

IELTS TEST ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING

The Total Test Duration is 2 Hours and 45 Minutes

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ACADEMIC AND GENERAL TEST FORMAT

The IELTS test assesses your abilities in listening, reading, writing and speaking – in less than three hours.

There are two types of IELTS: Academic and General Training.

Listening and Speaking are the same for both tests, but the subject matter of the Reading and Writing sections differs depending on which test you take.

The Listening, Reading and Writing sections of all IELTS tests are completed on the same day, with no breaks in between them.

The Speaking section, however, can be completed up to a week before or after the other tests. Your test centre will advise.

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Test format - Speaking [11-14 minutes]

The speaking section assesses your use of spoken English. Every test is recorded.

Part 1 - the examiner will ask you general questions about yourself and a range of familiar topics, such as home, family, work, studies and interests. This part lasts between four and five minutes.

Part 2 - you will be given a card which asks you to talk about a particular topic. You will have one minute to prepare before speaking for up to two minutes. The examiner will then ask one or two questions on the same topic.

Part 3 - you will be asked further questions about the topic in Part 2. These will give you the opportunity to discuss more abstract ideas and issues. This part of the test lasts between four and five minutes.

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Test format - Listening [30 minutes]

You will listen to four recordings of native English speakers and then write your answers to a series of questions.

- **Recording 1:** A conversation between two people set in an everyday social context.
- **Recording 2:** A monologue set in an everyday social context, e.g. a speech about local facilities.
- **Recording 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.
- **Recording 4:** A monologue on an academic subject, e.g. a university lecture.

Assessors will be looking for evidence of your ability to understand the main ideas and detailed factual information, the opinions and attitudes of speakers, the purpose of an utterance and evidence of your ability to follow the development of ideas.

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Test format - Reading [60 minutes]

The Reading section consists of 40 questions, designed to test a wide range of reading skills. These include reading for gist, reading for main ideas, reading for detail, skimming, understanding logical argument and recognising writers' opinions, attitudes and purpose.

IELTS Academic test - this includes three long texts which range from the descriptive and factual to the discursive and analytical. These are taken from books, journals, magazines and newspapers. They have been selected for a non-specialist audience but are appropriate for people entering university courses or seeking professional registration.

IELTS General Training test - this includes extracts from books, magazines, newspapers, notices, advertisements, company handbooks and guidelines. These are materials you are likely to encounter on a daily basis in an English-speaking environment.

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Test format - Academic Writing [60 minutes]

Topics are of general interest to, and suitable for, test takers entering undergraduate and postgraduate studies or seeking professional registration. There are two tasks:

Task 1 - you will be presented with a graph, table, chart or diagram and asked to describe, summarise or explain the information in your own words. You may be asked to describe and explain data, describe the stages of a process, how something works or describe an object or event.

Task 2 - you will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. Responses to both tasks must be in a formal style.

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Test format - General Writing [60 minutes]

Topics are of general interest. There are two tasks:

Task 1 - you will be presented with a situation and 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 will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. The essay can be fairly personal in style.

Source: www.ielts.org