



IELTS Preparation Guide



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IELTS

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is the world's leading English test for work, study and migration, and we're here to support you to achieve your goals.

Why IELTS?

IELTS is an English language test for study, migration or work.

IELTS is recognised by more than 12,000 organisations including educational institutions, employers, professional associations and governments, in more than 140 countries around the world.

IELTS your way

You have the choice between taking IELTS at a test centre or at the convenience of your home. At a test centre you can take IELTS on computer or on paper. At home you can take IELTS online.

Accessible and convenient

Available to take at home online or from more than 1200 locations in 140 countries. There's an IELTS test near you.

To find out test dates in your area, please contact your nearest IELTS test centre. A list of IDP IELTS test locations is available at ielts.idp.com/book/.

The international test

IELTS content is internationally focused. Texts and tasks are sourced from publications from all over the English-speaking world, a range of native-speaker accents are used in the Listening test (North American, Australian, New Zealand, etc.) and all standard varieties of English are accepted in test takers' written and spoken responses.

The test that's tried and trusted

IELTS has been developed by some of the world's leading experts in language assessment and is supported by an extensive program of research, validation and test development.

The level of the test

There is no 'pass' or 'fail' in IELTS as it is designed to assess English language skills across a wide range of levels. Results are reported as band scores on a scale of 1 (the lowest) to 9 (the highest).



How can IELTS help you succeed?

IELTS offers extensive preparation materials to build your skills and combine technology with human-based testing to provide the best possible test conditions. Respected and accepted worldwide, IELTS prepares you for real-life success.

IELTS on computer: Fast and Flexible

The same IELTS test you know and trust, delivered via computer. Reading, Listening and Writing are taken on a computer, you're Speaking test will still be face-to-face with an IELTS examiner! IELTS on computer provides more flexibility with multiple sessions a day and fast results.

To find out test dates and locations, visit [IELTS on computer](#).

IELTS Online

Bring IELTS closer to you. We know it's not always easy or possible to go to a test centre. IELTS Online allows you to take IELTS Academic in the comfort of your own home. To see if IELTS Online is best for you visit [IELTS Online](#).

Face-to-face speaking tests to put you at ease

When it comes to speaking, we are proud to still provide face-to-face testing. If you are taking IELTS in a test centre your speaking test will take place in a quiet room. If you are taking IELTS online your speaking test will be face-to-face over a video call. Unlike a computer you can trust a person to put you at ease, pick up on your native accent and guide you towards your best performance.

Real help for the real world

Our real-world assessment approach helps to prepare you for life beyond the test. We offer real support from real people to set you up for success on the day and we work together to build your language skills. Whether your goal is study, a career, or migration, IELTS unlocks that ambition.

Expert support to help you reach your goals.

Our official IELTS experts can coach you through the process to help you succeed. Whether it be giving you feedback on official practice tests, answering your questions in free Masterclasses, or providing you with a personalised action plan – we're here to help you boost your score and achieve your goals.

IELTS One Skill Retake

IELTS One Skill Retake allows you to retake one of the four skills (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking) if you didn't get the score you needed first time around. IELTS One Skill Retake gives you the opportunity to get the score you need without having to retake the whole test.

Understanding IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training

Before booking your test, understand if you need IELTS Academic or IELTS General Training.

IELTS is available in two different types: Academic and General Training. Organisations will normally specify which type of IELTS you will need for your application.

In some cases, either IELTS Academic or IELTS General Training may be accepted. If you are in doubt as to which to take, you should contact the organisation you are applying to check their requirements.

In both IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training tests, you are tested on all four language skills – Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking – unless you have an exemption due to a disability. Everyone takes the same Listening and Speaking tests. There are different Reading and Writing tests for IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training.

IELTS ACADEMIC



Listening (30 minutes)

- Four recorded monologues and conversations



Reading (60 minutes)

- Three reading passages with tasks
- Texts may include diagrams, graphs or illustrations
- Texts are taken from books, journals, magazines and newspapers



Writing (60 minutes)

- Summarise, describe or explain a table, graph, chart or diagram
- Short essay task of at least 250 words



Speaking (11–14 minutes)

- Face-to-face interview without disruptions or distractions
- Includes short questions, speaking at length about a familiar topic and a structured discussion

IELTS GENERAL TRAINING



Listening (30 minutes)

- Four recorded monologues and conversations



Reading (60 minutes)

- Section 1 contains two or three short factual texts
- Section 2 contains two short, work-related, factual texts
- Section 3 contains one longer text on a topic of general interest
- Texts are authentic and taken from notices, advertisements, company handbooks, official documents, books and general interest



Writing (60 minutes)

- Letter writing task of at least 150 words
- Short essay task of at least 250 words



Speaking (11–14 minutes)

- Face-to-face interview without disruptions or distractions
- Includes short questions, speaking at length about a familiar topic and a structured discussion

How is IELTS scored?

IELTS nine-band scale

Your performance on test day in each language skill – Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking – is reported as a band score on a scale of 1 (the lowest) to 9 (the highest). All parts of the test and the overall band score are reported in whole or half bands (e.g. 6.0, 6.5, 7.0, 7.5, etc.).

9	Expert user	Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
8	Very good user	Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex, detailed argumentation well.
7	Good user	Has operational command of the language, although with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
6	Competent user	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
5	Modest user	Has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, although is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.
4	Limited user	Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
3	Extremely limited user	Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
2	Intermittent user	No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.
1	Non-user	Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.
0	Did not attempt the test	No assessable information provided.

Computer, paper or online – Your IELTS, your choice

Taking IELTS online, on computer or on paper, you can be confident that you are taking the same trusted English language test.

	IELTS ONLINE (TAKEN AT HOME OR A SUITABLE LOCATION)	IELTS ON COMPUTER (TAKEN IN-CENTRE)	IELTS ON PAPER (TAKEN IN-CENTRE)
Covers all 4 English Skills	✓	✓	✓
Face-to-face Speaking test with an IELTS Examiner	✓ Online	✓	✓
Available for IELTS Academic	✓	✓	✓
Available for IELTS General Training	Coming soon	✓	✓
Results available	6-8 days	1-5 days	13 days
Test availability	6 days a week	7 days a week	48 days per year
Length of test	Listening (30 minutes) Reading (60 minutes) Writing (60 minutes) Speaking (11-14 minutes)		
Can be taken anywhere	✓ Private room with reliable internet connection	✗ Must be taken in-centre	✗ Must be taken in-centre




IELTS Online

What is IELTS Online

IELTS Online is our new convenient way to take IELTS Academic. All you need is a Windows or Mac computer, stable internet connection and a well-lit private space.

IELTS Online has the same content and features of IELTS on paper and IELTS on computer taken in a test centre. The difference with IELTS Online is you can take it from the comfort of your home.

Key benefits

-  Convenient, take from home or any private space with an internet connection
-  Results within 6-8 days
-  Speaking test with a human examiner via video call

For more information visit our [IELTS Online](#) page.



IELTS One Skill Retake




Helping you show your full potential



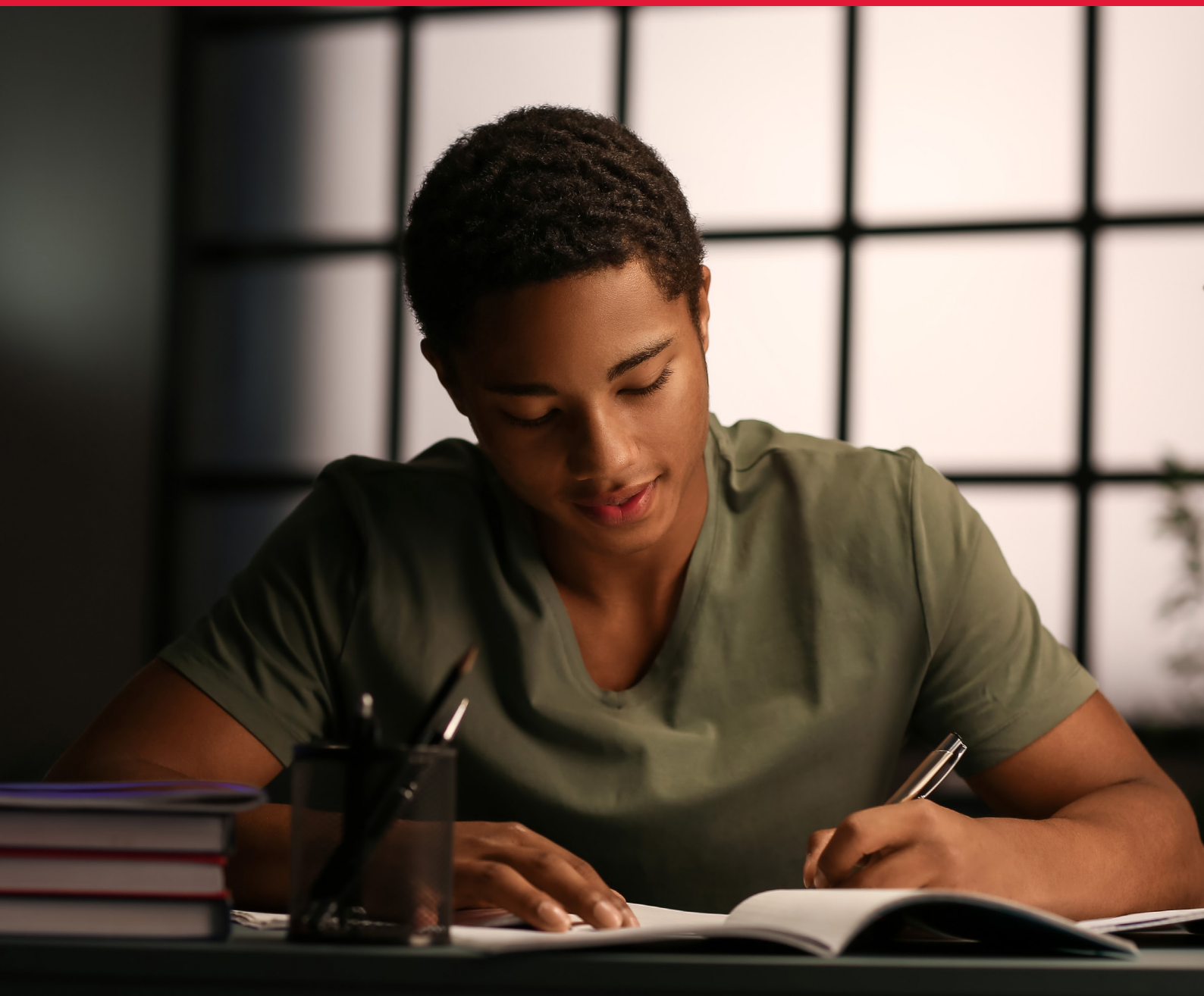
What is IELTS One Skill Retake?

