

Cambridge IELTS 3

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Introduction

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is widely recognised as a reliable means of assessing whether candidates are ready to study or train in the medium of English. IELTS is owned by three partners, the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, the British Council and IDP Education Australia (through its subsidiary company IELTS Australia Pty Limited). The main purpose of this book of Practice Tests is to give future IELTS candidates an idea of whether their English is at the required level. Further information on IELTS can be found in the IELTS Handbook available free of charge from IELTS centres.

WHAT IS THE TEST FORMAT?

IELTS consists of six modules. All candidates take the same Listening and Speaking modules. There is a choice of Reading and Writing modules according to whether a candidate is taking the Academic or General Training version of the test.

Academic For candidates taking the test for entry to undergraduate or postgraduate studies or for professional reasons	General Training For candidates taking the test for entry to vocational or training programmes not at degree level, for admission to secondary schools and for immigration purposes
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The test modules are taken in the following order:

Listening 4 sections, 40 items 30 minutes		
Academic Reading 3 sections, 40 items 60 minutes	OR	General Training Reading 3 sections, 40 items 60 minutes
Academic Writing 2 tasks 60 minutes	OR	General Training Writing 2 tasks 60 minutes
Speaking 11 to 14 minutes		
Total test time 2 hours 44 minutes		

Introduction

Listening

This is in four sections, each with 10 questions. The first two sections are concerned with social needs. There is a conversation between two speakers and then a monologue. The final two sections are concerned with situations related to educational or training contexts. There is a conversation between up to four people and then a monologue.

A variety of question types is used, including: multiple choice, short-answer questions, sentence completion, notes/chart/table completion, labelling a diagram, classification, matching.

Candidates hear the recording once only and answer the questions as they listen. Ten minutes are allowed at the end to transfer answers to the answer sheet.

Academic Reading

There are three reading passages, of increasing difficulty, on topics of general interest and candidates have to answer 40 questions. The passages are taken from magazines, journals, books and newspapers. At least one text contains detailed logical argument.

A variety of question types is used, including: multiple choice, short-answer questions, sentence completion, notes/chart/table completion, labelling a diagram, classification, matching lists/phrases, choosing suitable paragraph headings from a list, identification of writer's views/attitudes - yes, no, not given, or true, false, not given.

General Training Reading

Candidates have to answer 40 questions. There are three sections of increasing difficulty, containing texts taken from notices, advertisements, leaflets, newspapers, instruction manuals, books and magazines. The first section contains texts relevant to basic linguistic survival in English, with tasks mainly concerned with providing factual information. The second section focuses on the training context and involves texts of more complex language. The third section involves reading more extended texts, with a more complex structure, but with the emphasis on descriptive and instructive rather than argumentative texts.

A variety of question types is used, including: multiple choice, short-answer questions, sentence completion, notes/chart/table completion, labelling a diagram, classification, matching lists/phrases, choosing suitable paragraph headings from a list, identification of writer's views/attitudes - yes, no, not given, or true, false, not given.

Academic Writing

There are two tasks and it is suggested that candidates spend about 20 minutes on Task 1, which requires them to write at least 150 words, and 40 minutes on Task 2-250 words. The assessment of Task 2 carries more weight in marking than Task 1.

In Task 1 candidates are asked to look at a diagram or table and to present the information in their own words. They are assessed on their ability to organise, present and possibly compare data, describe the stages of a process, describe an object or event, explain how something works.

In Task 2 candidates are presented with a point of view, argument or problem. They are assessed on their ability to present a solution to the problem, present and justify an opinion, compare and contrast evidence and opinions, evaluate and challenge ideas, evidence or arguments.

Candidates are also judged on their ability to write in an appropriate style.

General Training Writing

There are two tasks and it is suggested that candidates spend about 20 minutes on Task 1, which requires them to write at least 150 words, and 40 minutes on Task 2-250 words. The assessment of Task 2 carries more weight in marking than Task 1.

In Task 1 candidates are asked to respond to a given problem with a letter requesting information or explaining a situation. They are assessed on their ability to engage in personal correspondence, elicit and provide general factual information, express needs, wants, likes and dislikes, express opinions, complaints, etc.

In Task 2 candidates are presented with a point of view, argument or problem. They are assessed on their ability to provide general factual information, outline a problem and present a solution, present and justify an opinion, evaluate and challenge ideas, evidence or arguments.

Candidates are also judged on their ability to write in an appropriate style.

Speaking

The Speaking module takes between 11 and 14 minutes. It consists of an oral interview between the candidate and an examiner.

There are three main parts:

Part 1

The candidate and the examiner introduce themselves and then the candidate answers general questions about themselves, their home/family, their job/studies, their interests and a wide range of similar familiar topic areas. This part lasts between four and five minutes.

Part 2

The candidate is given a task card with prompts and is asked to talk on a particular topic. The candidate has one minute to prepare and they can make some notes if they wish, before speaking for between one and two minutes. The examiner then asks one or two rounding-off questions.

Part 3

The examiner and the candidate engage in a discussion of more abstract issues and concepts, which are thematically linked to the topic prompt in Part 2. The discussion lasts between four and five minutes.

The Speaking module assesses whether candidates can communicate effectively in English. The assessment takes into account Fluency and Coherence, Lexical Resource, Grammatical Range and Accuracy, and Pronunciation.

HOW IS IELTS SCORED?

