

Philosophy and Sociology in IELTS

As an enthusiast and lecturer in philosophy and sociology, and an IELTS instructor with many years of experience, I can confidently assert that the majority of questions test-takers encounter in IELTS Writing Task 2 involve sociology (institutions and globalization) and philosophy. A good example is *Cambridge IELTS 20*: Test 1 involves human rights (philosophy), Test 2 points to education (an institution), Test 3 aims at environment and economics (two of the nine global trends), and Test 4 touches on global fashion development (a global issue).

To be concise, "philosophy-related" means the questions are inherently philosophical issues. They are found on philosophical concepts emerging from debates concerning:

- Ethics (Moral Philosophy): What is the right way to live? What do we owe each other? Concepts like justice, fairness, and dignity are core to ethics.
- Political Philosophy: What is the role of government? What is the legitimate balance between individual freedom and collective security? The answers to these questions directly influence modern human rights declarations.

Values systems are also questioned as an application of philosophy. For example, the debate between individualism versus universalism is common. This includes a society that values individualism,

influenced by philosophies like liberalism, versus a society that emphasizes collective harmony, which might draw from Confucian or communitarian philosophies, while cultural relativism is also involved.

As for globalization, the book entitled *Introduction to Global Studies* by John McCormick provides comprehensive knowledge on the topic. Page 32 of its second edition offers a very brief outline of an IELTS Writing-related framework, noting that the nine global trends involve economics, politics, culture, technology, mobility, security, environment, disease, and globalization itself.

Regarding social institutions, these are the established, organized systems and structures in society that are created to address fundamental human needs and govern behavior. They are the "pillars" that hold society together, providing order, predictability, and a framework for social life. Sociologists typically identify five primary social institutions: Family, Education, Government, Economy, and Religion (the latter is basically not asked in IELTS, though test-takers can relate to it if they wish). Some scholars may break these down further or group them slightly differently, for instance, to include mass media and health.

Therefore, cultivating a knowledge of philosophy and sociology is a significant advantage for any IELTS test-taker wishing to enhance their essays with substantial

ideas and persuasive arguments—a strategic imperative for those aiming for a high band score. This insight comes from an experienced IELTS instructor who is also a lecturer in Sociology and a holder of a BA in Philosophy.

