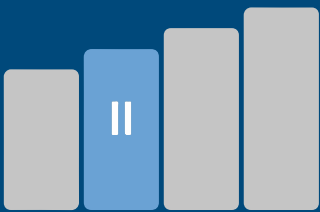




# UN Level II Intermediate Language Competence Examination

## English



# READING



## Learning objective



Understand the relevant details in a variety of social media exchanges, describing facts and feelings, related to personal subjects or those of public interest.

## Domains



Personal



Public

## Task 1

Two graphic designers from the United Nations Electronic Publishing Unit (EPU) in Vienna discuss the process of developing powerful visual elements for the Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA).

Read the questions the interviewer asks them. Read their answers. Then match the answers to four of the five questions.

One question the interviewer asks is not answered.

Questions	Answer 1.	Answer 2.	Answer 3.	Answer 4.	n/a
Working with UNOOSA means conveying often complex scientific/technical topics into effective visual material, bridging science and design. How do you approach this complexity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The work of EPU helps the UN communicate effectively. Communication, at the UN and beyond, is moving more and more into digital formats. How do you see it evolving in the future?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What were the inspirations behind the visual identity you developed for UNOOSA? Which priorities did you have in mind?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What aspects of working with UNOOSA do you enjoy the most?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Answer 1.	Answer 2.	Answer 3.	Answer 4.	n/a
What advice would you give to young people thinking of a career in graphic design?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**1** – We wanted to make sure that it would do justice to the importance of UNOOSA and its mandate. It also had to win the acceptance of staff, who would ultimately be the ones working with it. We wanted something that was fresh and recognizable, would have longevity, and would be especially good for digital use.

**2** – The first thing for me is to listen to the client officer and understand their goals. They know their subject best, and I see myself as someone helping them to develop the tools and materials they need to communicate it effectively. This might be through a training manual, an announcement for a conference or workshop, a scientific poster, a flagship publication or something else.

**3** – There is no doubt that the UN is speaking the same 'language' as the people it is serving. I think this shift has brought the UN closer to people. I see a rise in the use of video content, animation and digital information associated with a decline in the use of paper publications due to several reasons: environmental and financial concerns, ease and reach of digital distribution and the reduced shelf-life of printed communications products.

**4** – They need empathy and a genuine interest in the subjects they are working on. Besides the techniques you need to produce beautiful imagery and graphics, I recommend that you do not forget the foundation provided by the basics of typography. This is essential even if you then go on to bend or break some of these rules.

*Texts adapted from iSeek*

# READING



## Learning objective



Understand the main conclusions in news stories and articles on topics of general interest, with the occasional support of resources if needed.

## Domain



Public

## Task 2

Read the news article about underwater cities. Then for questions 1 to 6, choose True or False.

### Could humans live in underwater cities?

#### Why would we need underwater cities?

As sea levels and populations rise, and we begin to run out of space on land, some pioneers think that we should begin to colonise the oceans.

French architect Jacques Rougerie has designed dozens of underwater habitats over his career. In a boatyard in Bordeaux lies the first component of his latest idea: SeaOrbiter, a floating research colony that extends 31m beneath the surface.

Meanwhile, Canadian inventor Phil Nuytten imagines a place much deeper underwater, which would harvest resources. We're not talking city-sized habitats yet, but every journey starts with a single step...

#### Has anyone already tried living underwater?

Diving pioneer Jacques-Yves Cousteau built the first inhabited underwater habitat in 1962. Called Conshelf 1, this steel cylinder was home, for a week, to two divers. They were submerged off the coast of Marseilles at a depth of 10m, studying marine life and even building an underwater farm.

Underwater living isn't just for oceanographers, though. In 1970, an all-female team of US 'aquanauts' spent over 10 days 15m underwater in the Caribbean. The aim of the mission, called Tektite II, was to study the psychological effects of living in close quarters, in an environment similar to that of a spacecraft. Nowadays, there are a handful of underwater research labs around the world.

#### What are the main obstacles to living underwater?

Breathing is an obvious issue. Oxygen will have to be supplied from the surface, and underwater citizens will also need access to fresh water, food and power.

One of the most ambitious habitats to be proposed so far is Japanese architectural firm Shimizu Corporation's 'Ocean Spiral'. This deep-sea city would use the temperature difference of deep and shallower waters to drive a power generator, while drinking water would come from desalination technology, and food from underwater farms. The aim is to house 5,000 people by 2030. The cost? A mere \$26bn.

