

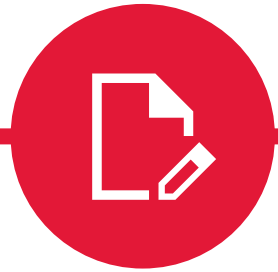
UECA Language Testing Forum

By Brian Smith and Reza Tasviri

18th November 2023



What is IELTS?



IELTS is the International English Language Testing System



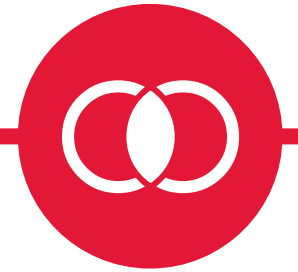
A test of all four language skills (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking)



A test of international English



High stakes English language assessment for people who intend to study or work where English is the language of communication



Jointly owned by IDP: IELTS Australia, British Council and Cambridge Assessment English

What is IELTS?



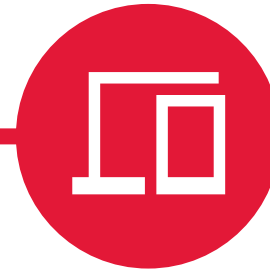
Face-to-face speaking test



35 test venues across Australia, >1,500 globally



Biometric security and integrity features



Test taken on paper, computer or online



Trusted and accepted by more governments around the world for migration purposes

Test Delivery

At a test centre




- ✓ IELTS on paper
- ✓ IELTS on computer

At home

- ✓ IELTS Online

- A test of all four language skills (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking)
- Marked by certified IELTS examiners
- Face-to-face speaking test (in person or via video conferencing)
- Same test timing, construction, marking criteria and 9-band scale
- Online verification or electronic delivery of results
- Accommodations available on request
- Enquiry on results

Overview of IELTS tests

Feature	 Remote IELTS Online (taken at home or a suitable location)	 In centre IELTS on computer (taken in-centre)	 In centre IELTS on paper (taken in-centre)
Covers all 4 English skills: Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking	✓	✓	✓
Face-to-face Speaking test with an IELTS Examiner	✓ Online	✓	✓
Compatible with IELTS Academic test	✓	✓	✓
Compatible with IELTS General Training test	✗	✓	✓
Available for UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration) and other migration purposes	✗	✓	✓
Returns results within 3–6 days	✓	✓	✗ 13 days after the test
Safeguards results with multi-layered test security	✓	✓	✓
Globally accepted	✓ Not for migration	✓	✓
Includes a Test Report Form for test takers	✓ Electronic	✓	✓
Results Verification Service	✓	✓	✓
Listening and Reading tests marked electronically	✓	✓	✓
Writing and Speaking tests marked by official IELTS Examiners	✓	✓	✓
Globally available	✓ With a staggered launch	✓	✓
Can be taken anywhere	✓ Private room with reliable internet connection	✗ Must be taken in-centre	✗ Must be taken in-centre

Key features of IELTS Online



Remote Proctoring

- IELTS managed
- Hybrid of human and AI proctoring
- Ability to perform test taker ID checks



Video-Call Speaking

- IELTS owned platform
- Live online face-to-face Speaking test with an IELTS Examiner
- ID checks



Electronic Results

- Test taker will receive electronic Test Report Form, not paper
- Electronic distribution of results within 3–6 days
- Results organisations verify online
- Same results verification system



Test Sessions

- A wide range of scheduled start times
- Initially session based
- Greater flexibility – more choice



Customer Support Model

- Centralised 24/7 pre-test, post-test hubs
- Proctors/Examiners
- Online chat tech support

What is One Skill Retake?

One Skill Retake

Test takers allowed to retake one component of the test once

No later than 60 days after their original test

Updated test report form will indicate original test report form number

Launching in Australia in November 2022

Why scores vary

Research shows that test day results can vary from test to test for the same skill.

Things like how a test taker feels on a particular day, varying motivation levels or familiarity with the topic of the question amongst other reasons¹

Why 60 days?

The service allows a test taker to resit a single component of the test if they believe that they did not perform to the best of their ability.

Test takers will only be able to resit a single component one time, and it must be within 60 days of their original test.

To ensure that it is used for the purposes intended and that there is no impact on test validity.^{2,3,4}

1. https://www.ielts.org/-/media/research-reports/ielts_rr_volume10_report3.ashx
2. <https://www.ielts.org/for-researchers/research-reports/volume-04-report-6>
3. [ielts-rr_2021-1_kang-et-al.ashx](https://www.ielts.org/for-researchers/research-reports/volume-04-report-6)
4. [EAP study recommendations and score gains on the IELTS Academic Writing test - ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0278612521000000)

Test Format

Academic



Listening

30 minutes | 4 sections | 40 questions

Reading

60 minutes | 3 sections | 40 questions

Writing

60 minutes | 2 tasks

Speaking

11 - 14 minutes | 3 parts

General Training



Listening

30 minutes | 4 sections | 40 questions

Reading

60 minutes | 3 sections | 40 questions

Writing

60 minutes | 2 tasks

Speaking

11 - 14 minutes | 3 parts

Total test time



2 hours 44 minutes

The construct: What we assess

Listening

- Complex combination of bottom-up and top-down processing which is contextualised by a specific situation, purpose and audience.
- Use of authentic real world listening events.



