

GAC001 Academic English I: Listening and Speaking Skills

GAC001-aligned listening and speaking practice; the centre's current task brief sets the assessment requirements.

A useful message connects to an action

Useful English connects a message to an action a listener can carry out.

Six themes give you something to talk about

Theme	Talk practice it offers
Communicating	Text types, purpose, audience and formality
Countries and cultures	Listening for gist and detail
Modern lifestyles	Responding and following instructions
Journeys and travel	Preparing a short presentation
Living things	Accuracy in interaction
Technology	The formal discussion

Your teacher's brief sets the assessment

- The brief may include a listening test, a short formal presentation, a discussion, or coursework.
- Read it for the time, permitted materials, criteria and submission rules.
- This guide is original practice, not an official GAC assessment.
- No speaking habit is promised a score here.

What a written practice answer cannot establish

Your turn

A typed answer to a practice task cannot establish which of these?

- A. The condition attached to a deadline
- B. The meaning of a supplied detail
- C. Pronunciation, pace and spoken delivery
- D. Who must carry out an action

Four terms for describing talk

Term	What it means
Text type	A form of talk: announcement, conversation, interview, lecture
Purpose	What the talk tries to achieve
Audience	The people the talk addresses
Formality	Set by the relationship and the situation

Formal and informal: decide from several features

Formal speech

Often uses carefully organised language.

Still allows a contraction such as "we'll".

Informal speech

May use contractions and short turns.

Can still give a precise instruction.

Two ways to give one change

The same message, two text types

Announcement: "Tuesday's reading club will meet in the library seminar room instead of room 204. The start remains 15:30."

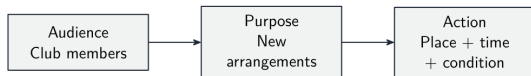
Conversation: "Are we still meeting at half past three?" "Yes, but use the library seminar room this week."

Both give the same change. The second also shows a listener checking it.

Notice

Identify the type by its features, then say what the features do.

Signposts organise, they do not rank



- Signposts such as "first", "however" and "finally" organise a message.
- They can show sequence, a contrast, or a final point.
- They do not make every statement that follows equally important.

Worked example: a condition is not a general deadline

- 1 **Hear the condition** "If you need step-free access, email the coordinator by Monday lunchtime."
- 2 **Identify who must act** Students who need step-free access, not the whole club.
- 3 **Preserve it in the reminder** "Students who need step-free access should email by Monday lunchtime."
- 4 **Test the weak version** "Everyone must email on Monday" changes who must act and blurs the timing.

Decision

Ask who, what, when, where, and under what condition.

Your turn: the workshop and the tablets

Your turn

A tutor says: "The workshop remains on Friday. Only students borrowing a school tablet need to collect it on Thursday." Must every student collect a tablet?

- ☐ A. Yes, the workshop day changed to Thursday
- ☐ B. No; only borrowers collect on Thursday, and the workshop stays on Friday
- ☐ C. Yes, everyone collects a tablet on Thursday
- ☐ D. No, but the workshop moves to Thursday

Gist and detail: two listening purposes

Listening for gist

Finding the overall point of a message.

Prepared by predicting likely topics before the recording.

Listening for detail

Finding information needed for a particular question or action.

Includes times, places, conditions and who must act.

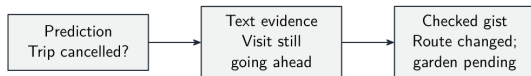
Worked example: predict, then follow the recording

- 1 **Read the task first** Use the printed questions to see what kind of answer is needed.
- 2 **Predict** Expect a topic, or an answer type such as a time or a place.
- 3 **Treat the guess as attention, not evidence** A prediction prepares your ear; it does not make the guess correct.
- 4 **Follow what was actually said** When the speaker gives a different detail, use that detail.

Decision

Your prediction is a spotlight, not a source of facts.

Context clues narrow, they do not define



- Context clues are the surrounding words and situation that explain a message.
- They can narrow possible meanings without fixing an exact definition.
- Mark an uncertain word and keep following the message.
- Return on a second listening, or ask for clarification in a live conversation.

Worked example: a changed route is not a cancellation

- 1 **Notice the change** The river path is blocked by a fallen tree; visitors use the hill entrance.
- 2 **Keep what continues** The trip still goes ahead; indoor galleries remain available.
- 3 **Keep the condition separate** The garden visit may be cancelled if weather is unsafe; staff decide Saturday morning.
- 4 **State the bounded gist** The trip continues with a changed route and a possible change to one activity.

Decision

"The museum is closed" and "the garden is definitely cancelled" both go beyond the notice.

Three times, three events

Time	Event
08:40	Meet at the school gate
08:50	The bus leaves
09:30	Planned arrival

Use the evidence

A reminder that gives only 08:50 may cause students to miss the meeting time.

