

## IELTS [International English Language testing system]

The test is organized by the University of Cambridge ESOL [English for speakers of other Languages] Examinations jointly with the British Council and IDP Australia as a standardized, global test designed to assess the candidate's proficiency in English. The test has, in a short span of time, gained recognition as a yard stick for evaluating the proficiency in English. The test is conducted all around the world. Regular tests are conducted in India at major cities. Details of the test and test dates for British council and IDP Australia can be looked up in

[www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)

[www.ieltsindia.com](http://www.ieltsindia.com)

The test is for 2 hrs and 45 minutes. It consists of four modules namely Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. There are two modules for the test - General Training module and Academic module. A candidate cannot pass or fail the IELTS examination. He/She will be given a band score between 0 and 9 for each of the 4 sub-tests. The overall band score is an average of the 4 sub-test band scores. The result of the test will be out in 13 days.

### Useful tips for the test

#### Listening

- Always remember to read the instructions carefully, don't just glance at them. They are not always the same as in practice or previous tests.
- Corrections are quite common in the test. So, beware of them. It's a common trick
- Try and predict at least the type of answers. This requires concentration.
- Try to get all the answers in the first two sections as they are the easiest. Don't make any careless mistakes in the easier sections.
- Practice a lot with the available materials and get accustomed to the different accents in English.
- Spelling mistakes and incomplete answers may lead to a very poor performance.
- Don't panic if you think the topic is too difficult or the speaker is too fast. Relax and tune in.
- Read, write and listen at the same time. Tricky, but, you can do it with practice.
- There is no negative marking in the test. So don't leave answers blank.

#### Reading

- Time management is most important. Wasting your time on a particular question or type of question may prove devastating.
- The passages are all for a non- specialized audience, so, you need not worry about the topic. The answers will surely be there in the passage.

- Remember, you have no extra time to transfer your answers. Many candidates think so because they have extra time in listening they are able to do this in reading too. You can't.
- You will have to read a lot of materials to improve your skill in reading. Concentrating on reading materials like newspapers, magazines etc would be useful.
- If you come across words you don't know guess the meaning based on the context.
- Always be aware of the word limit for the answer.
- Check if your answers are grammatically right.

## Writing

- Both the tasks should have a proper structure.
- Don't repeat ideas in a different way.
- Read the question at least two times to understand the question properly.
- Stick to the topic.
- Begin with the task 2 as it carries more marks and weightage.
- Organization in writing is important. Make sure that you explain only one point in a paragraph.
- Avoid informal language.
- Practice to understand how much you need to write to reach the required word limit. You don't really have time to count.
- Get used to always spending several minutes re-reading and correcting your essays.
- Don't memorize model answers, they won't fit the question and you will make careless mistakes.
- Avoid use of abbreviations of any sort in your writing. For example: &, i.e., %age, etc, and so on.

## Speaking

- It tests your ability to communicate effectively and not just your grammatical accuracy.
- Don't learn chunks of answers. The examiner is trained to spot this and will change the question.
- Develop your answers as much as possible.
- Speak more than the examiner.
- Ask for clarification if necessary.
- Remember it is not a test of knowledge and there is no single correct answer, but ensure that you give your opinion. Don't worry if you feel it is not sophisticated enough.
- The areas covered are fairly predictable and not infinite, so practise at home, recording ideas onto a tape recorder.
- Your performance in Part 2 and Part 3 counts a lot in determining your score.

## Some Frequently Asked Questions on IELTS

1. Who owns the IELTS?  
The IELTS is jointly owned by the British Council, IDP Australia and the Cambridge University ESOL Examinations.
2. Is the IELTS test more difficult than other English Tests?  
The IELTS test is surely a challenging test but, is not any more difficult than other English Tests.
3. Can I write the general or academic module of the test?  
It depends on the purpose of taking the IELTS. The General Training module is for diploma level courses and immigration purposes. The module is actually determined by the purpose or choices you make about the future.
4. Are scores at some centers better than others?  
No, there is a standardization of the marking scheme that ensures the same standard throughout the centers.
5. How many times can I take the test?  
There is actually no restriction on the number of times you can take the test but, it is advisable to always take proper training before you appear.
6. Can I study and appear for the test by myself?  
If you are good at English, you can surely write the test. However, it is advisable to get trained on the different aspects of the tests from a reputed training institute.
7. To get a Good result should I do a number of practice tests?  
Not really, to achieve a good score you must have a reasonable idea of the strategies that can be used for the test. Practice tests only help in understanding the strategies.
8. Is the listening test the most difficult sub test?  
In reality, all the sub tests are of equal difficulty. A feeling that a particular test is difficult clearly indicates the need for more practice.
9. How long is the IELTS report valid?  
The IELTS report is valid for a period of two years from the date of the exam.
10. Can I choose to take a computerized version of the IELTS test?  
Yes, you can choose between writing the paper based test or the computer test but this version is not available at all centers. In India, the computer version of the IELTS is available only in Delhi.
11. Can I do rough work on the question paper?  
Yes, you can. However, you will not be able to take the question paper out of the examination hall. Only the answers on your answer sheet will be looked at by the examiner.
12. Do the listening tests get progressively difficult?  
Yes, this is true for the listening and reading tests. As you proceed with the test you will find it getting more and more difficult. The section 4 in listening and 3rd passage in the reading tests are the most difficult parts of the sub tests.
13. How soon can I get the results?  
The test results are available two weeks from the date of the test. The results are not available sooner than that.

1. How accurate is the test?  
The present IELTS test is put through an exhaustive and carefully analyzed trialing process which ensures accurate results.
2. How soon can I appear a second time for the test?  
You can retake the test on the very next available test day. The earlier waiting period of 90 days has been removed.
3. What can I do if I am un-happy with my results?  
You can apply for your test to be re-marked within four weeks of receiving your results. There is a fee for this which is refunded should your band score change.
4. What can I bring into the examination room?  
Only your ID, PENCILS, and ERASER. Correction fluid must not be used. You must leave anything which you do not need, or which is not allowed, either outside the examination room, or as instructed by the supervisor. Mobile phones and pagers must be switched off and placed with personal belongings in the area designated by the supervisor. Any candidate who does not switch off their phone/pager, or who retains one in their possession, will be disqualified.
5. What should I bring for the Speaking test?  
You need to bring the same identification documents you supplied on registration, as these must be checked again against the information on the application form. These documents will be checked by the administrator and the Speaking Examiner prior to you entering the interview room.
6. Can I complete the Listening and Reading answer sheets in pen?  
No. The answer sheets are scanned by a computer which cannot read pen. You will strictly have to use the pencil.
7. What happens if I lose my Test Report form?  
At any time within two years of the date of the examination, you can apply to the centre which administered the test to send 5 copies of the original Test Report Form free of charge. These Test Report Forms will not be sent to you, but will go directly to the university, Embassy or Consulate that require them. For any further copies, there is an administration charge, which has to be borne by the candidate.

Details of the latest IELTS score requirements of different professionals is available at the link below

<http://bandscore.ielts.org/>