IELTS One Skill Retake gives you the option to retake any one component of the test; Listening, Reading, Writing or Speaking. If you didn't show your full potential in one section on test day, IELTS One Skill Retake can help you get back on track.

Key features

-  Focus and prepare for one skill
-  Available on IELTS on computer for Academic and General Training. Coming soon for IELTS Online.
-  Retake one skill per original test within 60 days of original test

IELTS One Skill Retake is currently available at selected IELTS test centres in Australia and will continue to roll out globally during 2023. Please contact your test centre to find out more.



IELTS preparation planner

Get ready to get results

There are so many great ways to prepare for IELTS, which can help you to achieve your best on test day. By taking advantage of our step-by-step guide and planning well, you can boost your confidence and your score.

01 FIRST STEPS

Register for the test: To find a test centre near you or to book your IELTS on computer, IELTS on paper or IELTS online test go to ielts.idp.com/book/.

Set your 'score goal': Confirm the IELTS score required by your chosen university, institution, employer or organisation. Knowing your 'score goal' gives you a clear target to work towards. You can look up the criteria for each score here: ielts.idp.com/results/scores so you understand what you need to prepare for.

02 BOOST YOUR ENGLISH SKILLS

The best way to succeed in any English language test is to improve your English. Here are two great ways to build your skills.

An English language course: This is one of the best ways to improve your English. The feedback you receive from your teacher will help you improve the specific skills involved in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking English.

An IELTS preparation course: This can help you familiarise yourself with the types of tasks included in an IELTS test. Ask your local IELTS test centre for more information about a preparation course near you.

03 USE YOUR ENGLISH EVERY DAY

Practice makes perfect, so use your English as much as you can well in advance of the test.

Listen: Listen to English language radio, television and film. You should try to listen to a variety of English accents including American, Australian, British, Canadian and New Zealand.

Read: Read English publications such as newspapers and magazines regularly.

Write: Write letters, emails or notes in English whenever possible.

Speak: Speak English with your friends and family.

04 PRACTICE WITH OFFICIAL IELTS MATERIAL

IELTS Prepare

IELTS Prepare gives you access to a range of preparation materials, from practice tests, videos and articles, to expert assessments, online courses, webinars and more.

With the ability to filter content based on your needs and skill level. To get access to all official IDP IELTS preparation materials go to [IELTS Prepare](https://ielts.idp.com/prepare).

Popular IELTS practice material

IELTS Macquarie Preparation Course: Book your IELTS test with IDP and learn the university way, for free! Access hundreds of new and improved IELTS study materials developed by Macquarie University experts, sample test questions with model answers, and over 60 guided video tutorials delivered by award-winning IELTS trainers. Learn more here ielts.idp.com/lp/ielts-free-preparation-offer.

IELTS by IDP app: Achieve your study and work abroad dreams by getting the band score you need. No matter what test format you're using, you prepare for your IELTS test with a massive range of preparation videos, articles and practice tests. Download the app today: ielts.idp.com/lp/ielts-by-idp-app.

05 THE DAY BEFORE THE TEST

Recap on the rules: Re-read information provided by your test centre to ensure you understand the test format and rules. If you are taking IELTS Online, make sure you have your computer and room set up correctly.

Plan your journey: Ensure you know how to get to the test venue so that you arrive on time. Also get plenty of rest the night before your test to help you feel more relaxed on the day.

06 TEST DAY

Allow time: Allow plenty of time to travel to the test venue to ensure you arrive on time or get set up at home if you are taking IELTS online.

Bring your passport/national identity card: Please make sure you bring the same identification that you provided when you book your test, as we need to match these for you to be able to sit the test.

Listening test



Listening Test format: Approximately 30 minutes

The Listening section is the same for both IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training. There are four parts. You will hear the recording only once. A variety of voices and native speaker accents are used.

Section 1

A conversation between two people set in an everyday social context (e.g., a conversation about accommodation).

Section 2

A monologue set in an everyday social context (e.g., a speech about local facilities or about arrangements for meals during a conference).

Section 3

A conversation between up to four people set in an educational or training context (e.g., a university tutor and a student discussing an assignment, or a group of people planning a project).

Section 4

A talk (e.g., a university lecture).

Tips

01

At the beginning of each section read the questions for that section carefully, before the recording starts. This will help you to follow the recording and identify the answers.

02

After completing a section, it is better to look ahead and read the questions for the next section than to worry about the last section.

03

You will sometimes have a list of options to choose from as answers. The possible answers may be listed in alphabetical order and not necessarily in the order you will hear them.

04

Be careful to note word limits. If there is an instruction: Write no more than two words, writing more than two words will mean you will receive no marks at all for your answer, even if some of the words are correct.

05

Try to listen for key words or synonyms (words that have the same or nearly the same meaning as another word) from the question to help you identify the answer. For example, in the recording you might hear: "She likes going to the gym and playing tennis". On your answer sheet/screen (in IELTS on computer), this could appear as "She is an active person".



Listening test



Question types

A variety of question types are used, chosen from the following: multiple choice, matching, plan/map/diagram labelling, form/note/table/flowchart/summary completion, sentence completion.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

In multiple choice questions, there is a question followed by three possible answers, or the beginning of a sentence followed by three possible ways to complete the sentence. You are required to choose one correct answer – A, B or C.

Sometimes, you are given a longer list of possible answers and told that you have to choose more than one. In this case, you should read the question carefully to check how many answers are required.

How it works

Multiple choice questions are used to test a wide range of skills. You may be required to have a detailed understanding of specific points or an overall understanding of the main points of the listening text.

MATCHING

You are required to match a numbered list of items from the listening text to a set of options on the question paper. The set of options may be criteria of some kind.

How it works

Matching assesses the skill of listening for detail and whether you can identify information given in a conversation on an everyday topic, such as the different types of hotel or guest house accommodation.

It also assesses the ability to follow a conversation between two people. It may also be used to assess your ability to recognise relationships and connections between facts in the listening text.

PLAN, MAP, DIAGRAM LABELLING

You are required to complete labels on a plan (e.g., of a building), map (e.g., of part of a town) or diagram (e.g., of a piece of equipment). The answers are usually selected from a list on the question paper.

How it works

This type of task assesses the ability to understand, for example, a description of a place, and to relate this to a visual representation. This may include being able to follow language expressing spatial relations and directions (e.g., straight on/through the back door).

FORM, NOTE, TABLE, FLOWCHART, SUMMARY COMPLETION

You are required to fill in the gaps in an outline of part or of all of the listening text. The outline will focus on the main ideas/facts in the text. It may be:

1. **A form:** often used to record factual details such as names.
2. **A set of notes:** used to summarise any type of information using the layout to show how different items relate to one another.
3. **A table:** used as a way of summarising information which relates to clear categories – e.g. place/time/price.
4. **A flowchart:** used to summarise a process that has clear stages, with the direction of the process shown by arrows.

You may have to select your answers from a list presented or identify the missing words from the recording, keeping to the word limit stated in the instructions. You do not have to change the words from the recording in any way.

You should read the instructions very carefully as the number of words or numbers you should use to fill the gaps will vary. A word limit is given, for example, 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER'.

Reading test



Reading test format: IELTS Academic, 60 minutes

There are three sections, each containing one long text.

The texts are all real and are taken from books, magazines and newspapers. They have been written for a non-specialist audience and are on academic topics of general interest, which means you do not need specialist knowledge to do well.

The texts are appropriate to, and accessible to, candidates entering undergraduate or postgraduate courses or seeking professional registration.

Texts range from the descriptive and factual to the discursive and analytical. Texts may contain non-verbal materials such as diagrams, graphs or illustrations.

If texts contain technical terms, then a simple glossary is provided.

Reading test format: IELTS General Training, 60 minutes

There are three sections all of which contain real passages.

Section 1

Contains two or three short factual texts, one of which may be composite (consisting of 6–8 short texts related by topic, e.g. hotel advertisements). Topics are relevant to everyday life in an English-speaking country.