IELTS results are reported on a nine-band scale. In addition to the score for overall language ability IELTS provides a score, in the form of a profile, for each of the four skills (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking). These scores are also reported on a nine-band scale. All scores are recorded on the Test Report Form along with details of the candidate's nationality, first language and date of birth. Each Overall Band Score corresponds to a descriptive statement which gives a summary of the English language ability of a candidate classified at that level. The nine bands and their descriptive statements are as follows:

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

Most universities and colleges in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Canada accept an IELTS Overall Band Score of 6.0 or 6.5 for entry to academic programmes. IELTS scores are increasingly being recognised by universities in the USA.

MARKING THE PRACTICE TESTS

Listening and Reading

The Answer key is on pages 149-158.

Each item in the Listening and Reading tests is worth one mark. There are no half marks. Put a tick (✓) next to each correct answer and a cross (✗) next to each wrong one. Each tick will equal one mark.

Single letter/number answers

- For questions where the answer is a single letter or number, you should write **only one** answer. If you have written more than one, the answer must be marked wrong.

Longer answers

- Only the answers given in the Answer key are correct. If you write something different to the answer given in the key, it should be marked wrong.
- Answers may be written in upper or lower case.
- Sometimes part of the correct answer is given in brackets. Words in brackets are optional - they are correct, but not necessary.
- Alternative words or phrases within an answer are indicated by a single slash (/).
- Sometimes there are alternative correct answers to a question. In these cases the possible answers are separated by a double slash (//). If you have written any one of these possible answers, your answer is correct.
- You will find additional notes about individual questions in the Answer key.

Spelling

- All answers require correct spelling unless alternative spellings are stated in the Answer key. If a word is spelt differently from the Answer key, it should be marked wrong.
- Both US and UK spelling are acceptable.

Writing

Obviously it is not possible for you to give yourself a mark for the Writing tasks. For Tests 2 and 3 and GT Test A we have provided *model answers* (written by an examiner) at the back of the book. It is important to note that these show just one way of completing the task, out of many possible approaches. For Tests 1 and 4 and GT Test B we have provided *sample answers* (written by candidates), showing their score and the examiner's comments. We hope that both of these will give you an insight into what is required for the Writing module.

HOW SHOULD YOU INTERPRET YOUR SCORES?

In the Answer key at the end of each set of Listening and Reading answers you will find a chart which will help you assess if, on the basis of your practice test results, you are ready to take the IELTS exam.

In interpreting your score, there are a number of points you should bear in mind.

Your performance in the real IELTS test will be reported in two ways: there will be a Band Score from 1 to 9 for each of the modules and an Overall Band Score from 1 to 9, which is the average of your scores in the four modules.

However, institutions considering your application are advised to look at both the Overall Band and the Bands for each module. They do this in order to see if you have the language skills needed for a particular course of study. For example, if your course has a lot of reading and writing, but no lectures, listening comprehension might be less important and a score of 5 in Listening might be acceptable if the Overall Band Score was 7. However, for a course where there are lots of lectures and spoken instructions, a score of 5 in Listening might be unacceptable even though the Overall Band Score was 7.

Once you have marked your papers you should have some idea of whether your Listening and Reading skills are good enough for you to try the real IELTS test. If you did well enough in one module but not in others, you will have to decide for yourself whether you are ready to take the proper test yet.

The Practice Tests have been checked so that they are about the same level of difficulty as the real IELTS test. However, we cannot guarantee that your score in the Practice Test papers will be reflected in the real IELTS test. The Practice Tests can only give you an idea of your possible future performance and it is ultimately up to you to make decisions based on your score.

Different institutions accept different IELTS scores for different types of courses. We have based our recommendations on the average scores which the majority of institutions accept. The institution to which you are applying may, of course, require a higher or lower score than most other institutions.

Sample answers or model answers are provided for the Writing tasks. The sample answers were written by IELTS candidates; each answer has been given a band score and the candidate's performance is described. Please note that the examiner's guidelines for marking the Writing scripts are very detailed. There are many different ways a candidate may achieve a particular band score. The model answers were written by an examiner as examples of very good answers, but it is important to understand that they are just one example out of many possible approaches.

Further information

For more information about IELTS or any other UCLES examination write to:

EFL Division
UCLES
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU
England

Telephone: +44 1223 553311
Fax: +44 1223 460278
e-mail: efl@ucles.org.uk
<http://www.cambridge-efl.org.uk>

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Test 1

LISTENING

SECTION 1 Questions 1-10

Complete the notes below.

Example	Answer
Name of agent:	Flagstone
Areas dealt with:	1 north suburbs
Rent:	from 2 £ to £ a month
Depends on:	the area availability of 3 garage
Properties available:	West Park Road rent 4 £ a month including 5 Tithe Road rent £380 a month including 6 rental
Viewing arrangements:	meet at office on 7 at 5.00 pm
Need:	letter from bank reference from 8
Must:	give 9 notice of moving in give deposit of 10 pay for contract

SECTION 2 *Questions 11-20*

Questions 11 and 12

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.

11 Who is Mrs Sutton worried about?

.....

12 What is the name for a group of family doctors working in the same building together?

.....

Questions 13-17

Complete the table below.

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

Name of Health Centre	Number of doctors	Other information	Information about doctors
Dean End	13.....	Appointment system 15..... than South Hay	Dr Jones is good with 16..... patients. Dr Shaw is good with small children.
South Hay	14.....	Building less modern than Dean End	Dr Williams helps people with 17.....

Test 1

Questions 18-20

Question 18

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS OR A NUMBER**.

Doctors start seeing patients at the Health Centre from.....o'clock.

Question 19

Choose **TWO** letters **A-E**.

Which **TWO** groups of patients receive free medication?

- A** people over 17 years old
- B** unemployed people
- C** non-UK residents
- D** people over 60 years old
- E** pregnant women

Question 20

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS OR A NUMBER**.

The charge for one item of medication is about £.....

