

**IELTS™**

# Preparation guide

**We're here  
to help boost  
your score.**



Real help.  
Real support.  
Real people.  
And real results.

**Help you boost  
your IELTS score  
and prepare you for  
real-world success.**





## Preparation guide



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# Discover how IELTS can help you succeed

IELTS is the world's leading English test for work, study and migration, and we're here to support you to achieve your goals.

We offer 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.

## Computer-delivered IELTS: Fast and flexible

IELTS takes advantage of the best technology available through our option of computer-delivered Reading, Listening and Writing tests. With up to three test sessions available per day, 7 days a week, this approach offers you fast results and more convenience and flexibility than the traditional paper-based tests.

## Face-to-face Speaking tests to put you at ease

When it comes to speaking, we are proud to still provide person-to-person testing in a comfortable, quiet room. Unlike a computer, you can trust a person to put you at ease, to 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.



Available from more than 1,200 locations in 140 countries. Scan the QR code to find out test dates in your area and test centres near you.

"IELTS makes the world a bigger, more open place and it allowed me to become a citizen of the world."

**Pavel Kachaolov**  
Analyst at a large  
accounting firm

# 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 test, visit [IELTSessentials.com](https://ieltsessentials.com)

**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: [IELTSessentials.com/results/about-ielts-scores](https://ieltsessentials.com/results/about-ielts-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.

Book your IELTS test and get FREE access to an online preparation course for 30 days!\*

### 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 Practise with sample questions

#### Free support tools

**Free test sample:** The free IELTS test sample gives you a chance to see sample test questions and practise your responses: [IELTSessentials.com/prepare](https://ieltsessentials.com/prepare)

**Free computer-delivered IELTS practice materials:** Know what to expect on the day with videos, FAQs and sample questions to help guide you through the computer-delivered Listening, Reading and Writing tests: [IELTSessentials.com/oncomputer](https://ieltsessentials.com/oncomputer)

#### Additional support options

**IELTS Progress Check:** Take a full practise test, which gives you an indicative band score plus personalised feedback from an official IELTS marker — so you can identify your weaknesses and improve for the real test. You can practise anytime, anywhere: [IELTSprogresscheck.com](https://ieltsprogresscheck.com)

**Official IELTS Practice Material books:** Available in Volume 1 and Volume 2, the Official IELTS Practice Material books give you a chance to try sample questions. They include example responses and examiner comments to help guide you, plus there are CDs and DVDs to assist with the Listening and Speaking tests. These are available online or from your local test centre.

### 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.

**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.

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

# Test format: IELTS Academic or IELTS General Training?

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

IELTS is available in two different versions: Academic and General Training. Each organisation that accepts IELTS will normally specify which version 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 in order 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)

- Writing task of at least 150 words where the test taker must 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 newspapers

### 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

\* The Listening and Speaking sections are the same for both IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training.

# 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 | <b>Expert user</b>              | Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.                                                                                                                      |
| 8 | <b>Very good user</b>           | 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 | <b>Good user</b>                | 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 | <b>Competent user</b>           | 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 | <b>Modest user</b>              | 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 | <b>Limited user</b>             | Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.                                                                                   |
| 3 | <b>Extremely limited user</b>   | Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.                                                                                                             |
| 2 | <b>Intermittent user</b>        | 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 | <b>Non-user</b>                 | Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.                                                                                                                                              |
| 0 | <b>Did not attempt the test</b> | No assessable information provided.                                                                                                                                                                                               |

# Listening test

## Question types and tips



### Listening test format: 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 computer-delivered IELTS), this could appear as *"She is an active person"*.

## 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'.

### Question types continued

You will be penalised for writing more than the stated number of words, and you should check this word limit carefully for each task. Contracted words will not be tested. Hyphenated words count as single words.

#### How it works

This question type focuses on the main points that a listener would naturally hear in this type of situation.

### Sentence completion

In this question type, you are required to read a set of sentences summarising key information from all the listening text or from one part of it. You will then fill a gap in each sentence using information from the listening text. A word limit is given, for example, 'NO MORE THAN ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER'.

You will be penalised for writing more than the stated number of words. You should check this word limit carefully for each task: the limit is either ONE, TWO or THREE words. Contracted words will not be tested. Hyphenated words count as single words.

