

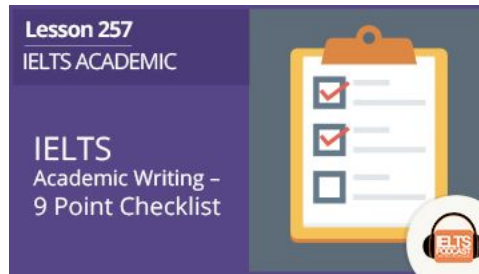
Female Voice: You are now listening to the IELTS podcast. Learn from tutors and ex-examiners who are masters of IELTS preparation. Your host, Ben Worthington.

Ben: Academic IELTS part 1: a nine-point checklist for you to use when you're writing your academic IELTS part 1 report. My name is Ben Worthington and you're listening to IELTS podcast. In this tutorial, we're going to dive into details about IELTS academic part 1. This is quite a thorough checklist. So, if you've got a pen and paper, I'd strongly recommend you just make notes because this is also going to help you memorize and remember the information.

As a side note, this information a lot of it is explained in more detail in the online course we've got about IELTS academic task 1. Let's jump into it. The first important point-- actually these are not in order of importance, but this is an important point. Let's go.

Number one: ordering the information. The key question here is have you organized your information logically? By this I mean, fair enough we've included the correct information, but have we put the correct information or have we hidden the key points somewhere in the middle of the paragraph, for example.

Now, logical ways of ordering the report include starting with the most significant detail, so this might be the extremes. We can also give an overview of the general pattern and then we can possibly note the exceptions. Also, we can group the items that are similar and this is key. This is a really important skill to develop; grouping the information. I'll go into it in a later date, but



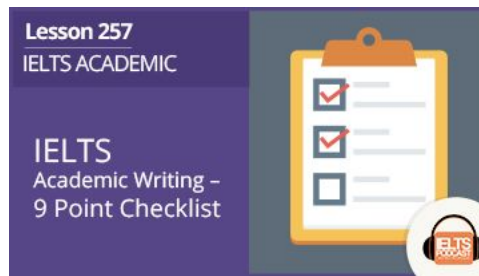
there's a whole tutorial about this in the online course and it's a key requirement if you look at the IELTS official criteria to score a seven or above.

Also, we can move from the largest to the smallest and obviously as well, if it's a dynamic chart, we can also start with the time period. So, we can say from the first in time to the last in time. Now, a good sort of like way to check that you've got this right is that could the person who's reading your IELTS academic task 1, would they be able to reproduce the graph from your written description?

This is essential. If they can do that then you're on the right track. So, you might want to consider if you're studying with somebody else say hey, try and reproduce this graph from my written description.

Point number two: we're going to talk about very briefly here the vocabulary used for percentages. Now, it's really important that you review this especially for pie charts and the reason is because this is a language test. Now, I'll give you a quick overview.

We could say something like while 24% of people in Poland have \$1.10 a day to live on, 7% of people in Germany have this amount, yes? Now, that's one way we could describe the data. Another way we could describe it is while almost a quarter of the population in Poland have \$1.10 a day to live on, less than a tenth of people in Germany have this amount.

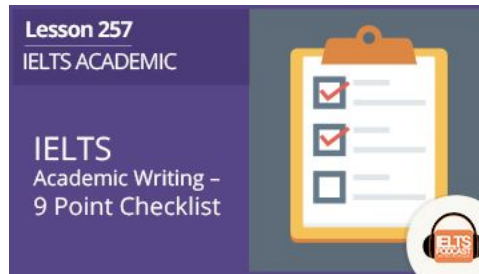


Now, can you see? Which reads better? Which is easier to understand? The key point here is obviously it's the second one and it sounds better because that's how we speak and as I said before, this is a language test.

This will also help you because we're going to increase the variety of grammar that we use. Instead of saying 22% of whatever, 21%, we're going to say a quarter. That helps with lexical resource. Also, it helps with the communication because we can't really see 21%, but we can easily see a quarter.

Point number three: this is quite a simple point. Have you correctly identified if this is a pie chart? Is it a flow chart? Is it a line graph? Is it a bar chart? This seems kind of straight forward, but the amount of essays I see that we get sent in to correct, the amount of essays I see, academic task 1 essays that we correct and I see that the student hasn't written the correct description. It is quite surprising.

Point number four: the correct tense and we've gone into this in a lot of detail in previous podcasts. I'll give you a quick overview. So, we want to be crystal clear regarding the image that we are looking at or the graphic. Does it show a future prediction? Does it show the current and present sort of like data? Does it give you an image or does it communicate what's happening right now? Or does it relate to the past? Just as a bonus point, this also relates to the specific times in your report. So, you really need to pay attention to that.



