

# Understanding the IELTS test format

## The test for study, work and life

You will take the Listening, Reading and Writing sections in this specific order on the same day.

The Speaking component may be taken on the same day or within 7 days of the other components, depending on local arrangements.

## Choose the right test



### IELTS Academic test

The IELTS Academic test is for test takers wishing to undertake **academic study at the undergraduate or postgraduate level** in an English-speaking country.



### IELTS General Training test

The IELTS General Training test is for test takers wishing to **study at below degree level, work or emigrate** to an English-speaking country.



30  
minutes

LISTENING



There are four parts with related questions.



A range of native-speaker accents is used. All standard varieties of English are accepted as responses in all parts of the test.



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LISTENING

READING



Three long sections with tasks.



Texts ranging from the descriptive and factual to the discursive and analytical.



Text might include non-verbal material such as diagrams, graphs or illustrations.



Texts are authentic and are sourced from books, journals and newspapers.



Three sections with tasks:

- Section 1: Two or three factual texts
- Section 2: Two short, work-related factual texts
- Section 3: One longer text on a topic of general interest



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READING

WRITING



There are two tasks:  
Task 1 – summarise, describe or explain a table, graph, chart or diagram in 150 words.



Task 2 – short essay task of at least 250 words.



There are two tasks:  
Task 1 – letter writing task of at least 150 words.



Task 2 – short essay task of at least 250 words.

WRITING

SPEAKING



There are three parts:  
Short questions, speaking at length about a familiar topic, and a structured discussion.



The Speaking test is a face-to-face conversation with a real person making similar to a real-life situation.



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SPEAKING

60  
minutes

60  
minutes

11–14  
minutes

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