Section 2

Contains two short factual texts focusing on work-related issues (e.g. applying for jobs, company policies, pay and conditions, workplace facilities, staff development and training).

Section 3

Contains one longer, more complex text on a topic of general interest. You will be reading real passages taken from notices, advertisements, company handbooks, official documents, books, magazines and newspapers.

Tips

01

To improve your performance in the Reading test you need to practise reading a variety of English texts. This will help you develop the ability to read quickly.

02

Read every question carefully first before reading the passages. This will make it easier for you to find the answers. Underline possible answers as you go. In IELTS on computer, you can highlight or make notes on a section of text.

03

When you come to reading the passage, read it quickly the first time in order to get a general idea of what it's about. Don't worry about words you do not understand. Then read each question again to remind yourself which parts of the passage you will need to read again in detail.

04

The Reading passages always contain the information you need to answer the question. You won't have to use your own knowledge of a topic.

05

If you are copying words from a question or reading passage to use in your answer, remember that your spelling must be accurate. In IELTS on computer, you can use Copy (Ctrl C) and Paste (Ctrl V) on your keyboard to move your answers to the answer box, reducing room for mistakes.

Reading test



Question types

A variety of question types may be used, chosen from the following: multiple choice, identifying information, identifying the writer's views/claims, matching information, matching headings, matching features, matching sentence endings, sentence completion, summary completion, note completion, table completion, flowchart completion, diagram label completion and short-answer questions.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

For this question type, you are required to choose:

- the best answer from
- four alternatives, or the best two answers from
- five alternatives, or the best three answers
- from seven alternatives.

The questions may involve completing a sentence, where you are given the first part of a sentence and then choose the best way to complete it from the options. There could be complete questions, where you will be asked to choose the option that best answers them. The questions are in the same order as the information in the reading text: that is, the answer to the first question in this question type will be located in the text before the answer to the second question, and so on.

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

In this question type, you will be given a number of statements and asked: "Do the following statements agree with the information in the text?". You are then required to write 'True', 'False' or 'Not given' in the answer boxes. It is important to understand the difference between 'False' and 'Not given'. 'False' means the passage states the opposite of the statement in question. 'Not given' means that the statement is neither confirmed nor contradicted by the information in the passage.

IDENTIFYING WRITER'S VIEWS/CLAIMS

In this question type, you will be given a number of statements and asked: 'Do the following statements agree with the views/ claims of the writer?'. You will then select 'Yes', 'No' or 'Not given'.

It is important to understand the difference between 'No' and 'Not given'.

- 'No' means that the views or claims of the writer explicitly disagree with the statement, i.e. the writer somewhere expresses the view or makes a claim that is opposite to the one given in the question.
- 'Not given' means that the view or claim is neither confirmed nor contradicted.

Any knowledge that you bring from outside the passage should not play a part when deciding on your answers.

How it works

This question type assesses your ability to recognise opinions or ideas and is often used with discursive or argumentative texts.

MATCHING INFORMATION

In this question type, you are required to locate specific information within the lettered paragraphs/sections of a text, and to select the letters of the correct paragraphs/sections in the answer section.

You may be asked to find: specific details, an example, a reason, a description, a comparison, a summary or an explanation.

You will not necessarily need to find information in every paragraph/section of the text, but there may be more than one piece of information that you need to locate in a given paragraph/section. When this is the case, you will be told that you can use any letter more than once.

This question type can be used with any text as it tests a wide range of reading skills, from locating detail to recognising a summary or definition.

How it works

Matching information assesses your ability to scan for specific words and phrases.

Reading test



Question types (continued)

MATCHING HEADINGS

In this question type, you are given a list of headings. A heading will refer to the main idea of the paragraph or section of the text. You will then be asked to match the heading to the correct paragraphs or sections. There will always be more headings than there are paragraphs or sections, so that some headings will not be used. It is also possible that some paragraphs or sections may not be included in the task. This question type is used with texts that contain paragraphs or sections with clearly defined themes.

How it works

Matching headings will test your ability to recognise the main idea or theme in the paragraphs or sections of a text, and to distinguish main ideas from supporting ones.



MATCHING FEATURES

For this question type, you are required to match a set of statements or pieces of information to a list of options. The options are a group of features from the text and are identified by letters.

For example, you may be required to match different research findings to a list of researchers, or characteristics to age groups, events to historical periods, etc. It is possible that some options will not be used and that others may be used more than once. The instructions will inform you if options may be used more than once.

How it works

Matching features will assess your ability to recognise relationships and connections between facts in the text and your ability to recognise opinions and theories. It may be used with factual information or opinion-based discursive texts. You will need to be able to skim and scan the text in order to locate the required information and to read for detail.

MATCHING SENTENCE ENDINGS

In this question type, you are given the first half of a sentence based on the reading text and asked to choose the best way to complete it from a list of possible options. There will be more options to choose from than there are questions. You will then have to choose the correct option to complete the sentence. The questions are in the same order as the information in the passage: that is, the answer to the first question in this group will be found before the answer to the second question, and so on.

How it works

Matching sentence endings will assess your ability to understand the main ideas within a sentence.

SENTENCE COMPLETION

In this question type, you will complete sentences in a given number of words taken from the reading text. You must type your answer in the answer box. The instructions will make it clear how many words/numbers test takers should use in their answers, e.g. 'NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/ OR A NUMBER from the passage', 'ONE, WORD ONLY' or 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS'.

If you write more than the number of words asked for, you will lose marks. Numbers can be written using figures or words. Hyphenated words count as single words. The questions are in the same order as the information in the passage: that is, the answer to the first question in this group will be found before the answer to the second question, and so on.

How it works

Matching sentence endings assesses your ability to locate detail/specific information.

Reading test



Question types (continued)

SUMMARY, NOTE, TABLE, FLOWCHART COMPLETION

In this question type, you are given a summary of a section of the text and are required to complete it with information drawn from the text. The summary will usually be of only one part of the passage rather than the whole. The given information may be in the form of:

- several connected sentences of text (referred to as a summary)
- several notes (referred to as notes)
- a table with some of its cells empty or partially empty (referred to as a table)
- a series of boxes or steps linked by arrows to show a sequence of events, with some of the boxes or steps empty or partially empty (referred to as a flowchart).

The answers will not necessarily occur in the same order as in the text. However, they will usually come from one section rather than the entire text. There are two variations of this task type. You may be asked either:

1. to select words from the text or;
2. to select from a list of answers.

Where words have to be selected from the passage, the instructions will make it clear how many words/numbers test takers should use in their answers, e.g. 'NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/ OR A NUMBER from the passage', 'ONE WORD ONLY' or 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS'. If you write more than the number of words asked for, you will lose marks.

Numbers can be written using figures or words. Hyphenated words count as single words.

Where a list of answers is provided, they most frequently consist of a single word. Because this task type often relates to precise factual information, it is often used with descriptive texts.

How it works

Summarising assesses your ability to understand details and/or the main ideas of a section of text. In the variations involving a summary or notes, you will need to be aware of the type of word(s) that will fit into a given gap (for example, whether a noun is needed, or a verb, etc.).

DIAGRAM LABEL COMPLETION

In this question type, you are required to complete labels on a diagram, which relates to a description contained in the text. The instructions will make it clear how many words/numbers test takers should use in their answers, e.g. 'NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/ OR A NUMBER from the passage', 'ONE WORD ONLY' or 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS'.

If you write more than the number of words asked for, you will lose marks. Numbers can be written using figures or words. Hyphenated words count as single words. The answers do not necessarily occur in order in the passage. However, they will usually come from one section rather than the entire text.

The diagram may be of some type of machine, or of parts of a building or of any other element that can be represented pictorially. This task type is often used with texts describing processes or with descriptive texts.

How it works

Diagram label completion assesses your ability to understand a detailed description and to relate it to information presented in the form of a diagram.

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

In this question type, you will answer questions that usually relate to factual information about details in the text. This is most likely to be used with a text that contains a lot of factual information and detail.

You must then type your answers in words or numbers, using words from the text. The instructions will make it clear how many words/numbers test takers should use in their answers, e.g. 'NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/ OR A NUMBER from the passage', 'ONE WORD ONLY' or 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS'. If you write more than the number of words asked for, you will lose marks.

Numbers can be written using figures or words. Hyphenated words count as single words. The questions are in the same order as the information in the text.

How it works

Short-answer questions will assess your ability to locate and understand precise information in the text.

Writing test



Writing test format: IELTS Academic, 60 minutes

There are two parts. Responses to Task 1 and Task 2 should be written in a formal style.

Task 1

You are presented with a graph, table, chart or diagram and are asked to summarise and report the information in your own words. You may be asked to select and compare data, describe the stages of a process, describe an object or how something works.

Task 2

You are asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. Task 2 contributes twice as much as Task 1 to the Writing score. The issues raised are of general interest to, suitable for and easily understood by test takers entering undergraduate or postgraduate studies or seeking.

Writing test format: IELTS General Training, 60 minutes

There are two parts. Topics are of general interest.

Task 1

You are presented with a situation and are asked to write a letter requesting information or explaining the situation. The letter may be personal, semi-formal or formal in style.

Task 2

You are asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. The essay can be less formal in style with a more personal response than the Academic Writing Task 2 essay. Task 2 contributes twice as much as Task 1 to the Writing score.

Tips

01

In your Writing test there are no right or wrong answers or opinions. The examiners are assessing how well you can use your English to report information and express ideas.