- The coverage of a range of language skills and listening abilities, which contributes to the overall construct validity and thus fairness of the IELTS test.
- A gradation across each version of the IELTS Listening test in terms of length, complexity, level of abstractness, register, and mode of expression as well as levels of cognitive processing.
- More concrete information through simpler language and require more localised processing.
- Comprehension of concrete and abstract information through a wider range of linguistic expression and longer stretches of discourse.

The construct: What we assess

Reading

- A wide range of task and text types to ensures the coverage of a range of language skills and reading abilities, which contributes to the overall construct validity and thus fairness of the IELTS test.
- In line with theoretical and empirical understanding of the process of reading, features of the construct gradually change across a test version.



- Start with understanding of important information presented in sentence-level propositions.
- The location of specific information.
- Careful comprehension of main points in a short text.
- Organisation and purpose of a text.
- Distinguishing major from minor ideas and essential from non-essential information.
- Conceptualising and organising text information into a mental framework.
- Combining information across texts and understanding rhetorical functions such as cause-effect relationships, comparisons and contrasts, classification relationships and persuasive intent.

The construct: What we assess

Speaking

- IELTS views speaking as situated social practice which involves interaction with others.
- Not only a cognitive but also a socio-cognitive activity.
- The use of a multi part Speaking test format allows for different patterns of spoken interaction, i.e. question and answer uninterrupted monologue and two-way discussion



Academic

Speaking

11-14 minutes | 3 parts

Part 1:

Questions about you (4 - 5 mins)

Part 2:

Talking about a topic for up to 2 minutes (3 - 4 mins)

Part 3:

General discussion, linked to Part 2 (4 - 5 mins)

The construct: What we assess

Writing

- a contextualised phenomenon and fundamentally a communicative act.
- the writer-reader roles, the purpose and task type



- The ability to transfer information in a logical way.
- The ability to put forth a stance and elaborate on ideas.
- The ability to operationalize textual competence, and organize and link ideas logically.
- The ability to use language flexibly and accurately.

Test Security



Pre-test

- Unique test versions
- Secure test paper delivery/ download/ auto-generation
- Global policies in place to ensure consistent delivery
- Test taker screening
 - valid ID documents
 - screening for banned test takers



Test Day

- Secure environment
 - In-centre: storage of all belongings
 - Online: unique password, lockdown browser
- Invigilators / human and AI proctoring
- ID check process



Post-Test

- Processing of results/ pre-release checks/withheld -remarked results
- Global marking policy and quality control systems
- Systems for delivery and verification of results
- Online: additional plagiarism check

Remote Proctoring Features and Benefits

- As tests are done outside of the test centre environment invigilation is instead done via remote proctors.
- A technology platform is used to combine both human invigilation and the use of artificial intelligence to flag unusual behaviours or events during the test.
- A human can later review the results to determine if the behaviour or event constitutes test malpractice.
- A secure browser ensures Test Takers cannot access google or other tools to help them answer the questions.
- Finally, a plagiarism detector is applied to the outputs of the writing test to ensure Test Takers are not copying from other texts. The tools and technologies together with processes ensure test integrity.



Remote Proctoring allows
Invigilation to be done
Remotely from the test
taker



Enables remote Identity
verification



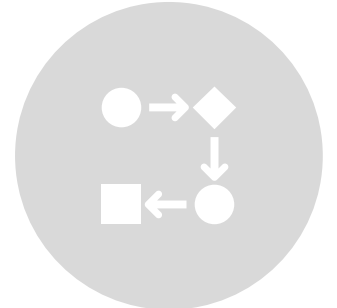
Hybrid model that uses
AI & Live human proctors



Secure Browser to prevent
Access to other applications



Plagiarism check to ensure
Academic Integrity



Procedures to ensure
security, privacy and data
protection and deter
content harvesting

Test Report Form

IELTS on paper and IELTS on computer

IELTS™
Test Report Form


ACADEMIC

NOTE: Admission to undergraduate and post graduate courses should be based on the ACADEMIC Reading and Writing Modules. GENERAL TRAINING Reading and Writing Modules are not designed to test the full range of language skills required for academic purposes. It is recommended that the candidate's language ability as indicated in this Test Report Form be re-assessed after two years from the date of the test.