#### How it works

Sentence completion focuses on the ability to identify the key information in a listening text. You must understand functional relationships such as cause and effect.

### Short-answer questions

In this question type, you are required to read a question and then write a short answer using information from the listening text. A word limit is given, for example, 'NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER'. You will be penalised for writing more than the stated number of words. You should check this word limit carefully for each task. Contracted words will not be tested. Hyphenated words count as single words. Sometimes test takers are given a question that asks them to list two or three points.

#### How it works

Sentence completion focuses on the ability to listen for concrete facts, such as places, prices or times, within the listening text.

# Reading test

## Question types and tips



### 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.

**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 computer-delivered IELTS, 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 computer-delivered IELTS, 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.

## 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.

### 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.

## 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

## Question types and tips



### Writing test format: IELTS Academic, 60 minutes

There are two parts. Responses to Task 1 and Task 2 should be written in an academic, semi-formal or neutral 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 professional registration.

### 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.

## Question types

## 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

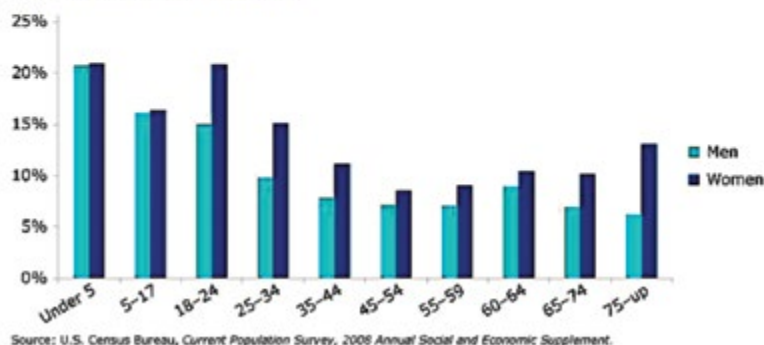
Generally, the charts, graphs and tables can either show comparisons of data at one moment in time or compare data over a fixed period of time.

### Showing comparisons of data at one moment in 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.*

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

Poverty rates 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).

**For more question types and advice on how to best organise your essays, see:**



[IELTSSessionals.com/prepare/preparation-course/writing](http://IELTSSessionals.com/prepare/preparation-course/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?*

## 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.*

*a) Does this trend have more advantages or more disadvantages?*

*b) 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.

## 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 it 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.

## 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 homeschool 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.

**For more question types and writing tips, visit:**



IELTSSessionals.com/prepare/  
preparation-course/writing

# Speaking test

## Tips and advice

The Speaking test is a short, face-to-face interview with an examiner that lasts between 11 and 14 minutes.

There are three parts to complete and they become progressively more challenging.



### 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.

#### Tips for doing well in Part 1:

- 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.

### Tips for doing well in Part 2:

- 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.”

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.

### Tips for doing well in Part 3:

- 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.

# Official support to help you succeed

**Our official practice tools are designed to help you achieve the score you need.**

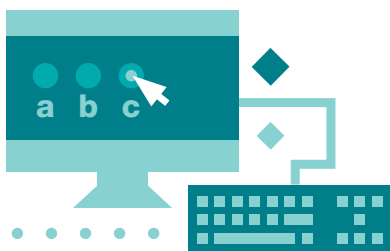
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|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>IELTS Progress Check</b>   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                              |                                          |                                                      |                              |                              |                                                                                   |
| Practice test                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The only official online practice test developed by IELTS</li> <li>Indicative band scores for every test section and an overall band score</li> <li>Marked by official IELTS markers</li> <li>Suitable for both computer-delivered and paper-based IELTS</li> <li>Personalised feedback in all assessment criteria for Writing and Speaking</li> </ul>  |                              | <br><br>Marked by official IELTS markers | <br><br>All assessment criteria for Writing/Speaking | <br><br>Marker's comments    |                              | Paid<br>Indicative price: \$65 AUD*                                               |
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# Test day tips to help you succeed

## Know what to expect to perform at your best.

Here is some handy advice to help you understand how a test day is run — 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 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 test 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: [results.ieltsessentials.com](https://results.ieltsessentials.com)

Your results will be available within:

- 5–7 days for computer-delivered IELTS
- 13 days for paper-based IELTS.