02

Analyse the questions carefully to make sure your answer addresses all the points covered by the question.

03

Notice the minimum word limit. If you write less than 150 words for Task 1 and less than 250 for Task 2, you will lose marks. In computer delivered IELTS, the screen shows your word count automatically.

04

Be careful to use your own words because the examiner will not include words copied from the question in the word count.

05

You must write both your answers in full, not in note form or in bullet points. You must arrange your ideas in paragraphs to show the examiner that you are able to organise your main and supporting points.

Writing test

IELTS Academic Writing



IELTS Academic Writing Task 1

Length: Write at least **150** words.

Time: You should spend about **20** minutes on this task.

SUMMARISING FACTS OR FIGURES FROM GRAPHIC INFORMATION

If you are doing the Academic test, your first job may be to compose a report identifying the most important and relevant information and trends using the facts or figures presented in a chart, graph, table or a combination of such graphics.

It is also possible that you will instead be given a diagram of a machine, device or process and be required to explain how it works.

Other graphics that can sometimes appear on the test are two maps or structural drawings of an area from different times showing changes that have occurred. You will need to summarise the major changes or differences between them.

The key to responding successfully to any of these Task 1 visuals is to show that you understand the big picture by identifying the main trends, major parts or stages and/or important differences that are evident in the graphic. So, rather than mechanically describing all the data, select and report on the most important and the most relevant aspects that appear.

As you can probably guess, there are specific kinds of details you should be looking for in the different graphics that appear on the test. Here is a more detailed breakdown of question types with some tips for how to interpret and complete each of them.

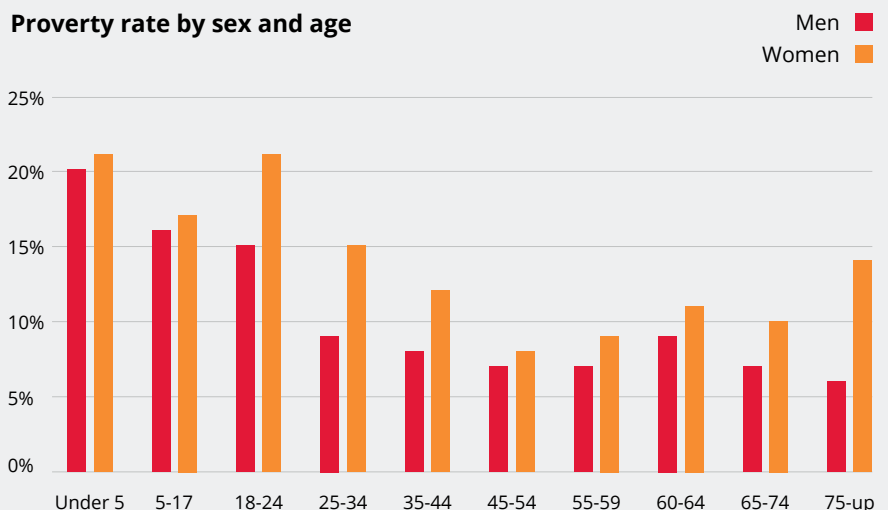
CHARTS, GRAPHS OR TABLES

Generally, the charts, graphs and tables can either show comparisons of data at one moment in time or compare data over a fixed period of time.

The chart shows the percentage of men and women living in poverty divided into ten different age groups in the United States in 2008.

Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

Poverty rate by sex and age



When you are reporting on a graphic you will need to show that you understand exactly what data is about.

Using this example, you can see a comparison between the percentage of men and women living in poverty in 10 different age groups in the USA in 2008.

Besides giving a general summary of what the data shows about men and women in poverty at this time and in this place (more females were in poverty than men at all ages with lower rates for men and women in the mid ages), you should note any outstanding

highs (highest rates were under the age of 5, for both males and females at 20% and 21% respectively) and lows for each (lowest poverty rate for men were those aged 75 and over at just over 5%, and for women it was between the ages of 45-54 at about 9%).

Look also at similarities (the higher rates of poverty for both men and women were under the age of 24) and/or differences (females had higher rates of poverty throughout, especially those over 75) and data that stands out as exceptional (higher rates of poverty in women aged 18-24 and 75-up).

Writing test

IELTS Academic Writing



IELTS Academic Writing Task 2

Length: Write at least **250** words.

Time: You should spend about **40** minutes on this task.

WRITING AN ESSAY

If you are doing the Academic test, you will be presented with an idea or premise about a subject and you will be asked to respond in some way to it. Topics can include a wide range of commonly discussed subjects such as the environment, immigration, technology, or culture. Your response to the prompt will be in one of various ways. You might be asked to answer by:

- agreeing or disagreeing.
- discussing two given opposing views.
- writing about whether the advantages of a given development outweigh the disadvantages.
- explaining a given problem or the cause of the problem and offering solutions.

ORGANISATION

You are required to organise your response into an essay. Essays are composed of several paragraphs.

The first paragraph should introduce the topic, your main idea (thesis) and generally outline how you propose to present your argument or discussion.

The body or middle paragraphs are divided into separate points with explanations and examples to support them.

The essay closes with a conclusion that summarises your points and brings your arguments or discussion to a reasoned closing. Aim to write 4-6 paragraphs including an introduction and conclusion.

Remember that you have only 40 minutes to write the essay because you also need to complete the Task 1 report in the 60 minutes you are given for this section of the test.

ADDRESSING THE ACADEMIC ESSAY COMPLETELY

It's very important that you read and respond to the prompt carefully. If you complete only part of the task, you will lower your score. Here are some examples of some of the different essay types and a breakdown of what needs to be addressed in each.

AGREE/DISAGREE

Some people believe that it is wrong for professional athletes to compete in the Olympics because their strong financial backing and training give them an unfair advantage over the other athletes. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Look carefully and you will see that there are two premises that you will need to address if you want your response to be complete. It's easier to see them if you look at them as questions:

- *Do professional athletes have an unfair advantage over other Olympic athletes because of their financial support and training?*
- *Is it wrong for the professionals to compete in the Olympics for this reason?*

NOTE: It is possible for you to agree with one and disagree with the other. For example, you could say that you agree that they have an advantage but that it isn't wrong for them to compete in certain circumstances.

DISCUSSION

Successful sports professionals can earn a great deal more money than people in other important professions. Some people think this is fully justified while others think it is unfair.

Discuss both these views and give your opinion. There are three parts that you need to address in this prompt:

- *Why do some believe it is justifiable that sports professionals earn a great deal more money than others?*
- *Why do others think it isn't justifiable that they make these earnings?*
- *What is your opinion in this matter?*

PROBLEM/SOLUTION

Here are two different variations of essays about problems that often appear. The questions related to these prompts are usually given to you so it's easy to see that there are two parts that need to be addressed.

However, take care to notice the plurals (reasons, problems, solutions). Be sure to pay attention to these instructions and provide more than one reason, problem or solution if you are aiming for a high score.

- *More and more wild animals are on the verge of extinction and others are on the endangered list. What are the reasons for this?*
- *What can be done to solve this problem?*
- *An increasing number of professionals, such as doctors and teachers, are leaving their own poorer countries to work in developed countries.*
- *What problems does this cause?*
- *What solutions can you suggest to deal with this situation?*

Writing test

IELTS Academic Writing



IELTS Academic Writing Task 2 (continued)

Length: Write at least **250** words.

Time: You should spend about **40** minutes on this task.

