DAY CHECKLIST

Before You Submit — 5-Minute Review

## Task 1 ✓

- Paraphrased the question (not copied)?
- Included an OVERVIEW paragraph?
- Selected and compared the most significant data?
- Included specific figures with correct units?
- Used a variety of trend vocabulary?
- Avoided personal opinion?
- 150+ words written?

## Task 2 ✓

- Clear thesis statement in the introduction?
- Each body paragraph: Topic → Explain → Example → Link?
- Used complex sentences (although, despite, not only...)?
- Used 2–3 linking words per paragraph?
- Avoided contractions and informal language?
- Consistent stance throughout?
- 250+ words written?
- Conclusion restates thesis with a future projection?

## Both Tasks — Vocabulary

- Replaced at least 5 simple words with Band 7 alternatives?
- Used no word more than twice consecutively?
- No spelling mistakes (quickly scan your work)?
- Used academic register (no slang, no contractions)?

### ■ Final Reminder

- Task 1: 20 minutes maximum. Task 2: 40 minutes minimum. Manage time strictly.
- If stuck on a word — paraphrase it. Never leave a gap.
- Write legibly. Examiners are human; messy handwriting loses marks.
- You have prepared. Trust your preparation. Now execute.

**Good luck — you've got this. ■**