

Legal Education and Development (LEAD) Fellowship Program for Tajikistan

Test Preparation Tips for Semi-Finalists

How do I prepare for the TOEFL?

Graduate school standardized exams, like the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), are extremely important in U.S. higher education. The TOEFL measures English language skills through both written and listening comprehension exercises. The exam is used by universities across the United States to assess the ability of non-native speakers to communicate in English. Accordingly, U.S. universities place great emphasis on TOEFL results when making an admission decision.

If you are ranked highly after the interview, your TOEFL score will help determine if you are offered a fellowship and play an important role in securing admission to a U.S. law school.

In order to help you prepare for the exam, recent U.S. government exchange program participants were surveyed and their recommendations are summarized below. It is recommended that you read this document carefully and approach your test preparation seriously.

Recommendations from other U.S. Government exchange program participants:

STUDY, STUDY, STUDY (start early, and study a lot)

- Increase your vocabulary; write words and definitions on note cards and test yourself frequently.
- Practice listening sections on sample tests (see recommended web links below); practice listening for the main ideas and specific questions.
- Practice reading sections on sample tests (see recommended web links below); first read the question and make sure you understand what is being asked, then read the selection, and then answer the questions.
- Talk with native English speakers online or in-person; participate in online discussions and conferences.
- Watch TV programs, movies (subtitles are helpful), and listen to music.

Practice the test as much as you can

- Fellows who were familiar with the exam before taking the test scored better than those who did not prepare.
- Identify local English language resource centers with test preparation resources.
- Take online practice tests for Paper Based Test (PBT) or Internet Based Test (iBT), depending on the format with which you will be tested.
- Use test preparation books and CDs (available online or at some English language resource centers). *See suggested web links on the next page; or Google "TOEFL Preparation"; or search for resources at your library or other local businesses that carry English materials.*
- Follow all instructions carefully; be sure that you understand the instructions.

Some helpful web resources: The websites below are only recommendations; this is not an exhaustive list of resources. Test takers should consult a variety of sites and should not rely on any one site for test recommendations and preparation.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

- TOEFL Test Preparation Site: <http://www.ets.org/toefl>
- TOEFL podcasts: <http://www.eslpod.com/toefl/scripts/scripts.html>
- TOEFL blog: <http://www.toeflblog.com/>

For all tests, online study groups, like those on Yahoo groups and Facebook, provide a social network that can be helpful when preparing for the TOEFL.

For additional test preparation resources and suggestions, please contact the IREX office in Tajikistan. You may also consult the American Corners or EducationUSA Advising Center, which can provide more information about preparing for TOEFL. Contact the IREX office to identify locations for these offices.