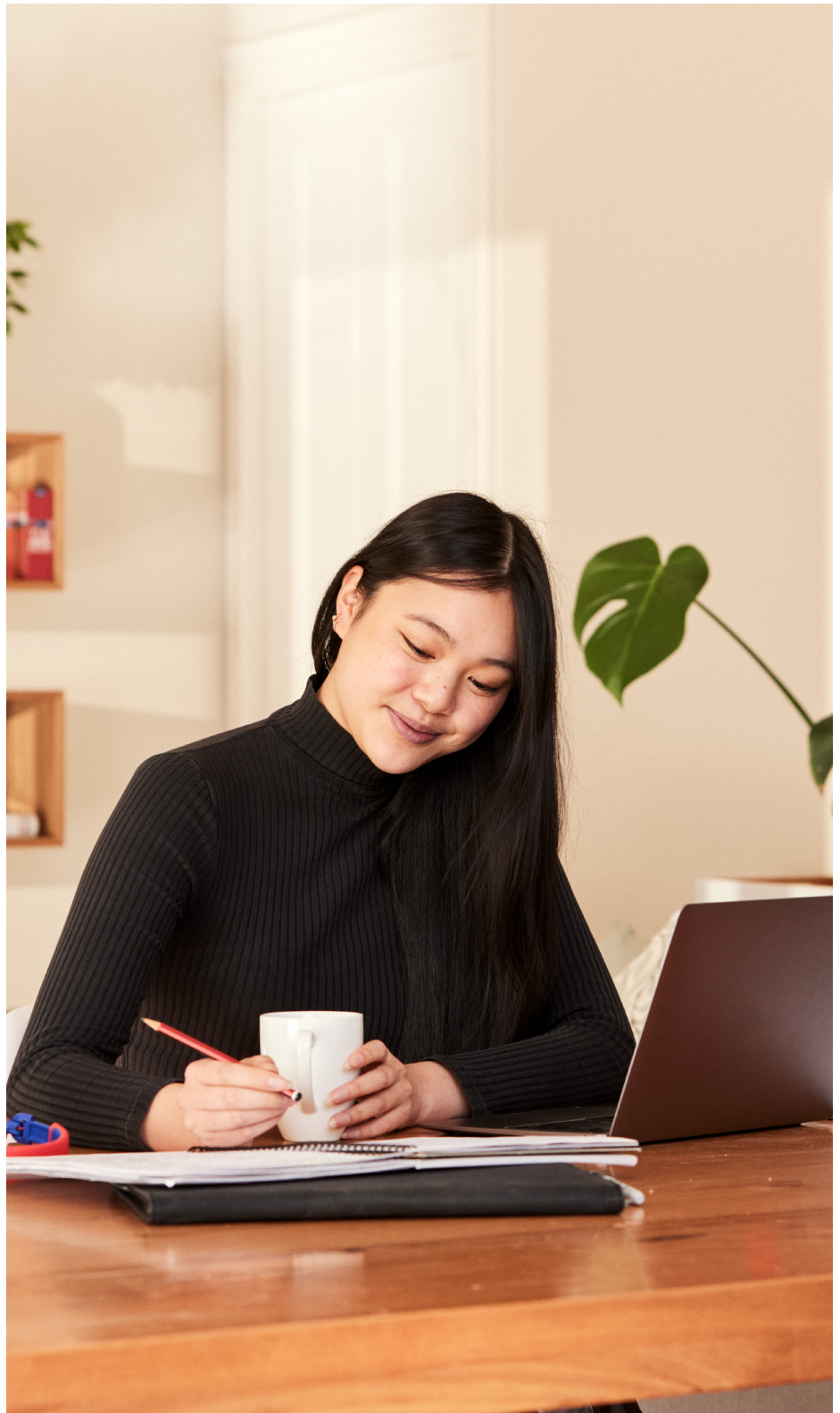
ADVANTAGES VS. DISADVANTAGES

Here are two different possible question formats you could see about advantages and disadvantages.

- *Today more and more people are working from home.*
- *Does this trend have more advantages or more disadvantages?*
- *Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?*

Whether you are given question (a) or (b) above, to respond completely, you need to consider both the advantages and disadvantages.

You can write more about one side than the other, especially if you have a strong opinion going one way. However, a one-sided argument in these types of questions is not complete and you will lower your score if you forget to consider both advantages and disadvantages.



Writing test

IELTS General Training Writing



IELTS General Training Writing Task 1

Length: Write at least **150** words.

Time: You should spend about **20** minutes on this task.

WRITE A SHORT LETTER FOR A SPECIFIC PURPOSE

Task 1 in the General Training Writing section is a letter of correspondence where you demonstrate your ability to communicate using English letter-writing conventions.

You will be given a common, everyday situation such as writing to apologise for missing a friend's party, or complaining to a company about bad service, writing to give advice to a friend about where to go on holiday, or writing to express your interest in a new job.

In addition to being given the situation three bullet points will outline exactly what information you need to include in your letter. You might, for example, have to describe details, give reasons, express likes and dislikes, or make suggestions or recommendations.

You will need to choose and use the correct tone in your letter. Tone is the way you communicate with people that shows the kind of relationship you have with them. In letters tone is clearly indicated by a proper salutation and closing, and it should also be conveyed by your choice of words or phrasing as well as the kind and amount of details you include.

Different relationships require different levels of respect which is probably true in your language as well. IELTS letters are usually either formal, or informal in tone. Generally, if the letter is to friends, people you know well, or family, and the reason for writing is positive, the tone is informal. Letters to everyone else and for all complaints or negative messages should be more formal.

Here are examples of the two main kinds of letters that can appear on the test with advice on how to create tone for each.

THE FORMAL LETTER

You live in a room in college that you share with another student. However, there are many problems with this arrangement and you find it very difficult to work. Write a letter to the accommodation officer at the college. In the letter, describe the situation explain your problems and why it is difficult to work say what kind of accommodation you would prefer.

Begin your letter as follows:

Dear Sir or Madam,

A key indicator of a formal letter is when you are given the salutation of "Dear Sir or Madam," which shows that you do not know the person you are writing to.

The following are some suggestions for how to create and keep a formal tone in your letter:

Openings and closings:

- Begin with: Dear Sir or Madam, or Dear Mr. Smith, or Dear Mrs. Jones
- End with: Yours faithfully or Yours sincerely

Kind and amount of detail:

Get to the point or purpose of your letter right away, include the necessary and relevant information only and make sure you cover the three bullet points in the question accurately (if you are asked to explain your problems (plural), give more than one and stick to the facts).

Use polite, formal language and DO NOT USE CONTRACTIONS OR SHORT FORMS:

- "I am writing to thank you..."
- "I apologise for missing the birthday celebration..."
- "I would like some more information about..."
- "Would it be possible for us to meet..."

THE INFORMAL LETTER

A friend has agreed to look after your house and pet while you are on holiday. Write a letter to your friend. In the letter:

- give contact details for when you are away,
- give instructions about how to care for your pet
- describe other household duties.

Begin your letter as follows:

Dear...

Notice that you have to choose the salutation, unlike the previous task sample. This does not automatically mean it is an informal letter. You should look to see who you are writing to and why. This example is a letter to a friend and the situation is a positive one (not a complaint or a serious apology), so an informal tone can be used.

Writing test

IELTS General Training Writing



IELTS General Training Writing Task 2

Length: Write at least **250** words.

Time: You should spend about **40** minutes on this task.

WRITING AN ESSAY

Essays in the General Training test are about general interest topics such as whether it is better to home-school children, whether the drinking age should be raised, who is responsible for the care of the elderly or how families could be brought closer together.

Given a statement about a topic, you may be asked to agree or disagree or you may be required to answer one or two questions about the topic. For example, given the statement that families are not as close as they were in the past, you might be asked to respond to the following questions: Why do you think this is so? What can be done to bring families closer together again?

ORGANISATION

An IELTS essay is usually composed of 4 – 6 paragraphs.

The first paragraph introduces the subject of your essay and what you plan to say about it. The last paragraph summarises your point and restates your main findings about this topic.

The body or middle paragraphs should answer the main questions you have identified in the task with a clear explanation for your response and examples to support your thinking. If you have analysed the task before writing, you will know exactly what to write in these body paragraphs. The following example will illustrate how.

ANALYSING THE ESSAY TASK

Force yourself to look carefully at the prompt by underlining key words. Then identify exactly what the questions are asking you to do. For example:

Traditionally, elderly people have lived with and been cared for by younger family members. In modern society, more and more elderly people are living in special homes for the elderly. Why do you think families choose to have their elderly relatives live in special homes away from family? What do you think is the best way for modern families to care for their elderly relatives?

This essay has two parts:

1. Explain why modern families send their elderly relatives away to live in special homes.
2. Say whether you think it is better for elderly parents to be cared for by younger family members at home or to be sent away or whether you have an even better alternative.

If you fail to answer either one of these questions, you will lower your score. You could use a paragraph to answer each part in the body of your essay. Note that if you had two very good reasons, for example, for why families send their relatives away, you could devote a paragraph to each, which would allow you to provide further extension and support.

High-level essays do not simply list possible answers; they make a couple of good points and provide reasoning and examples to support them. Here is an example of a point being effectively developed.

This is a sample body paragraph that might appear in an essay responding to the first question.

Modern families today often do not have the time or energy to care for the elderly at home. In most places today people have demanding jobs and can barely take care of themselves let alone an older relative who may be sick or infirm. In most countries, special residences for the ageing are designed to care for the needs of those who have medical issues related to getting older and they provide wholesome activities and social stimulation for the elderly who otherwise might be sitting alone at home while their younger relatives are off working. That is why some families feel their relatives are safer and happier living away in these care centres.

Notice that the paragraph begins with the answer to the question and is followed by further explanation, an example and a concluding sentence.

Speaking test



IELTS Speaking test is face-to-face with a human examiner whether you take IELTS at a test centre or online. The only difference with online is the test is over a video call.

There are three parts to complete.

Part 1: Introduction and questions on familiar topics Length: 4-5 minutes

The examiner will start by introducing him or herself and asking you to state your name and show your identification. Next, you will be asked general questions about yourself such as where you live or what you are currently doing (working or studying).

The remaining questions in this section are of a personal nature and topics will be familiar, for example, about the music you like, cooking, the weather, or movies you prefer. Usually, you cover one or two more topics and you may get two or three questions about each of them.

The examiner will ask the question and then just listen, although you may be prompted to extend your response with a "why" or "why not" if your answer is too short. This is not a conversation though; it happens in a question-answer format.

Be prepared to answer questions using different verb tenses and forms.

If you listen carefully to what the examiner asks, it will help you formulate your answer using the appropriate tense.

If you are asked: Did you like the same movies when you were a child? You could say: "When I was a child, I liked cartoons more because..."

- Don't give one- or two-word answers. Give at least one or two sentences. This is your chance to show off your English and holding back is not going to help your score.
- Prepare for this section by reviewing vocabulary about work, school, your home, hobbies, the weather, etc.

Part 2: Individual long turn Length: 3-4 minutes

After Part 1, the examiner will give you a topic and ask you to talk about it for one to two minutes.

The topic will be handed to you on a card and you will also be given a piece of paper and a pencil for making notes. On the card, you will see the speaking prompt and some points you can cover in your talk relating to this.

You will have exactly one minute to prepare and make notes before you speak.

