

**shreehari**<sup>TM</sup>

*Always Fly High*

# 1. Introduction to the IELTS Exam

## 1.1 Introduction to the IELTS Exam

In 1980, Cambridge English Language Assessment and the British Council STARTED a joint venture to take a test that can measure the proficiency in English language. It was called UCLES back then, which is an abbreviated form of the University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate. Initially, they faced many problems in managing and conducting the test. There was a pressing need for international participation for redesigning the test and IDP- the International Development program of Australian colleges and Universities joined hands with Cambridge English Language Assessment and the British Council. This venture became IELTS in 1989. Since then IELTS has gone through 3 major design revisions in 1995, 2001, and 2005 to become what it is today.

## 1.2 Who conducts IELTS test?

IELTS is an international test of English language proficiency for non-native English language speakers. This test is jointly managed by **the British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and Cambridge Assessment English.**

**The British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia:** These two international organisations are the exam conducting bodies. All tests which is conducted by the British Council and IDP are compiled by Cambridge English Language Assessment.

**Cambridge Assessment English:** Cambridge Assessment English, or University of Cambridge English Language Assessment, is a non-teaching department of the University of Cambridge.

Cambridge Assessment English is the producer of IELTS. The organisation produces **IELTS resources and materials** to help learners prepare and practice for their tests.

## 1.3 IELTS Test Format

The IELTS test assesses your abilities in Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. There are two modules of the IELTS test: **Academic and General Training**.

Listening and speaking are the same for both the modules. But the formats of the Reading and Writing section of both the tests are different.

The Listening, Reading, and Writing section is taken on the same day, with no break. The Speaking test, however, is one week before the test date or after the test date.

LRW (Listening, Reading, and Writing) is of 2 hours and 45 minutes.

Speaking test lasts for 11-14 minutes.

# Listening:

<b>Timing</b>	<p>Audio of maximum <b>30 minutes</b> is played + transfer time of 10 minutes is given.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Test takers write their answers on the question paper as they listen, and at the end of the test are given 10 minutes to transfer their answers to an answer sheet. Care should be taken when writing answers on the answer sheet, as poor spelling and grammar are penalised.</p>
<b>Format</b>	<p><b>The first two parts deal with situations set in everyday social contexts</b></p> <p><b>Part 1:</b> there is a conversation between two speakers (for example, a conversation about travel arrangements)</p> <p><b>Part 2:</b> there is a monologue (for example, a speech about local facilities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The final two parts deal with situations set in educational and training contexts.</li></ul> <p><b>Part 3:</b> there is a conversation between two key speakers (for example, two university students in discussion, perhaps guided by a tutor)</p> <p><b>Part 4:</b> there is a monologue on an academic subject</p>
<b>Number of questions</b>	40 questions
<b>Types of questions</b>	Fill in the blanks, maps/ plan/ diagram labelling, multiple-choice questions, matching form/note/table/flow-chart/summary completion, sentence completion.
<b>Scores</b>	Each correct answer is worth 1 mark.

# Reading:

The Reading section is for testing the ability of reading for gist, reading for key ideas, reading for detail, skimming, understanding logical argument and recognising writers' opinions, attitudes and purpose.

## **IELTS Academic test: Reading**

There are three long passages taken from journals, magazines, and books. The passages taken in this test are meant for those who want to go abroad for higher studies.

<b>Timing</b>	<b>60 minutes</b> <b>Note:</b> Test takers are required to transfer their answers to an answer sheet during the time allowed for the test. No extra time is allowed for transfer. Care should be taken when writing answers on the answer sheet, as poor spelling and grammar are penalized.
<b>Format</b>	Three reading passages with a variety of questions using several task types.
<b>Number of questions</b>	40 questions
<b>Types of questions</b>	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, flow-chart completion, diagram label completion and short-answer questions.
<b>Scores</b>	Each correct answer is worth 1 mark.

# IELTS General Training test: Reading

There are three sections taken from books, magazines, newspapers, notices, advertisements, company handbooks, and guidelines. These are materials you are likely to encounter daily in an English-speaking environment.

<b>Timing</b>	<b>60 minutes</b> <b>Note:</b> Test takers are required to transfer their answers to an answer sheet during the time allowed for the test. No extra time is allowed for transfer. Care should be taken when writing answers on the answer sheet, as poor spelling and grammar are penalised.
<b>Format</b>	There are three sections. Section 1 may contain two or three brief texts or several shorter texts. Section 2 comprises two texts. In Section 3, there is one long text.
<b>Number of questions</b>	40 questions
<b>Types of questions</b>	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, flow-chart completion, diagram label completion and short-answer questions.
<b>Scores</b>	Each correct answer is worth 1 mark.