*Source: BBC Science Focus Magazine*

**T F**

- 1. The underwater habitats are located on the seafloor.
- 2. The divers in the Conshelf 1 underwater habitat were oceanographers.
- 3. The goal of the Tektite II mission was to observe marine life.
- 4. The underwater habitats simulate being in a spacecraft.
- 5. Underwater cities could be powered by variations in water temperature.
- 6. In the past decade, underwater research labs have developed in large numbers.

# READING



## Learning objective



Follow the content and relevant details of most correspondence, mainly in familiar professional fields, including requests, instructions and information.

## Domains



Public



Professional

## Task 3

Read the letter from the Secretary-General on racism. Then for questions 1 to 8, choose a, b or c.

Wednesday, 3 March 2021 | Worldwide | Secretary-General

Secretary-General shares results of UN Survey on Racism



Dignity for all  
in our Workplace

Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to share with you an executive summary of the results of the 2020 United Nations Survey on Racism.

This is the first survey of its kind by the United Nations. The intention was to 1) hear directly from staff about their experiences, as part of our effort to eradicate this scourge from our workplace.

I would like to thank each of you who took the time to respond and to share almost 85,000 comments. The response rate was just over 20 per cent, or slightly more than 8,000 staff. The results are being analysed and 2) the detailed findings will be released by the Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for all at the United Nations in a global town hall meeting in March and published on iSeek.

The initial analysis finds that almost three-quarters of staff report a positive perception of the performance management system and access to learning and development activities.

However, approximately one-third of staff members believe our human resources regulations and rules can sometimes be applied unfairly based on race, nationality or ethnic background. More concerning to me personally is that more than one-fifth of staff disagreed with the statement that racial discrimination is not tolerated in their workplace. 3) One in three mentioned experiencing discrimination based on national origin, racial identity or gender identity. The survey also found that over a third of those who experienced this discrimination did not report it, mainly because 4) they had a sense nothing would happen, lacked trust or feared retaliation.

This is clearly unacceptable. It saddens me profoundly that this is the painful experience of some of our colleagues. This is not the kind of Organization we want to be or should be, and we are looking at ways to address these important findings.

Racism has no place in the United Nations. It violates the founding principles of our Charter, undermines the credibility of our work, and debases us all as human beings.

Last year, I launched an Organization-wide discussion, led by the interdepartmental Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All. Part of its efforts are to engage staff on issues related to racism, intersectionality, conscious and unconscious bias, and how to create an anti-racist organization.

The Task Force is also working on a strategic action plan to tackle racism in the workplace. The results of the Survey will inform this undertaking.

I encourage you all to continue to engage in the panels, dialogues and processes we are undertaking to understand how racism and discrimination manifest in our workplace, and how we can overcome them. As the United Nations, we must lead by example. We can and must do better.

I also urge staff not to be silent, whether as the person experiencing racism or discrimination, or as a witness. Do not be a bystander. Report complaints to the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and seek assistance from the Ethics Office and the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services (OMS). 5) I assure you that we are deeply committed to ensuring a safe environment in which staff can report experiences of racism and discrimination without fear of reprisal.

I count on your continued support as we work towards creating an inclusive and diverse workforce where everyone feels recognized and valued.

Yours faithfully,

António Guterres

Text adapted from iSeek

**1. The United Nations has \_\_\_\_\_ conducted this type of survey before.**

- a) regularly
- b) occasionally
- c) never

**2. The purpose of the 2020 United Nations Survey on racism was to**

- a) eliminate workplace racism.
- b) share approximately 85,000 comments.
- c) get first-hand accounts from UN employees on their views.

**3. What ratio of staff answered the survey?**

- a) more than a fifth
- b) a quarter
- c) over a third

**4. The Task Force will:**

- a) share the complete results.
- b) publish the executive summary.
- c) host a global town hall meeting.

**5. 33 per cent of staff felt that in the workplace:**

- a) professional development opportunities are easily accessible.
- b) discriminatory practices exist.
- c) prejudice based on race is accepted.

**6. According to the letter, racism:**

- a) weakens public belief in UN staff.
- b) opposes the UN Charter.
- c) threatens humanity on a global scale.



**7. The Secretary-General recommends that staff:**

- a) initiate a working environment which encourages diversity.
- b) not worry about negative consequences when reporting discrimination.
- c) organize panels to discuss inclusion in the workplace.

**8. The purpose of the letter is primarily to:**

- a) persuade.
- b) inform.
- c) evaluate.

# LISTENING



## Learning objective



Follow everyday conversations, such as exchanges of opinion and factual information, sometimes with emotional content or nuances, with some repetition or clarification.

## Domains



Personal



Public

## Task 1

Listen to the conversation between Paul and Aime. Then choose a, b or c for questions 1 to 4.