Here is a sample Part 2 task:

Describe a beautiful place to visit in your city. You should say:

- *where it is*
- *how to get there*
- *what there is to do when you are there and*
- *explain why you recommend this place.*

After the one-minute preparation, you will be asked to begin and the examiner will listen to you for two minutes. They may ask you a couple of follow-up questions when the time is up before going on to the next section.

Take notes! The initial thoughts you jot down will help you remember what you have to say.

Try to structure your talk with a simple beginning, middle and end. You can use key words from the prompt to form an introductory sentence. For example, take the words "beautiful place" "visit" and "city" from the above prompt and begin your talk with: "I would like to talk to you today about an area of my city that everyone should go see because its beauty is outstanding."

Speaking test



Then, use the three bullet points to help you organise the middle of your talk and conclude by explaining why this is the place you most recommend.

- Extend each part of your answer with some details. You have two minutes to fill and you need show that you can enlarge on a topic and use a range of expressions, grammatical structures and vocabulary.
- Use the full two minutes. Practise talking in front of a mirror on a subject for two minutes so you get a sense of the timing.



Part 3: Two-way discussion

Length: 4-5 minutes

The questions in Part 3 will be loosely connected to the topic that you spoke about in Part 2. They will become more complex and abstract as you go along. You will need to be able to express and justify your opinions, analyse, discuss and speculate on given subjects.

If your long turn was about a beautiful place to visit in your city, this section might begin by talking about beautiful places and the first question might be, "Do you think it's important to maintain beautiful places in cities?"

The examiner will speak more with you in this section and may challenge your opinions to see how well you are able to converse about abstract ideas versus the personal topics contained in Parts 1 and 2.

Support and extend your answers. State your opinions clearly and provide examples and reasoning as you talk. You do not have to believe your opinion, or you might not have one, so turn to what you think others are saying about the subject and create a line of reasoning from that.

Remember the more you say, the more you show how you can use English to communicate.

- Avoid long pauses. It is okay to pause to think but don't let too much time pass without speaking. It is good to have some fillers or stalling phrases that will give you time to formulate your answer. Phrases such as, "That's an excellent question...", "Where should I start, let me see...", "I need a couple of seconds to think about that but..."
- Ask for clarification. Be sure you understand the question before you answer so that your response is relevant. It's okay to say something like — "I'm sorry, can you please repeat that?", or "If I understand you correctly, you want to know...", or "Do you mean...?"

- Paraphrase or explain what you are trying to say instead of giving up if you forget a word in English. If you forget the word for "iron", for example, you could say, "the tool you use to take the wrinkles out of your clothing, you know, it heats up and you press it on the material, oh yes, it's called an iron". You will be rewarded for finding ways to express what you are thinking rather than penalised if you just say that you don't know how to say it

Test day tips to help you succeed in a test centre

Know what to expect to perform at your best.

Here is some handy advice to help you understand how a test day is run in a test centre – so you can arrive prepared and can focus on achieving your goal.



Arrive early

Arriving early is a great way to set yourself up for success on the day. Remember that you'll need to allow time to register, check in your belongings and get seated for the test – so double check your booking confirmation for timings and plan to arrive or log on in advance.

Check in your personal items

All of your personal items will need to be checked in before you can enter the test room. This includes all mobile phones, wrist watches, handheld computers, headphones, cameras, hats, scarves, wallets, books, notes and food. Our staff will collect and safely store all of your belongings in secure lockers, unless you specifically need them for religious reasons.

ID check

When you register on test day, you'll be greeted by test centre staff who will check your identification (ID).

Please make sure your ID:

- is the same ID you used when you booked your test
- is current and valid
- has a recognisable photo of yourself

Before you enter the room, your finger will be scanned to verify your identity as part of our standard security procedure.

Entering the test room

When you enter the test room, an IELTS test invigilator will guide you to your seat. You're able to bring in a drink of water in a transparent bottle, but as it is a test environment you're not able to speak to other test takers or write notes. If you do have a question, raise your hand and someone will help you.

Breaks

If you need to go to the bathroom during the test, raise your hand and a staff member will assist you. Please note that no one is able to leave the room while the test supervisor is giving instructions, as we don't want you to miss out on any important test information.

Asking for help

If you have a problem (e.g. if you think you have been given the wrong paper, you cannot hear the instructions, or you feel ill) raise your hand to attract the attention of the invigilators. Please note that the supervisor will not provide any explanation of the questions.

End of the test

Congratulations – you've finished your test! Everyone does need to stay in their seat for the full duration of the test, so if you finish early make the most of your time and review your answers until the test invigilator advises everyone to leave. Please leave any notes and materials from the test on your desk and remember to collect your checked belongings before you leave.

Getting your results

You can view your test results online as soon as they are available at ielts.idp.com/results/get-ielts-results.

Your results will be available within:

- 3-5 days for IELTS on computer
- 6-8 days for IELTS online
- 13 days for IELTS on paper

You can collect your Test Result Form – which is the formal transcript of your result – from the test centre or have it mailed directly to you, depending on what you specified when you registered for the test.

Tips for getting your room ready for IELTS Online





Important

Set up your room and check your computer the day before your test so that you are prepared. This will give you time to fix any problems before your test.








No one else is allowed in the room while you are taking the test. If you are interrupted, or if you speak to anyone during your test, you may not be able to continue with your test.



Get your room ready

- 1 Find a quiet, private, well-lit room. Close the door.
- 2 Choose a desk or table so that you are comfortable for the whole test.
- 3 Make sure your desk is clear. You are allowed:
 -  Your computer (laptop or desktop).
 -  Your test username, password, and PIN. You will have a different PIN for your Speaking test and your Listening, Reading & Writing test. Take a photo of these with your phone or tablet, or write them on a piece of paper.
 -  Your passport (no other ID).
 -  For the Listening, Reading, Writing test you will need a tablet or mobile phone with a camera for the room scan. This will be turned off once the scan is complete.

Get your computer ready

-  No extra screens are allowed. Only one screen is allowed to take the test.
-  Bluetooth is not allowed. Remove any Bluetooth keyboard or mouse.
-  Headphones are not permitted during the test.
-  Make sure your computer is connected to power.
-  Make sure your camera, speakers and microphone are working.
-  Download the Inspira Exam Portal.
-  Run the Inspira Exam Portal system check. If the Inspira Exam Portal system check is successful you may close the Portal.

To make sure you understand what to expect on your test day, we recommend you read the [test format](#) and practise with the [IELTS Online familiarisation tests](#). You can find more sample questions [here](#).

Have a question or need support?

Please contact us at IELTSOnline@idp.com and we will be pleased to assist.

How your skills are assessed

There is no pass or fail in an IELTS test – you will receive a score from 1-9 on each part of the test.

— The nine-band scoring system

IELTS uses a nine-band scoring system to measure your test results. You will receive individual scores for each of the four skills in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking, and an overall band score on a scale of 1 (the lowest) to 9 (the highest).

= Marking performance fairly

Examiners do not see any of your personal details (including any previous scores if you have sat the test before), which ensures that they mark your performance anonymously and fairly. Different examiners also mark different sections of your test.

☆ Assessed by highly qualified examiners

Your test results are assessed by examiners who are highly qualified and experienced English language professionals. They work to clearly defined criteria and are subject to extensive and detailed quality control procedures.

🌐 Global assessment criteria

Your IELTS test is marked with the same assessment criteria used all over the world. You are no more likely to receive a higher band score in one country than another.

Whether you take IELTS on paper, computer or IELTS Online, you can be confident that you are taking the same trusted English language test.



Receiving your results

You will receive a Test Report Form, which reports a score for each of the four skills (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking), as well as an overall band score.



To find out more about your IELTS scores, visit ielts.idp.com/results/scores.

Your Test Report Form is the official record of your results on that test day, so make sure you keep this document safe. If you do need a replacement due to unforeseen circumstances, speak to your test centre.

You can request copies of your Test Result Form to be sent directly up to five recognising organisations per application. This includes, academic institutions, government agencies, professional bodies and employers. It doesn't include migration or education agents.

Preview your results online

We know you have a lot riding on your IELTS test, so you can preview your results online as soon as they become available. Your results will be available within:

- 3-5 days for IELTS on computer
- 6-8 days for IELTS online
- 13 days for IELTS on paper.

Your Test Report Form remains the official confirmation of your results and you'll need to supply that document to recognising organisations.

Your scores explained and advice to improve your scores

When you log on to ielts.idp.com/results/get-ielts-results to see your results, you will be able to receive feedback on your performance for each of the skills. You will also receive advice on how to improve your performance in order to reach the next level. This advice should be used for guidance only.

IELTS One Skill Retake

If you didn't achieve the score you were hoping for on one skill you can take IELTS One Skill Retake. It allows you to retake one of the four skills (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking) if you didn't get the score you needed first time around. IELTS One Skill Retake gives you the opportunity to get the score you need without having to retake the whole test.

Retaking IELTS

In the event that you don't get the result you're hoping for, you can take the test again and there are no restrictions on the number of times you can sit the test. Before resitting IELTS, it can be helpful to take some extra steps to make sure you're ready.

Results validity period

Organisations decide how long they will accept your Test Report Form. The IELTS Test Partners recommend you check with your organisation to determine its particular validity period for IELTS results.

Enquiry on Results

If you are unhappy with your test result, you can apply for a re-mark (Enquiry on Results) at the centre where you took the test. You have up to six weeks to apply for a re-mark and you can choose which test sections are reviewed. There is a fee for this service, but that fee does get refunded if your score on any section is increased.

