

## TOEFL Speaking Task 5 Sample Question and Answer

### Text of conversation

(Female student) Did you hear about the work experience scheme that the college is offering for the vacation?

(Male student) I heard something about it, yes.

(Female student) You get to work in a law office and see how all the things we've been learning in our lectures are relevant and can be put into practice.

(Male student) It sounds useful.

(Female student) I'm sure it is. We need practical skills to really understand this job. We'll be able to use what we've learned in our assignments next term, and it'll make us more employable in the long term too. Plus, we get paid, which is a real bonus!

(Male student) Yes, it's a shame I won't be able to go.

(Female student) Won't you? Why not?

(Male student) I want to retake one of my exams again – the exam on family law.

(Female student) Did you fail it? I didn't realize.

(Male student) No, I didn't fail it. But I didn't do very well. I was sick a lot last term and I missed a lot of lectures. I know I can do better, and my tutor says I can retake it if I complete a two-week revision course during the holidays.

(Female student) So it isn't necessary.

(Male student) No, but our final grade depends on our exam results for all the units we've studied. Every grade counts, and I want to do as well as I can. Besides, the revision course doesn't cost anything. It's free, and since there won't be many students there, I'll be able to talk in depth to the tutors about any aspects of family law that I find confusing.

(Female student) Well, to my mind, getting some work experience at a real law firm is far more interesting and useful, especially since you don't need to take the exam again.

(Male student) I suppose you could be right. Well, I can still drop out. I'll think about it.

### **Text of sample answer**

#### **Sample answer:**

The man has two options for the holidays. The first is the one the girl was recommending. The college has arranged for students to get work experience at a law firm. Here, the students will be able to learn on-the-job skills. The man's other option is to attend a two-week course so that he can retake one of his exams: a family law exam. Both options have advantages. The work experience will be useful because it will help students learn what it is like to work in a real law firm, and it may help them find a job in the future. Not only that, but they may be able to use what they've learned in future assignments at the college. A third advantage is that the work is paid, and most students are short of money, so I expect this would be a real bonus, because it's difficult for students to find temporary jobs in the college holidays. However, the exam option is also beneficial. If the man went on the course, he'd be able to get a better grade in his exam, and this will boost his final mark overall. Plus, he will be able to spend more time talking to the tutors, which would be useful for him, because he missed a lot of classes last term because of his illness. Thirdly, the course doesn't cost anything, so the man may as well take advantage of it.

As for which option I'd recommend, it's a difficult decision. They are both good options. But I think I'd suggest the man goes on the course and re-takes his exam. It's really important that he understands this topic, and in order to be successful, he needs to get a good final grade. It's great that the college puts on a study course in the holidays like this one. I doubt if many colleges would, so he should make the most of it. I dare say the work experience option will be available during the next holidays, so he can take part in that next time.