<https://www.elllo.org/english/1301/T1341-amy-email-habits.htm>

### 1. Aimee consults her smartphone first thing:

- a) every morning
- b) most mornings
- c) some mornings

### 2. Paul thinks smartphones:

- a) create dependency
- b) provoke insomnia
- c) encourage unhealthy routines

### 3. Both Aimee and Paul:

- a) admit to using their smartphones too much
- b) have picked up the habit of reading books again
- c) recently started exercising first thing in the morning

4. Paul and Aimee discuss a recommendation to check smartphones for messages and news:

- a) daily
- b) two times a day
- c) every 30 minutes

# LISTENING



## Learning objective



Follow the main content of much recorded media, such as documentaries and podcasts in standard varieties, sometimes requiring resources to improve understanding.

## Domain



Public

## Task 2

Watch the environmental report from VOA news. Then answer True or False for questions 1 to 6.

UN Report Warns Climate Change Will Hit Our Stomachs



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5cWazcakUw>

T F

- |                          |                          |    |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. | A UN report predicts that climate change will affect our diets in the future.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. | The panel claims that natural disasters caused by climate change are negatively affecting ecosystems.                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. | The panel points out that land's ability to absorb CO <sub>2</sub> is crucial in reducing global warming by two degrees.      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. | According to the panel, people waste a fifth to a quarter of the food that is made.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. | The panel aims to inform people what they should and shouldn't eat.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. | If people change to a more vegetarian diet, by 2050, we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 85 per cent of current levels. |

# LISTENING



## Learning objective



Understand the main ideas and key details in live broadcasts, speeches, interviews and presentations with visual support, on familiar subjects, even if clarification may be needed.

## Domains



Public



Professional

## Task 3



Listen to the speech. Then choose a, b or c for questions 1 to 8.

Questions for: Jarmo Sareva, Director of the UN Institute of Disarmament Research

1. How extensive is the UN Institute of Disarmament Research (UNIDAR) mandate?

- a) wide
- b) precise
- c) limited

2. The UN Institute of Disarmament Research (UNIDAR) mandate:

- a) was issued in response to an emergency
- b) spans numerous arms-related domains
- c) has received international approval

3. The Institute's work specifically involves:

- a) nuclear disarmament
- b) arms control
- c) security issues

**4. The institute's team:**

- a) takes great pride in their research outputs
- b) favors theory over practicality
- c) strives to become more research intensive

**5. Through its research, the institute can provide:**

- a) IT support
- b) policy advice
- c) unity of action

**6. What's special about the UNIDAR security programme?**

- a) It's emerging and innovative.
- b) It's beyond current thinking or trends.
- c) It's the first of its kind.

**7. The institute began looking into the problem of security in space:**

- a) recently
- b) in the year 2000
- c) over two decades ago

**8. Emerging security areas addressed by UNIDER include:**

- a) outer space security
- b) cyber warfare
- c) scientific advancement

# WRITING



## Learning objective



Describe experiences, events and expectations in adequate detail, for instance in blogs, using a moderate range of language.

## Domains



Personal



Public

## Task 1: production

You attended this festival and you have been asked to write about your experience on a United Nations cultural events blog. In your blog entry, you should write 125 – 150 words and:

- Talk about the event and your impressions
- Outline a problem you had and how it was resolved, for example with the facilities or information available
- Give some advice to other staff members going to the same festival next year

Flexi items:

- Describe the preparations you made before going
- Describe an aspect the organizers could improve for future festivals



“In 2021, the Annecy International Animation Film Festival has received for the Short Films, Graduation Films, and TV and Commissioned Films categories, over 2,700 films coming from almost one hundred different countries.” There will be a special focus on African films, “with special programming to pay tribute to this rich, varied, and eclectic animation”



<https://www.annecy.org/zoom-2021/africa2020-season>





# WRITING



## Learning objective



Relay the key points and some detailed information on familiar, mainly work-related, tasks, projects or documents.

## Domains



Public



Professional

## Task 2: interaction

Read the Broadcast below signed by the Security and Safety Service.

Write an email to your team to inform them of what is / isn't possible in Geneva at work / outside of work during the high-level political event.

Refer to restrictions, disruptions and consequences and share recommendations.