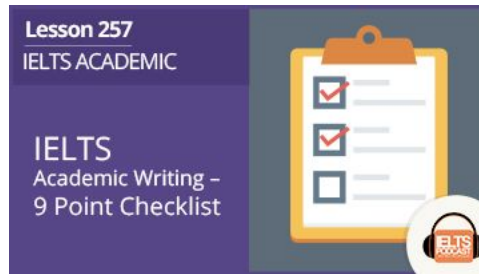
Now then, point number five: the subject. Have we included all of the, for example, ten different products that are mentioned? We can't just say these are all leather products from Southeast Asia. No. We have to say the chart includes eight leather products. These are... Or eight south Asian leather products. These are shoes, bags, watch straps, wallets, hats... I can't really think of any more. You get what I'm saying.

We need to be specific. We can't just say eight European countries or eight leather products. Be specific. We don't have to mention them all the time, but just make sure we do cover all eight or nine or seven or six of them, whatever they are.

Point number six: the units. This is extremely important. Are we talking about milliliters? Are we talking about liters? There's a massive difference. Are we talking about U.S. dollars? Are we talking about pesos from the Philippines? Massive difference.

Also, another point we need to be aware of is the time reference. Are we talking about days, hours, months? I've seen academic task 1 reports just tank. Absolutely just tank and I mean like serious flaws just because they got it wrong regarding the time reference. And this is what's kind of probably frustrating for a lot of students. This goes beyond the requirements of the English language basically.

This is more about understanding data and reporting the data. Of course, communication is involved there, but these skills-- for example, a native English speaker who dominates the-- who



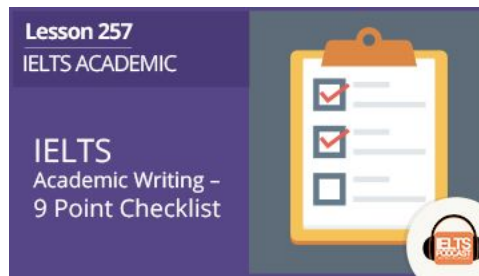
obviously speaks the language perfectly could probably still lose points on this just because they've interpreted the graph incorrectly.

Number seven and this is a point that we mention in the online course that-- and it's a really good one because this will help you improve your score for grammatical range and accuracy as well. Point number seven is, are we including the extremes? Are we including the maximums and the minimums?

This is extremely useful because if we get-- if we do identify these, not only are we going to give a better description of the graphic that we have in front of us but also we're going to be using the superlatives. We're going to-- we can say phrases like the most significant fall in crop production was... or the largest fall in crop production was in 1997. Can you see?

So, this is why it's very important and just a side note, a bonus point here, this applies for your pie charts, for your bar charts, for your line graphs; the highest and the lowest. For the pie charts, it's the largest segment and the smallest segment.

The point I wanted to make before that idea popped into my mind is avoid biggest and smallest because these are amongst the first words that we use when we're learning a language. The first words we learn when we're learning English or in fact, any language. What could we say instead? Well, we could say the most significant fall or the most serious drop or the most, I



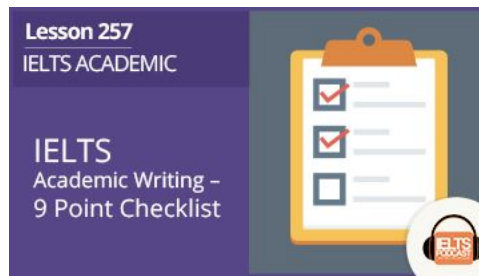
don't know, the largest fluctuation, yes? How good does that sound? So, there are lots of different ways we can say-- we can upgrade the language.

Number eight and this is quite obvious and quite straightforward and we touched on this before when we were mentioning grouping the data, but number eight refers to the patterns or the sequence or the trends. Now, this is really important especially for a dynamic chart. A dynamic chart is usually a line graph and obviously, it's going to most likely include a measurement such as time that is dynamic, that is changing.

What we want to do is we want to clearly give the reader an overview of the general pattern and this goes back to what we were saying before that a good test is, can a decent drawing be rendered, be produced from your written description? Just again, point eight: patterns, sequences, and trends. What's going on? What's the overview here?

Number nine and this is another point that we mentioned on the online course and this is to note the exceptions. So, we've already outlined the general overview so, for example, it might be that temperatures are rising across I don't know, Spain, Portugal, and Croatia. There's a general trend of rising temperatures in these countries, for example.

But then we might see that there was a slight drop in temperature in Portugal in the year 2019 and this data is important because it's a key detail that really sort of like enables you or enables



the person looking at your work to give an accurate-- to get an accurate overview of what's actually happening.

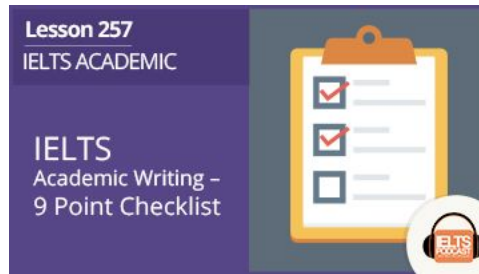
So, let me just review all of these points again. Maybe you could pause the tutorial and try and reproduce them. So, let's have a look.