# Writing:

This module of IELTS is divided into 2 parts: Task 1 and Task 2. In this section a candidate's ability of addressing the task appropriately by using a wide range of vocabulary and grammar is assessed.

Writing task of the Academic module differs from that of the General's writing task.

<b>Timing</b>	<b>60 minutes</b> <b>Note:</b> Test takers are required to write their tasks on the answer sheets during the time allowed for the test. Responses to both tasks must be in a formal style.
<b>Format</b>	<b>Task -1:</b> Candidates will be given some visual information that will have to be described in at least 150 words in about 20 minutes. <b>Task -2 -</b> Candidates respond to a point of view or argument or problem in at least 250 words in about 40 minutes.
<b>Number of questions</b>	2 questions
<b>Types of questions</b>	<b>Task -1</b> graph, table, chart or diagram <b>Task -2-</b> you will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem.
<b>Scores</b>	Responses are assessed by certified IELTS examiners. The points for Task 2 are twice that of Task1's points.

## General Training writing:

<b>Timing</b>	<b>60 minutes</b> <b>Note:</b> Test takers are required to write their tasks in the answer sheets during the time allowed for the test. Responses to task-2 must be in a formal style. While task 2's response could be formal, semi-formal, or informal, it depends on what kind of question is asked.
<b>Format</b>	<b>Task -1:</b> test takers are asked to respond to a situation by writing in at least 50 words in about 20 minutes. <b>Task -2</b> - Candidates respond to a point of view or argument or problem in at least 250 words in about 40 minutes.
<b>Number of questions</b>	2 questions
<b>Types of questions</b>	<b>Task -1-</b> a letter requesting information or explaining a situation. <b>Task -2-</b> you will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem.
<b>Scores</b>	Responses are assessed by certified IELTS examiners. The points for Task 2 are twice that of Task1's points.

# Writing:

This module of IELTS is divided into 3 parts. In this test candidates spoken English is assessed. And every test is recorded.

<b>Timing</b>	<b>11-14 minutes</b>
<b>Format/ Timing</b>	<p><b>Part-1-</b> In part one the examiner introduces him/herself and asks the candidate general questions on some familiar topics, such as work, hobbies, religion, hometown, and music. This part lasts for 4-5 minutes.</p> <p><b>Part-2 -</b> In this part the candidate is given a card in which there is a topic along with three sub-points to speak on. The candidate is given 1 minute to think and make points if he/she wishes to, and then 2 minutes are given to speak on the topic.</p> <p><b>Part-3-</b> In this last part of the speaking test, the examiner discusses the cue card topic by asking some questions which a candidate should spoke elaborately. This part lasts for 4 to 5 minutes.</p>
<b>Number of questions</b>	Variable
<b>Scores</b>	Speaking performances are assessed by certified IELTS examiners.

# 1.4 How Hard is the IELTS?

IELTS is not that difficult as people perceive it to be. It's like any other. The questions are straightforward and are meant to assess how well you can use your English. None of the questions is meant for tricking or testing a candidate's opinions. Also, remember that there is no pass or fail in IELTS. The results are reported on a 9-band scale (1 being the lowest, 9 being the highest). This scale has remained consistent for over 20 years. The score you need is determined by the requirements of your visa or the institution/organisation to which you are applying. Always remember to check what score you need before you take the test.

IELTS test assesses the following abilities of a candidate:

- Candidate's ability to understand a speaker's attitude and opinion.
- Candidate's ability to understand specific points or an overall understanding of the key points of the text.
- Candidate's ability to communicate in English using complex and abstract ideas.

IELTS test is not tough if a candidate is well-prepared. Candidate should be familiar with the topics that could be asked or expected in the test. Unfamiliarity with the format of the IELTS makes it difficult.

## 2. SCORING:

### 2.1 WHAT IS A BAND SCORE?

IELTS scores are reported as band scores on a scale from 1 (the lowest) to 9 (the highest). You will be given a band score from 1 to 9 for each section of the test. – Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. You will also be given an overall band score - which is the average of your four individual test section band scores.

### 2.2 IELTS 9-BAND SCALE:

<b>9</b>	<b>Expert user</b>	Have fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
<b>8</b>	<b>Very good User</b>	Have fully operational command of the language with only Occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriate. Misunderstandings may occur. In unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed arguments well.
<b>7</b>	<b>Good User</b>	Have operational command of the language, though with occasional Inaccuracies, inappropriate, and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally, handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
<b>6</b>	<b>Competent User</b>	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacy and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations
<b>5</b>	<b>Modest User</b>	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.