Appendix – Assessment criteria for each band score

IELTS Speaking Assessment Criteria



Band	Fluency and coherence	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy	Pronunciation
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks fluently with only rare repetition or self-correction; any hesitation is content-related rather than to find words or grammar speaks coherently with fully appropriate cohesive features develops topics fully and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses vocabulary with full flexibility and precision in all topics uses idiomatic language naturally and accurately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a full range of structures naturally and appropriately produces consistently accurate structures apart from 'slips' characteristic of native speaker speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a full range of pronunciation features with precision and subtlety sustains flexible use of features throughout is effortless to understand
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks fluently with only occasional repetition or self-correction; hesitation is usually content-related and only rarely to search for language develops topics coherently and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide vocabulary resource readily and flexibly to convey precise meaning uses less common and idiomatic vocabulary skilfully, with occasional inaccuracies uses paraphrase effectively as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures flexibly produces a majority of error-free sentences with only very occasional inappropriacies or basic non-systematic errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of pronunciation features sustains flexible use of features, with only occasional lapses is easy to understand throughout; L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks at length without noticeable effort or loss of coherence may demonstrate language-related hesitation at times, or some repetition and/or self-correction uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with some flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses vocabulary resource flexibly to discuss a variety of topics uses some less common and idiomatic vocabulary and shows some awareness of style and collocation, with some inappropriate choices uses paraphrase effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a range of complex structures with some flexibility frequently produces error-free sentences, though some grammatical mistakes persist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows all the positive features of Band 6 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 8
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is willing to speak at length, though may lose coherence at times due to occasional repetition, self-correction or hesitation uses a range of connectives and discourse markers but not always appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has a wide enough vocabulary to discuss topics at length and make meaning clear in spite of inappropriacies generally paraphrases successfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a mix of simple and complex structures may make frequent mistakes with complex structures, though these rarely cause comprehension problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a range of pronunciation features with mixed control shows some effective use of features but this is not sustained can generally be understood throughout, though mispronunciation of individual words or sounds reduces clarity at times
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually maintains flow of speech but uses repetition, self-correction and/or slow speech to keep going may over-use certain connectives and discourse markers produces simple speech fluently, but more complex communication causes fluency problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> manages to talk about familiar and unfamiliar topics but uses vocabulary with limited flexibility attempts to use paraphrases with mixed success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> produces basic sentence forms with reasonable accuracy uses a limited range of more complex structures, but these usually contain errors and may cause some comprehension problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows all the positive features of Band 4 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 6
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot respond without noticeable pauses and may speak slowly, with frequent repetition and self-correction links basic sentences but with repetitious use of simple connectives and some breakdowns in coherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is able to talk about familiar topics but can only convey basic meaning on unfamiliar topics and makes frequent errors in word choice rarely attempts paraphrase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> produces basic sentence forms and some correct simple sentences but subordinate structures are rare errors are frequent and may lead to misunderstanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a limited range of pronunciation features attempts to control features but lapses are frequent mispronunciations are frequent and cause some difficulty for the listener
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaks with long pauses has limited ability to link simple sentences gives only simple responses and is frequently unable to convey basic message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses simple vocabulary to convey personal information has insufficient vocabulary for less familiar topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempts basic sentence forms but with limited success, or relies on apparently memorised utterances makes numerous errors except in memorised expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows some of the features of Band 2 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 4
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pauses lengthily before most words little communication possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> only produces isolated word or memorised utterances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot produce basic sentence forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speech is often unintelligible
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no communication possible no rateable language 			
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not attend 			

IELTS Writing Task 1 Band Descriptors (for Academic and General Training tests)



Note: A script must fully fit the positive features of the descriptor at a particular level.

Band	Task achievement	Coherence and cohesion	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the requirements of the task are fully and appropriately satisfied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The message can be followed effortlessly. Cohesion is used in such a way that it very rarely attracts attention. Any lapses in coherence or cohesion are minimal. Paragraphing is skilfully managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full flexibility and precise use are evident within the scope of the task. A wide range of vocabulary is used accurately and appropriately with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features. Minor errors in spelling and word formation are extremely rare and have minimal impact on communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of structures within the scope of the task is used with full flexibility and control. Punctuation and grammar are used appropriately throughout. Minor errors are extremely rare and have minimal impact on communication.
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response covers all the requirements of the task appropriately, relevantly and sufficiently. (AC) Key features are skilfully selected, and clearly presented, highlighted and illustrated. (GT) All bullet points are clearly presented, and appropriately illustrated or extended. There may be occasional omissions or lapses in content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The message can be followed with ease. Information and ideas are logically sequenced, and cohesion is well managed. Occasional lapses in coherence or cohesion may occur. Paragraphing is used sufficiently and appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide resource is fluently and flexibly used to convey precise meanings within the scope of the task. There is skilful use of uncommon and/or idiomatic items when appropriate, despite occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation. Occasional errors in spelling and/or word formation may occur, but have minimal impact on communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of structures within the scope of the task is flexibly and accurately used. The majority of sentences are error-free, and punctuation is well managed. Occasional, non-systematic errors and inappropriacies occur, but have minimal impact on communication.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response covers the requirements of the task. The content is relevant and accurate – there may be a few omissions or lapses. The format is appropriate. (AC) Key features which are selected are covered and clearly highlighted but could be more fully or more appropriately illustrated or extended. (AC) It presents a clear overview, the data are appropriately categorised, and main trends or differences are identified. (GT) All bullet points are covered and clearly highlighted but could be more fully or more appropriately illustrated or extended. It presents a clear purpose. The tone is consistent and appropriate to the task. Any lapses are minimal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and ideas are logically organised and there is a clear progression throughout the response. A few lapses may occur. A range of cohesive devices including reference and substitution is used flexibly but with some inaccuracies or some over/under use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is sufficient to allow some flexibility and precision. There is some ability to use less common and/or idiomatic items. An awareness of style and collocation is evident, though inappropriacies occur. There are only a few errors in spelling and/or word formation, and they do not detract from overall clarity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of complex structures is used with some flexibility and accuracy. Grammar and punctuation are generally well controlled, and error-free sentences are frequent. A few errors in grammar may persist, but these do not impede communication.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response focuses on the requirements of the task and an appropriate format is used. (AC) Key features which are selected are covered and adequately highlighted. A relevant overview is attempted. Information is appropriately selected and supported using figures/data. (GT) All bullet points are covered and adequately highlighted. The purpose is generally clear. There may be minor inconsistencies in tone. Some irrelevant, inappropriate or inaccurate information may occur in areas of detail or when illustrating or extending the main points. Some details may be missing (or excessive) and further extension or illustration may be needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and ideas are generally arranged coherently and there is a clear overall progression. Cohesive devices are used to some good effect but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical due to misuse, overuse or omission. The use of reference and substitution may lack flexibility or clarity and result in some repetition or error. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is generally adequate and appropriate for the task. The meaning is generally clear in spite of a rather restricted range or a lack of precision in word choice. If the writer is a risk-taker, there will be a wider range of vocabulary used but higher degrees of inaccuracy or inappropriacy. There are some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but these do not impede communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A mix of simple and complex sentence forms is used but flexibility is limited. Examples of more complex structures are not marked by the same level of accuracy as in simple structures. Errors in grammar and punctuation occur, but rarely impede communication.

IELTS Writing Task 1 Band Descriptors

(for Academic and General Training tests)



Note: A script must fully fit the positive features of the descriptor at a particular level.