Your turn: "might" and "if"

Your turn

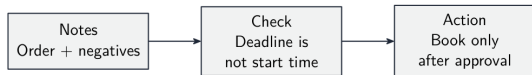
A speaker says: "We might move the discussion indoors if it rains." Which part is certain?

- A. The discussion will move indoors
- B. Rain is expected that day
- C. There is a plan for a discussion and a possible indoor location
- D. The discussion is cancelled

Instructions come with conditions

- Following instructions means carrying out required actions and respecting their conditions.
- Some actions must happen in order; others are separate requirements.
- Listen for "before", "after approval", "only if" and "once".

Notes are selective, not compressed



- Record the action, important details, conditions and questions.
- Short phrases and clear abbreviations can help.
- A useful note: "send tutor Thu 16:00; wait approval BEFORE booking".
- Do not shorten so much that you cannot read your own notes later.

Clarify or restate: two different moves

Clarifying

Ask about what is uncertain, and name the problem.

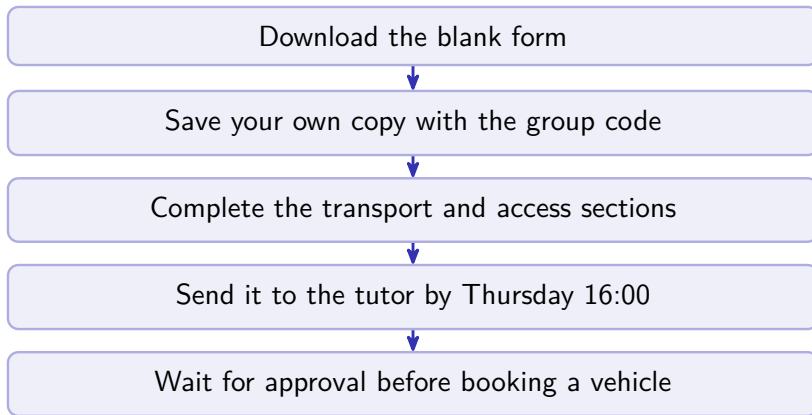
"Is 16:00 the form deadline or the meeting time?"

Restating

Say the message again in your own words so the speaker can check it.

The response confirms the message or repairs it.

Worked example: permission changes the sequence



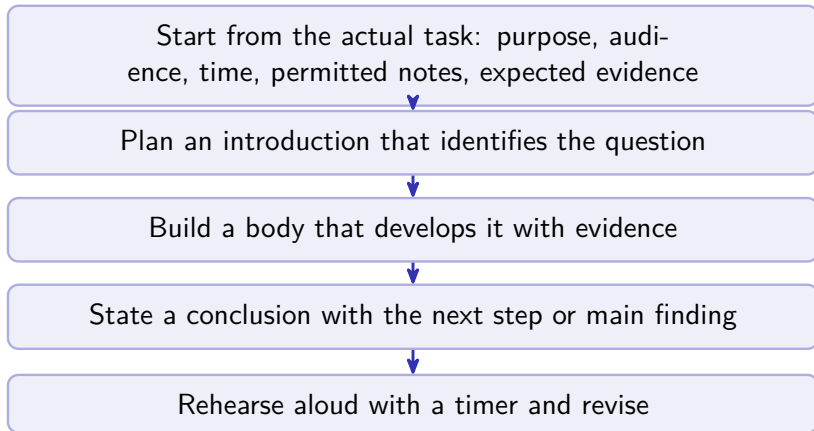
Your turn: the equipment list

Your turn

A teacher says: "Send me the equipment list today. Buy the materials only after I approve the list." A student sends the list and immediately buys the materials. What is missing?

- A. Nothing; sending the list completes the task
- B. The teacher's approval
- C. A longer equipment list
- D. Permission to send email

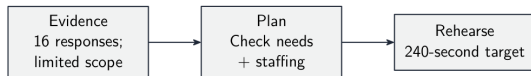
Plan a short presentation from the task



Transitions show real relationships

- A transition should show a real relationship between points.
- "The survey gives one view. However, it does not tell us about staffing."
- Adding "therefore" does not make a conclusion valid.

A note card carries point, evidence, limit



- A note card may contain a point, its evidence, and a reminder of its limit.
- Practise aloud with a timer; measure your own talk.
- If it runs long, cut repetition or reduce scope — keep evidence and limits.
- Check the task rules before choosing how much to read from notes.

Worked example: a small poll is a starting point

- 1 Count the evidence** A class poll on later library closing receives 16 responses: 10 prefer later hours, 4 prefer current hours, 2 have no preference.
- 2 State the bounded claim** "Ten of the sixteen respondents preferred later hours."
- 3 Name what is unknown** Nonresponders' views, staffing, cost; and no change has been approved.
- 4 Choose the next step** Ask nonresponders, and discuss staffing with the librarian.

Decision

"Everybody wants later hours" goes beyond the evidence.