1) Ordering the information. How are we going to do this? Are we going to start with the most significant ones? Are we going to start with the general pattern? Are we going to group information? Are we going to go from the smallest to the largest? This is really important. In the online course, we talk about devising your plan. This is one of the first stages. Before you even jump into writing, you organize the paragraphs.

2) The language and this is really important. We need to practice the language for percentages and also-- not just percentages but for the line graphs; plummet, fall, surge, all of these especially for percentages though as I demonstrated. If I say 21% it's difficult to visualize. If I say almost a quarter, you kind of get a better image. You get a word picture. So, let's see.

3) Have we correctly identified the graphic? Is it a table? Is it a flow chart? Is it a bar chart? Is it a line graph? Is it a pie chart? All of these and as I said before, this is an easy place to lose points.

4) Correct tense. This is a big issue for students and I see students struggle with this daily. This is a pain point. One way to get around this, just as a bonus point, find model task 1 sample essays



and copy them out pen and paper. Copy them out and you'll soon get a feel for the correct tense.

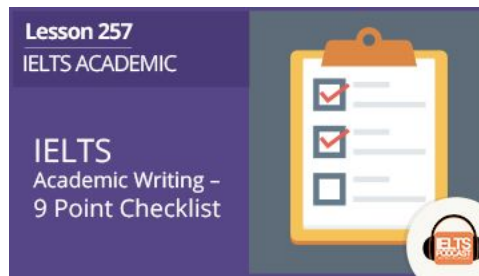
5) The subject. Have we mentioned the data or have we just grouped it all together and forgot about the details? I'm being specific here. Not the data points but the data. Are we talking about brown leather products? Are we talking about five brown leather products? Well, mention those five brown leather products.

6) What are the units? Are we talking about dollars? Are we talking about pesos? Are we talking about kilos? Grams? Tons? And just as a bonus point that's popped into my mind now, in the Mediterranean countries and I've seen this from Asian country students as well, that I see a decimal place put in the number especially large numbers when we want to put a comma.

So, if I put 10,000, that's ten thousand. If I put 10.000, that's just ten. Whereas in Spanish and in other languages, 10.000 is ten thousand and this is a big issue.

7) Extremes: highs, lows, the most significant, the largest, the biggest, the smallest, the beginning, the ending, all of these. This is very useful because we can employ the superlative.

8) Patterns, trends, sequences. What's the overall view? What's the overall trend here? Are we seeing that two countries are dominating-- are having 80% of the pie? Are we seeing that all the lines are going down? And if you can't even see a trend, that is the trend.



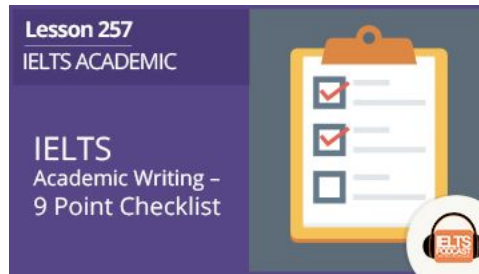
On the online course, I give the students a horrible line chart to write about and I don't do this because I'm an evil person. I do this because I want to show that sometimes we can get charts that don't have a trend and that is the pattern.

For example, the chart that we use in the online course, it's got just like three or four wiggly lines of wildly fluctuating numbers-- of line chart and you cannot really identify an overall trend. We can't say that rainfall is decreasing in three countries. We can't say anything like that.

What we can say though is that each country shows a clear fluctuation between 10 milliliters and 60 milliliters of rainfall over the 12 month period. That's the trend. That's the pattern there that it's just wildly fluctuating for everybody. For every country.

9) Exceptions. Is there anything here that is the exception that might be probably linked to the extreme? Is there anything maybe in the overall trend and that just [unintelligible 00:19:21.06] the trend and then it goes the other way? Important to look for.

If you want to practice this and if you want to go and learn it to a very deep level, you can join us on the course. And another method, if you don't have access to the course, is that you can write your description and then ask somebody to draw a picture or we can do this also vice-versa, the opposite. Find a model essay and then draw a description, yes? More often than not, if the description is good, your drawing should be broadly similar to the graphic.



Right then, thank you very much for listening and if you've got any suggestions for future podcast episodes or any guests that you'd like me to interview, then please just send us an email to ieltpodcast@gmail.com or ben@ieltpodcast.com with your suggestion. We'd love to hear from you.

If you're having any struggles, you can send us an email and tell us what you're struggling with and we'll be glad to help you. Also, if you need to pass the IELTS fast, then have a look at the online course. One last thing, two last things actually, I'm sorry.

Number one, join us on the email list. Join us-- sign up, leave your email and we'll be sending out a ton of value. Tutorials, tips, discount codes, everything. I'm getting a lot of thank you emails from students. Number two, if you know anybody who is struggling with the IELTS preparation, send them a link. Tell them to listen to this podcast and we'll be very grateful.

Right then, that's everything and thank you very much for listening. [music]

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