Band	Task achievement	Coherence and cohesion	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response generally addresses the requirements of the task. The format may be inappropriate in places. (AC) Key features which are selected are not adequately covered. The recounting of detail is mainly mechanical. There may be no data to support the description. (GT) All bullet points are presented but one or more may not be adequately covered. The purpose may be unclear at times. The tone may be variable and sometimes inappropriate. There may be a tendency to focus on details (without referring to the bigger picture). The inclusion of irrelevant, inappropriate or inaccurate material in key areas detracts from the task achievement. There is limited detail when extending and illustrating the main points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisation is evident but is not wholly logical and there may be a lack of overall progression. Nevertheless, there is a sense of underlying coherence to the response. The relationship of ideas can be followed but the sentences are not fluently linked to each other. There may be limited/overuse of cohesive devices with some inaccuracy. The writing may be repetitive due to inadequate and/or inaccurate use of reference and substitution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is limited but minimally adequate for the task. Simple vocabulary may be used accurately but the range does not permit much variation in expression. There may be frequent lapses in the appropriacy of word choice, and a lack of flexibility is apparent in frequent simplifications and/or repetitions. Errors in spelling and/or word formation may be noticeable and may cause some difficulty for the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range of structures is limited and rather repetitive. Although complex sentences are attempted, they tend to be faulty, and the greatest accuracy is achieved on simple sentences. Grammatical errors may be frequent and cause some difficulty for the reader. Punctuation may be faulty.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response is an attempt to address the task. (AC) Few key features have been selected. (GT) Not all bullet points are presented. (GT) The purpose of the letter is not clearly explained and may be confused. The tone may be inappropriate. The format may be inappropriate. Key features/bullet points which are presented may be irrelevant, repetitive, inaccurate or inappropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and ideas are evident but not arranged coherently, and there is no clear progression within the response. Relationships between ideas can be unclear and/or inadequately marked. There is some use of basic cohesive devices, which may be inaccurate or repetitive. There is inaccurate use or a lack of substitution or referencing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is limited and inadequate for or unrelated to the task. Vocabulary is basic and may be used repetitively. There may be inappropriate use of lexical chunks (e.g. memorised phrases, formulaic language and/or language from the input material). Inappropriate word choice and/or errors in word formation and/or in spelling may impede meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A very limited range of structures is used. Subordinate clauses are rare and simple sentences predominate. Some structures are produced accurately but grammatical errors are frequent and may impede meaning. Punctuation is often faulty or inadequate.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response does not address the requirements of the task (possibly because of misunderstanding of the data/diagram/situation). Key features/bullet points which are presented may be largely irrelevant. Limited information is presented, and this may be used repetitively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no apparent logical organisation. Ideas are discernible but difficult to relate to each other. Minimal use of sequencers or cohesive devices. Those used do not necessarily indicate a logical relationship between ideas. There is difficulty in identifying referencing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is inadequate (which may be due to the response being significantly underlength). Possible over-dependence on input material or memorised language. Control of word choice and/or spelling is very limited, and errors predominate. These errors may severely impede meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentence forms are attempted, but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate (except in memorised phrases or those taken from the input material). This prevents most meaning from coming through. Length may be insufficient to provide evidence of control of sentence forms.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The content barely relates to the task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little relevant message, or the entire response may be off-topic. There is little evidence of control of organisational features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is extremely limited with few recognisable strings, apart from memorised phrases. There is no apparent control of word formation and/or spelling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no evidence of sentence forms (except in memorised phrases).
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1. The content is wholly unrelated to the task. Any copied rubric must be discounted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1. The writing fails to communicate any message and appears to be by a virtual non-writer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1. No resource is apparent, except for a few isolated words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1. No rateable language is evident.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should only be used where a candidate did not attend or attempt the question in any way, used a language other than English throughout, or where there is proof that a candidate's answer has been totally memorised. 			

IELTS Writing Task 2 Band Descriptors (for Academic and General Training tests)



Note: A script must fully fit the positive features of the descriptor at a particular level.

Band	Task achievement	Coherence and cohesion	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The prompt is appropriately addressed and explored in depth. A clear and fully developed position is presented which directly answers the question/s. Ideas are relevant, fully extended and well supported. Any lapses in content or support are extremely rare. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The message can be followed effortlessly. Cohesion is used in such a way that it very rarely attracts attention. Any lapses in coherence or cohesion are minimal. Paragraphing is skilfully managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full flexibility and precise use are widely evident. A wide range of vocabulary is used accurately and appropriately with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features. Minor errors in spelling and word formation are extremely rare and have minimal impact on communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of structures is used with full flexibility and control. Punctuation and grammar are used appropriately throughout. Minor errors are extremely rare and have minimal impact on communication.
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The prompt is appropriately and sufficiently addressed. A clear and well-developed position is presented in response to the question/s. Ideas are relevant, well extended and supported. There may be occasional omissions or lapses in content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The message can be followed with ease. Information and ideas are logically sequenced, and cohesion is well managed. Occasional lapses in coherence and cohesion may occur. Paragraphing is used sufficiently and appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide resource is fluently and flexibly used to convey precise meanings. There is skilful use of uncommon and/or idiomatic items when appropriate, despite occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation. Occasional errors in spelling and/or word formation may occur, but have minimal impact on communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of structures is flexibly and accurately used. The majority of sentences are error-free, and punctuation is well managed. Occasional, non-systematic errors and inappropriacies occur, but have minimal impact on communication.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main parts of the prompt are appropriately addressed. A clear and developed position is presented. Main ideas are extended and supported but there may be a tendency to over-generalise or there may be a lack of focus and precision in supporting ideas/material. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and ideas are logically organised, and there is a clear progression throughout the response. (A few lapses may occur, but these are minor.) A range of cohesive devices including reference and substitution is used flexibly but with some inaccuracies or some over/under use. Paragraphing is generally used effectively to support overall coherence, and the sequencing of ideas within a paragraph is generally logical. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is sufficient to allow some flexibility and precision. There is some ability to use less common and/or idiomatic items. An awareness of style and collocation is evident, though inappropriacies occur. There are only a few errors in spelling and/or word formation and they do not detract from overall clarity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of complex structures is used with some flexibility and accuracy. Grammar and punctuation are generally well controlled, and error-free sentences are frequent. A few errors in grammar may persist, but these do not impede communication.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main parts of the prompt are addressed (though some may be more fully covered than others). An appropriate format is used. A position is presented that is directly relevant to the prompt, although the conclusions drawn may be unclear, unjustified or repetitive. Main ideas are relevant, but some may be insufficiently developed or may lack clarity, while some supporting arguments and evidence may be less relevant or inadequate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and ideas are generally arranged coherently and there is a clear overall progression. Cohesive devices are used to some good effect but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical due to misuse, overuse or omission. The use of reference and substitution may lack flexibility or clarity and result in some repetition or error. Paragraphing may not always be logical and/or the central topic may not always be clear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is generally adequate and appropriate for the task. The meaning is generally clear in spite of a rather restricted range or a lack of precision in word choice. If the writer is a risk-taker, there will be a wider range of vocabulary used but higher degrees of inaccuracy or inappropriacy. There are some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but these do not impede communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A mix of simple and complex sentence forms is used but flexibility is limited. Examples of more complex structures are not marked by the same level of accuracy as in simple structures. Errors in grammar and punctuation occur, but rarely impede communication.

IELTS Writing Task 2 Band Descriptors (for Academic and General Training tests)



Note: A script must fully fit the positive features of the descriptor at a particular level.

Band	Task achievement	Coherence and cohesion	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main parts of the prompt are incompletely addressed. The format may be inappropriate in places. The writer expresses a position, but the development is not always clear. Some main ideas are put forward, but they are limited and are not sufficiently developed and/or there may be irrelevant detail. There may be some repetition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisation is evident but is not wholly logical and there may be a lack of overall progression. Nevertheless, there is a sense of underlying coherence to the response. The relationship of ideas can be followed but the sentences are not fluently linked to each other. There may be limited/overuse of cohesive devices with some inaccuracy. The writing may be repetitive due to inadequate and/or inaccurate use of reference and substitution. Paragraphing may be inadequate or missing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is limited but minimally adequate for the task. Simple vocabulary may be used accurately but the range does not permit much variation in expression. There may be frequent lapses in the appropriacy of word choice and a lack of flexibility is apparent in frequent simplifications and/or repetitions. Errors in spelling and/or word formation may be noticeable and may cause some difficulty for the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range of structures is limited and rather repetitive. Although complex sentences are attempted, they tend to be faulty, and the greatest accuracy is achieved on simple sentences. Grammatical errors may be frequent and cause some difficulty for the reader. Punctuation may be faulty.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The prompt is tackled in a minimal way, or the answer is tangential, possibly due to some misunderstanding of the prompt. The format may be inappropriate. A position is discernible, but the reader has to read carefully to find it. Main ideas are difficult to identify and such ideas that are identifiable may lack relevance, clarity and/or support. Large parts of the response may be repetitive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and ideas are evident but not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression within the response. Relationships between ideas can be unclear and/or inadequately marked. There is some use of basic cohesive devices, which may be inaccurate or repetitive. There is inaccurate use or a lack of substitution or referencing. There may be no paragraphing and/or no clear main topic within paragraphs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is limited and inadequate for or unrelated to the task. Vocabulary is basic and may be used repetitively. There may be inappropriate use of lexical chunks (e.g. memorised phrases, formulaic language and/or language from the input material). Inappropriate word choice and/or errors in word formation and/or in spelling may impede meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A very limited range of structures is used. Subordinate clauses are rare and simple sentences predominate. Some structures are produced accurately but grammatical errors are frequent and may impede meaning. Punctuation is often faulty or inadequate.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No part of the prompt is adequately addressed, or the prompt has been misunderstood. No relevant position can be identified, and/or there is little direct response to the question/s. There are few ideas, and these may be irrelevant or insufficiently developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no apparent logical organisation. Ideas are discernible but difficult to relate to each other. There is minimal use of sequencers or cohesive devices. Those used do not necessarily indicate a logical relationship between ideas. There is difficulty in identifying referencing. Any attempts at paragraphing are unhelpful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is inadequate (which may be due to the response being significantly underlength). Possible over-dependence on input material or memorised language. Control of word choice and/or spelling is very limited, and errors predominate. These errors may severely impede meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentence forms are attempted, but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate (except in memorised phrases or those taken from the input material). This prevents most meaning from coming through. Length may be insufficient to provide evidence of control of sentence forms.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The content is barely related to the prompt. No position can be identified. There may be glimpses of one or two ideas without development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little relevant message, or the entire response may be off-topic. There is little evidence of control of organisational features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource is extremely limited with few recognisable strings, apart from memorised phrases. There is no apparent control of word formation and/or spelling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no evidence of sentence forms (except in memorised phrases).
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1. The content is wholly unrelated to the prompt. Any copied rubric must be discounted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1. The writing fails to communicate any message and appears to be by a virtual non-writer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1. No resource is apparent, except for a few isolated words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1. No rateable language is evident.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should only be used where a candidate did not attend or attempt the question in any way, used a language other than English throughout, or where there is proof that a candidate's answer has been totally memorised. 			

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Notes

