

## ISE II

### Sample Independent listening task – Cycling

#### Examiner rubric

You're going to hear a talk about cycling. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me generally what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?

*The task will play once*

Can you tell me in one or two sentences what the speaker was talking about?

*Give the candidate some blank notepaper.*

Now listen to the talk again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me what the speaker says the advantages and disadvantages of cycling are. Are you ready?

*The task will play once*

Now tell me what the speaker says the advantages and disadvantages of cycling are. I'll stop you after one minute.

#### Audio script

The popularity of cycling seems to be increasing daily. Certainly in many European cities, the number of free bike hire programmes is growing steadily. And there are more and more highly visible cyclists on the roads, especially during the rush hours. But is cycling really such a great idea? Should we all be throwing away our car keys and putting on bike helmets? Cycling remains a dangerous way to get around many cities. Accidents are not unusual. This can be due to other road users not being aware of cyclists. Unfortunately, many cyclists ignore normal road rules such as traffic light signals, and this causes problems too. What's more, cycling remains impractical for many. For the very young and the elderly, a bike's not going to replace a car or bus as the best way to get to school or the shops. Long-distance commuters are unlikely to prefer cycling to trains or driving. And those living in the countryside or particularly hilly areas won't be giving up their cars soon. Neither are bikes that cheap. A decent one costs quite a bit – and on top of that there's the cost of specialist clothing, lights and maintenance. And an effective lock is a necessity in many cities as bike theft is so common. What about countries with extreme temperatures? It's bad enough being caught on a bike in the English rain, but what about trying to ride in 30 plus degrees heat or monsoon conditions. So why do so many people seem keen to promote cycling? One answer lies, with the growing concern over weight issues. Cycling's seen as cheaper and more interesting than gym membership – and much healthier than sitting in a car. And if you're lucky enough to live in a city such as Munich in Germany which has extensive cycle paths, many of them through parks or woodland, then travelling to work by bike's a pleasure. Research does show, incidentally, that such activity's especially good for your mind as well as body, and you're likely to arrive at school or work buzzing with ideas and feeling fantastic. Anything that helps reduce congestion and pollution, and the chaos on many roads, has to be welcomed too. The hire schemes I mentioned earlier should surely be encouraged. Train companies need to make things easier for cycling commuters – and perhaps electric bikes could help older people, and those in hotter climates.

#### Answers

Main point/gist: Discussing the pros and cons of cycling – should it be encouraged? (Any broadly similar formulation is acceptable)

#### Pros

- ▶ Concern over weight issues: better than gym or driving
- ▶ Pleasure in cities with good paths, eg Munich
- ▶ Research shows cycling is good for the mind and body
- ▶ Reduces congestion and pollution

#### Cons

- ▶ Dangerous (in cities) because of other drivers and cyclists disobeying rules
- ▶ Impractical for many – for young, old, long-distance commuters and hilly areas/countryside
- ▶ Not cheap – bike, clothing, lock (theft a problem)
- ▶ Difficult in countries with extreme temperatures