

Band 7 Roadmap

8-Week Plan: From Band 5.5 to Band 7

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What Band 7 Actually Requires

Band 7 is not about 'being good at English'. It's about meeting 4 specific criteria per skill. Here's what the examiners are looking for:

Writing Band 7: Clear position throughout (TA), logical paragraphing with cohesive devices used flexibly (CC), sufficient range with some less common items and occasional errors (LR), variety of complex structures with frequent error-free sentences (GRA).

Speaking Band 7: Speaks at length without noticeable effort (FC), flexible use of vocabulary including less common items (LR), frequent complex forms with good control (GRA), all features of Band 6 pronunciation plus some Band 8 features (P).

Week 1: Diagnostic & Foundation

- * Take a full practice test under exam conditions (timed)
- * Score yourself honestly against band descriptors
- * Identify your 2 weakest criteria per skill
- * Focus: Academic vocabulary building (20 words/day with collocations)
- * Daily: Read 1 academic article (New Scientist, The Economist level)

Week 2: Writing Task 2 Structure

- * Master the 5-paragraph structure: Intro + 2 Body + Conclusion
- * Learn 3 essay types: Opinion, Discussion, Problem-Solution
- * Practice writing thesis statements (clear position = Band 7 TA)
- * Write 3 full essays this week, timed at 40 minutes each
- * Self-score using the Task 2 band descriptors

Week 3: Reading Speed & Strategy

- * Practice skimming: read passage in 3 minutes, identify main ideas
- * Master keyword scanning for T/F/NG questions
- * Learn to handle 'NOT GIVEN' (the hardest judgement for Arab students)
- * Do 3 full reading tests timed at 60 minutes
- * Focus on paraphrase recognition (the #1 reading skill)

Week 4: Speaking Fluency

- * Record yourself answering 5 Part 2 topics (2 min each)
- * Listen back: count fillers (um, uh, like) and pauses
- * Practice discourse markers: Well, Actually, In fact, Having said that
- * Extend Part 3 answers to 30-45 seconds with examples
- * Do 2 mock speaking tests with a partner or AI

Week 5: Listening Accuracy

- * Practice with BBC podcasts at 1x speed (academic topics)
- * Focus on spelling: dates, numbers, proper nouns
- * Learn to spot distractors (wrong answers designed to trap you)
- * Do 3 full listening tests timed
- * Review every wrong answer: understand WHY you got it wrong

Week 6: Writing Task 1 + Advanced Grammar

- * Master line graphs, bar charts, pie charts, tables, processes, maps
- * Learn the overview paragraph (most important paragraph in Task 1)
- * Practice 5 complex grammar structures for Band 7 GRA
- * Structures: relative clauses, conditionals, passive, participle clauses, inversions
- * Write 4 Task 1 reports timed at 20 minutes

Week 7: Full Practice Tests

- * Do 2 complete IELTS tests under real exam conditions
- * Listening: 30 min + 10 min transfer time
- * Reading: 60 minutes, no extra time
- * Writing: Task 1 (20 min) + Task 2 (40 min)
- * Score everything. Identify remaining weak points.

Week 8: Final Polish

- * Fix your top 3 remaining errors (the ones costing you the most marks)
- * Review all vocabulary learned (flashcard test of 150+ words)
- * Do 1 final full practice test 3 days before the exam
- * Day before exam: rest, review notes lightly, prepare documents
- * Exam day: arrive early, stay calm, trust your preparation

Daily Habits for Band 7

1. Read 1 academic article (20 min) - builds LR automatically
2. Learn 10 new collocations (not just single words)
3. Write 1 paragraph using a complex grammar structure
4. Listen to 15 min of academic English (TED Talks, BBC)
5. Practice speaking for 5 min (record and review)