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.

# 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: **[ieltsessentials.com/results/about-ielts-scores](https://ieltsessentials.com/results/about-ielts-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:

- 5–7 days for computer-delivered IELTS
- 13 days for paper-based IELTS

Your results will remain online for 28 days at: [results.ieltsessentials.com](https://results.ieltsessentials.com)

Please note that this online preview should be used for guidance only. 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 [results.ieltsessentials.com](https://results.ieltsessentials.com) 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.

## 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.

IELTS Progress Check is an official practice test that gives you an indicative band score and personalised feedback on your performance.

You can also look in more detail at the marking criteria so that you know what you're aiming for. Our IELTS preparation planner (see page 5) provides a range of tips for improving your skills and boosting your score.

## 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.

## To find out more, visit:



[ieltsessentials.com/results/request-a-remark](https://ieltsessentials.com/results/request-a-remark)

# Appendix — Assessment criteria for each band score

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

| Writing assessment criteria — Task 1 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Band                                 | Task achievement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Coherence and cohesion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Lexical resource                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Grammatical range and accuracy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 9                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fully satisfies all the requirements of the task</li> <li>clearly presents a fully developed response</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention</li> <li>skilfully manages paragraphing</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                       |
| 8                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>covers all requirements of the task sufficiently</li> <li>presents, highlights and illustrates key features/bullet points clearly and appropriately</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sequences information and ideas logically</li> <li>manages all aspects of cohesion well</li> <li>uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately</li> </ul>                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings</li> <li>skilfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation</li> <li>produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of structures</li> <li>the majority of sentences are error-free</li> <li>makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies</li> </ul>                                                                                                                   |
| 7                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>covers the requirements of the task</li> <li>(A) presents a clear overview of main trends, differences or stages</li> <li>(GT) presents a clear purpose, with the tone consistent and appropriate</li> <li>clearly presents and highlights key features/bullet points but could be more fully extended</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout</li> <li>uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/ over-use</li> </ul>                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision</li> <li>uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation</li> <li>may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation</li> </ul>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a variety of complex structures</li> <li>produces frequent error-free sentences</li> <li>has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors</li> </ul>                                                                                               |
| 6                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses the requirements of the task</li> <li>(A) presents an overview with information appropriately selected</li> <li>(GT) presents a purpose that is generally clear; there may be inconsistencies in tone</li> <li>presents and adequately highlights key features/bullet points but details may be irrelevant, inappropriate or inaccurate</li> </ul>                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression</li> <li>uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical</li> <li>may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task</li> <li>attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy</li> <li>makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication</li> </ul>                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms</li> <li>makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication</li> </ul>                                                                                                                        |
| 5                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generally addresses the task; the format may be inappropriate in places</li> <li>(A) recounts detail mechanically with no clear overview; there may be no data to support the description</li> <li>(GT) may present a purpose for the letter that is unclear at times; the tone may be variable and sometimes inappropriate</li> <li>presents, but inadequately covers, key features/bullet points; there may be a tendency to focus on details</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression</li> <li>makes inadequate, inaccurate or over-use of cohesive devices</li> <li>may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution</li> </ul>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task</li> <li>may make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader</li> </ul>                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses only a limited range of structures</li> <li>attempts complex sentences but these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences</li> <li>may make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader</li> </ul> |
| 4                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attempts to address the task but does not cover all key features/bullet points; the format may be inappropriate</li> <li>(GT) fails to clearly explain the purpose of the letter; the tone may be inappropriate</li> <li>may confuse key features/bullet points with detail; parts may be unclear, irrelevant, repetitive or inaccurate</li> </ul>                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response</li> <li>uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive</li> </ul>                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses only basic vocabulary which may be used repetitively or which may be inappropriate for the task</li> <li>has limited control of word formation and/or spelling</li> <li>errors may cause strain for the reader</li> </ul>                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses</li> <li>some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty</li> </ul>                                                                              |
| 3                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fails to address the task, which may have been completely misunderstood</li> <li>presents limited ideas which may be largely irrelevant/repetitive</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not organise ideas logically</li> <li>may use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas</li> </ul>                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling</li> <li>errors may severely distort the message</li> </ul>                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attempts sentence forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>answer is barely related to the task</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has very little control of organisational features</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot use sentence forms except in memorised phrases</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>answer is completely unrelated to the task</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fails to communicate any message</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>can only use a few isolated words</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot use sentence forms at all</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 0                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not attend</li> <li>does not attempt the task in any way</li> <li>writes a totally memorised response</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