Use an email layout and language that is clear for your multilingual staff to follow, ensuring that you paraphrase. (175-200 words)

Dear Colleagues,

As you are no doubt aware, a high-level political event will take place in Geneva on Wednesday, 16 February 2022. As part of the preparations the Swiss Council of State yesterday evening issued an official order containing specific provisions being applied for the meeting, including the following special arrangements for the Canton of Geneva:

- From this Friday, 11 February at 6 p.m. until the morning of Thursday, 17 February, public access to La Grange and Eaux-Vives parks is prohibited;
- On Tuesday, 15 June (in the afternoon) traffic congestion is foreseen in the quartier des Nations and vicinity of Geneva Cointrin Airport;
- On Wednesday, 16 February from 4 a.m. to midnight, the entire perimeter of the Geneva harbour - 'Lake U', including the lake, will be closed to the public (please refer to the map below). Residents and workers (pedestrians only) of these areas will be allowed to circulate upon presentation of the necessary certificates proving their status;
- The use of drones is prohibited throughout the canton of Geneva, including the lake, from 14 to 17 February;

As these temporary suspensions will inevitably cause significant disruption to traffic, the Council of State encourages employers to utilise, wherever possible, teleworking arrangements and to avoid as much as possible any travel. The UNOG Director-General has therefore asked that supervisors apply telework arrangements for staff on 15 & 16 February unless their presence is absolutely needed in the Palais des Nations. Staff members are also advised to avoid the areas as described and to follow the instructions of the Police.

The situation can be monitored on the [Facebook page of the Geneva Police](#)

More information as it becomes available on road closures and disruptions to public transport for the period concerned will follow.

Thank you for your update and attention.

*(Signed)* Liam Drumgoole  
Officer-in-charge, Security and Safety Service, UNOG (307 words)

# SPEAKING



## Learning objective



Engage in general social exchanges on personal or professional matters, such as sharing news and updates, using a moderate range of language, expressing degrees of feeling or empathy.

## Domains



Public



Professional

## Task 1: interaction

### Part 1:

You will hear two sets of questions. Play track 1 and record your response. Then play track 2 and record your response. We recommend you play each track only twice within the time allowed: 5 minutes (including the questions). You should speak for about 2 minutes for each response.

You have no preparation time for this part.

Play track 1 and record your response. You should speak for about 2 minutes.

P1\_Audio1 -- Male/American accent -- [Track 1: Can you first describe the positive and negative aspects of your current (or previous) position? Secondly, what changes would you make to your current work status?]

Play track 2 and record your response. You should speak for about 2 minutes.

P1\_Audio2 -- Female/Indian accent -- [Track 2: When was the last time you experienced a lot of pressure at work? What happened and how did you deal with it?]

### Part 2:

You will hear the beginning of three unrelated exchanges. Play track 1 and record your response. Then play track 2 and record your response, and so on. We recommend you play each track only twice within the time allowed: 4 minutes (including the questions). You should speak for about 1 minute for each response.

You have no preparation time for this part.

Play track 1 and record your response. You should speak for about 1 minute.

P2\_Audio1 -- Male/British accent -- [Audio 1: "Hi – haven't seen you in ages! With everything going on at work at the moment it's been so busy. What have you been doing? Any interesting projects these days?"]

Play track 2 and record your response. You should speak for about 1 minute.

P2\_Audio2 -- Female/Australian accent -- [Audio 2: "Oh, I'm SO tired. I think I'm coming down with something. I have a headache, but I'm supposed to go to a meeting. What should I do?"]

Play track 3 and record your response. You should speak for about 1 minute.

P2\_Audio3 -- Female/British accent -- [Audio 3: "I'm sorry – I shouldn't have got angry with you at the meeting today. It's just that I've been under quite a lot of pressure lately."]

# SPEAKING



## Learning objective



Engage in general social exchanges on personal or professional matters, such as sharing news and updates, using a moderate range of language, expressing degrees of feeling or empathy.

## Domains



Public



Professional

## Task 2: production

The time limit for this test is 20 minutes. You will be provided a grace period of two minutes to allow enough time for the audio tracks to upload into the system. Once you start, you must complete the exam in one attempt and within that time limit. You cannot stop in the middle or start over again. The clock continues to run even if you log out or leave the website.

Read the topic you will discuss and the questions you will answer in your presentation. You have 5 minutes to read and prepare. When ready, record your presentation. You should speak for about 4 minutes.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) updates their list of World Heritage Sites every year. World Heritage Sites are places or objects recognized as having a particular cultural or historical significance. These sites are legally protected and preserved.

You have been invited to contribute to an upcoming UNESCO podcast episode to speak about the importance of World Heritage Sites. Please explain the following:

- What is one location that you would add to the existing list of World Heritage Sites?
- What are your reasons for preserving this particular location?
- How important is it to identify and legally protect World Heritage Sites in general?



Machu Picchu (Peru)



Taj Mahal (India)



The Great Wall (China)



Petra (Jordan)



**United Nations Language Framework  
UN Levels of Language Competence**

**Language and Communications Training Unit (LCTU)  
at UN Headquarters New York**

**Language Training Programme (LTP)  
at UN Office in Geneva**