One 240-second plan for a practice talk

Segment	Seconds
Opening	30
Evidence	60
Limits and options	90
Next steps	40
Conclusion	20

Use the evidence

Totals 240 seconds: an example allocation, not an official GAC timing rule. A rehearsal of 4 minutes 40 is 40 seconds over.

Your turn: keep the nonresponders sentence

Your turn

Why should a speaker keep the sentence about nonresponders even when shortening the talk?

- A. It makes the talk sound more scientific
- B. It limits what the poll can show
- C. It fills the time evenly
- D. It repeats the opening point

Fluency and accuracy support each other

Fluency

Connected speech that a listener can follow.

Can still contain a wrong detail.

Accuracy

Using language forms that express the intended meaning.

An accurate sentence can still sit in a long, unclear explanation.

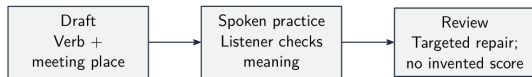
Stress and intonation carry meaning

- Word stress is the stronger beat in a word: the noun "record" stresses the first syllable, the verb the second.
- Intonation is the pattern of voice pitch across a phrase.
- A yes-no question can rise or fall-rise depending on meaning and context.
- "All questions rise" is not a rule.

Repair a meaning, do not restart the talk

- Self-correction can repair meaning: "He go—he goes to the lab on Tuesdays."
- A brief repair may help the listener.
- Constantly restarting every minor error can interrupt the message.
- There is no automatic score increase for every correction.

Turn-taking is a real exchange



- "Can I add a point about the room?" can open a turn.
- After someone responds, deal with their point.
- Do not recite your next prepared sentence.
- Check what a listener understood, and repair the specific problem.

Worked example: a wrong detail, an unknown cause

- 1 **See the mismatch** The intended message names lab 2; the partner's written note says lab 3.
- 2 **Separate it from the cause** Pronunciation, attention, noise or writing could explain it — the note does not say which.
- 3 **Make a practical repair** "The meeting is in lab 2, not lab 3. Could you say the room back to me?"
- 4 **Review the delivery if needed** Practise the sentence aloud; review the recording or delivery with your teacher if pronunciation remains a concern.

Decision

Without reviewed audio, a typed sentence cannot grade the speaker's sounds.

Your turn: a minor error mid-talk

Your turn

During a connected-speaking practice, a learner notices a minor grammar error. Must they stop the whole talk and restart?

- ☐ A. Yes, always restart from the beginning
- ☐ B. No: make a brief repair if meaning needs it, continue, and review selected errors afterwards
- ☐ C. Yes, but only for pronunciation errors
- ☐ D. No, never correct anything during a talk

Support a claim with evidence and limits

- Support a claim with relevant evidence and a reason connecting it to the decision.
- Identify the limits of that evidence.
- One person's preference is evidence of that person's view, not proof that everyone agrees.

Invite, listen, and disagree clearly

Bringing others in

A real invitation: "Mei, how does the room capacity affect your choice?" Then listen to the answer.

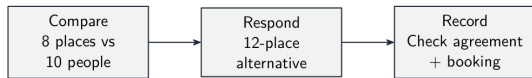
Polite disagreement can still be clear: "I understand why quiet matters, but this room holds only eight and we expect ten."

After someone responds, deal with their point rather than reciting your next prepared sentence.

Notice

An invitation is only real if the answer can change the discussion.

Consensus is reached, not assumed



- A consensus is a shared decision the group has actually reached.
- Silence alone does not prove agreement.
- Ask participants to respond, summarise the proposed choice, and check for remaining concerns.
- A discussion decision is not permission, and not a confirmed booking.

Worked example: a preference is not a completed decision

- 1 **Use the supplied numbers** Ten students expected; the quiet library room holds eight; room 204 holds twelve, with a supervisor until 17:00.
- 2 **Keep the outstanding checks** The meeting start is unset and neither room is booked; the task permits a choice between these two rooms.
- 3 **Make the contribution** "I prefer room 204 because it can hold ten people. We still need to check the start time and booking process."
- 4 **Invite a response** "Dan, you preferred the library. Does its capacity change your view?"

Decision

"Everyone agrees, so I have booked it" invents both agreement and a booking.

Your turn: one participant has not answered

Your turn

The group favours room 204, but one participant has not answered. What should happen before calling the decision shared?

- A. Nothing; a majority preference is shared enough
- B. Invite that participant's view and check whether anyone still objects, then confirm the booking procedure and timing
- C. Book the room immediately to avoid losing it
- D. Ask the teacher to decide without telling the group

Check yourself

- A reminder says "Everyone must email on Monday." What did the original condition limit?
- A notice gives 08:40, 08:50 and 09:30. Why is one time not enough?
- A poll of 16 students shows 10 preferring later hours. State a bounded claim.
- The group falls silent after a proposal. Is consensus reached?