| Writing assessment criteria – Task 2 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Band                                 | Task response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Coherence and cohesion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Lexical resource                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Grammatical range and accuracy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 9                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fully addresses all parts of the task</li> <li>presents a fully developed position in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well supported ideas</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention</li> <li>skilfully manages paragraphing</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                  |
| 8                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sufficiently addresses all parts of the task</li> <li>presents a well-developed response to the question with relevant, extended and supported ideas</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sequences information and ideas logically</li> <li>manages all aspects of cohesion well</li> <li>uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings</li> <li>skilfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation</li> <li>produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of structures</li> <li>the majority of sentences are error-free</li> <li>makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies</li> </ul>                                                                                                              |
| 7                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses all parts of the task</li> <li>presents a clear position throughout the response</li> <li>presents, extends and supports main ideas, but there may be a tendency to over-generalise and/or supporting ideas may lack focus</li> </ul>                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout</li> <li>uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use</li> <li>presents a clear central topic within each paragraph</li> </ul>                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision</li> <li>uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation</li> <li>may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation</li> </ul>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a variety of complex structures</li> <li>produces frequent error-free sentences</li> <li>has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors</li> </ul>                                                                                          |
| 6                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses all parts of the task although some parts may be more fully covered than others</li> <li>presents a relevant position although the conclusions may become unclear or repetitive</li> <li>presents relevant main ideas but some may be inadequately developed/unclear</li> </ul>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression</li> <li>uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical</li> <li>may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately</li> <li>uses paragraphing, but not always logically</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task</li> <li>attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy</li> <li>makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication</li> </ul>                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms</li> <li>makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication</li> </ul>                                                                                                                   |
| 5                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses the task only partially; the format may be inappropriate in places</li> <li>expresses a position but the development is not always clear and there may be no conclusions drawn</li> <li>presents some main ideas but these are limited and not sufficiently developed; there may be irrelevant detail</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression</li> <li>makes inadequate, inaccurate or over-use of cohesive devices</li> <li>may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution</li> <li>may not write in paragraphs, or paragraphing may be inadequate</li> </ul>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task</li> <li>may make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader</li> </ul>                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses only a limited range of structures</li> <li>attempts complex sentences but these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences</li> <li>may make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause difficulty for the reader</li> </ul> |
| 4                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>responds to the task only in a minimal way or the answer is tangential; the format may be inappropriate</li> <li>presents a position but this is unclear</li> <li>presents some main ideas but these are difficult to identify and may be repetitive, irrelevant or not well supported</li> </ul>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response</li> <li>uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive</li> <li>may not write in paragraphs or their use may be confusing</li> </ul>                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses only basic vocabulary which may be used repetitively or which may be inappropriate for the task</li> <li>has limited control of word formation and/or spelling; errors may cause strain for the reader</li> </ul>                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses</li> <li>some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty</li> </ul>                                                                         |
| 3                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not adequately address any part of the task</li> <li>does not express a clear position</li> <li>presents few ideas, which are largely undeveloped or irrelevant</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not organise ideas logically</li> <li>may use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling</li> <li>errors may severely distort the message</li> </ul>                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attempts sentence forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                            |
| 2                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>barely responds to the task</li> <li>does not express a position</li> <li>may attempt to present one or two ideas but there is no development</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has very little control of organisational features</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot use sentence forms except in memorised phrases</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>answer is completely unrelated to the task</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fails to communicate any message</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>can only use a few isolated words</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot use sentence forms at all</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 0                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not attend</li> <li>does not attempt the task in any way</li> <li>writes a totally memorised response</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

# Notes

# Notes

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