<b>4</b>	<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.
<b>3</b>	<b>Extremely Limited User</b>	Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
<b>2</b>	<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.
<b>1</b>	<b>Non User</b>	Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.
<b>0</b>	<b>Did Not Attempt The Test</b>	No assessable information provided.

## 2.3 How are the scores calculated?

All the scores of the test are between 0 to 9. The scores are calculated by averaging out the scores of the above mentioned four sections. The scores can be .5 as well as 6.5 or 7.5. In the case of decimal figures other than 5 or 0, the score is rounded up or down to the nearest 0.5. For instance, 6.1 will be rounded down to 6 or 7.75 will be rounded up to 8.

Each score has been given a unique description and is associated with a skill level. For example, '9' denotes an expert user whereas '0' denotes no attempt. Scores from 9 to 6 depicts that one understands the basics of the language, whereas 5 to 0 depicts that one has limited or no knowledge about the language.

## 2.4 Scoring in different sections

In Reading and Listening sections, with 40 questions each, one can score a maximum of 40 marks in each section. The marks awarded are called raw scores which are converted to the band score as per the makers of IELTS give the directions. For Speaking and Writing sections, different band descriptions have been provided. The average score of these descriptions will be the score in these sections. Fluency and coherence, Lexical resource, Grammar, Pronunciation are the parameters for Speaking whereas Task achievement, Cohesion along with Grammar and Lexical resource are the band descriptions for Writing.

## 2.5 What is a Good IELTS Score?

A good academic score is required for admission to different foreign universities. Now, the question of what is defined as “good” arises. Well, it differs from country to country and university to university. If you are considering studying abroad or pursuing opportunities in Canada or other countries, then you need a minimum overall score of 6.5, with a minimum score of 6.0 in each category for the Academic test. Minimum accepted scores vary depending on the country and institution requirements.

## 3. Test Results

### 3.1 The test report form (TRF)

It is the physical copy of your IELTS exam score card. You should keep it safe as getting a copy of your TRF is really cumbersome. This score card includes your band scores in each module and your overall band score. Your IELTS score will be valid for two years. Your TRF will be sent to your mailing address after the declaration of your result online.

### 3.2 Preview your result online

You can preview your results online 13 days after your test. Your result will be available online for viewing for 28 days. You will need your passport or id number and your candidate number.

### 3.3 Result Validity Period

Your result will be valid for 2 years from the date of your examination.

### 3.4 Re-checking IELTS

If you are not happy with your result, you can apply for a review of your score(s) through a service called Enquiry on Results (EOR).

Test papers are re-marked by senior Examiners/Markers, who are not aware of the original marks awarded for each of the test sections. Your test centre is then notified of the re-mark result and if the mark has changed, they issue a new Test Report Form (TRF).

This request has to be made within the six weeks of the date shown on your TRF at your test centre. You may ask to re-mark the whole test or any sections of it. Your result will be available in 2 to 21 days.

## 3.5 Re – Testing IELTS

You can give IELTS as many times as you wish as there is no upper limit on number of times

**you can give IELTS.**

Study hard, Be confident.  
Do your best...

### The TOP 3 IELTS general tips you can't miss!

#### **#1 Know the format**

Having a familiarity with the types of questions you'll get on test day will save you the time of figuring out "what is being asked of you" for each task.

#### **#2 Timed Practice**

Whether preparing for writing or speaking, reading or listening, practice with a TIMER! The time restrictions within the exam is often what trips up test takers! Adding this pressure will make you comfortable with responding to questions in a timely manner.

#### **#3 Strengthen your language skills**

Grammar, spelling and vocabulary. Make sure you use the correct articles, and be careful you don't record a noun as singular if it was supposed to be plural! These seemingly "little" mistakes can cost you your desired score!

## Head Office

A-403, Shivalik Yash, Opp. Shastrinagar BRTS,  
Naranpura, Ahmedabad 380013. Gujarat. India

---

## Branch Offices

415, Town Plaza, Nr. Raspan Arcade, Bhakti Circle Road, Nikol,  
Ahmedabad 382350

---

234, Shukan Avenue, Opp. Sindbad Hotel, Kalol-Mehsana Highway,  
Kalol 382721

---

401-417, E-Block, Joyos Hubtown, Nr. Modhera Cross Roads,  
Mehsana 384002

---

205, Surbhai Mall, Above Domino's Pizza, Waghawadi Road,  
Bhavanagar 364002

---

## For General Inquiry

Contact: +91 79 2744 4444, +91 9574008581 | Email: [info@shreehari.in](mailto:info@shreehari.in)

---

## For International Relations

Contact: +91 957 444 8582 | Email: [intl.relations@shreehari.in](mailto:intl.relations@shreehari.in)

---