Centre Number: GBS02 Date: 12/FEB/2015 Candidate Number: 000119

Candidate Details

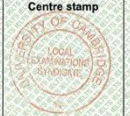
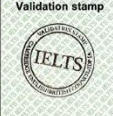
Family Name: CANDIDATE
 First Name: IELTS UKVI
 Candidate ID: KID0003020184
 UKVI Number: IEL/12022015/GBS02/000119




Date of Birth: 22/10/1978 Sex (M/F): M Scheme Code: Private Candidate
 Country or Region of Origin:
 Country of Nationality: ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
 First Language: ENGLISH

Test Results

Listening	1.0	Reading	1.0	Writing	1.0	Speaking	1.0	Overall Band Score	1.0	CEFR Level	Below B1
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Administrator Comments:
 Centre stamp:  Validation stamp: 

Administrator's Signature:  Date: 02/04/2015 Test Report Form Number: 14GB000119CANIS02A

BRITISH COUNCIL idp CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH Language Assessment
Part of the University of Cambridge

The validity of this IELTS Test Report Form can be verified online by recognising organisations at <http://ielts.ucies.org.uk>

IELTS Online

IELTS™
Test Report Form

IELTS Online
ACADEMIC

NOTE: It is recommended that the candidate's language ability as indicated in this Test Report Form be re-assessed after two years from the date of the test. To find out more about IELTS Online, IELTS band scores and the CEFR levels, please visit ielts.org/scores

Centre Number: GBS02 Date: 12/FEB/2021 Candidate Number: 000116

Candidate Details

Family Name: CANDIDATE
 First Name(s): IELTS
 Candidate ID: HID0023667770



Date of Birth: 02/04/1989 Sex (M/F): M Scheme Code: Private Candidate
 Country or Region of Origin:
 Country of Nationality: SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE
 First Language: SOMALI

Test Results

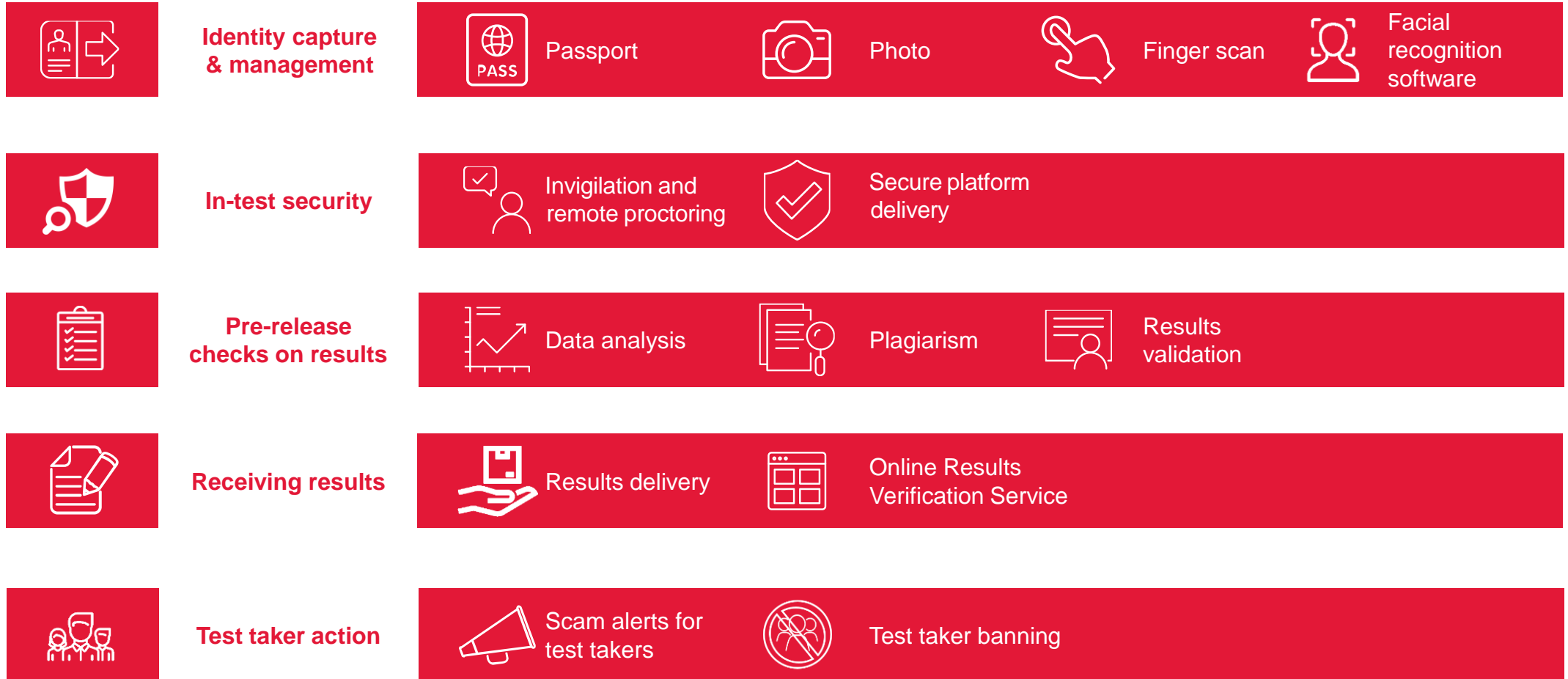
Listening	9.0	Reading	9.0	Writing	9.0	Speaking	9.0	Overall Band Score	9.0	CEFR Level	9.0
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Administrator Comments:
 Recognising organisations must verify this score at ielts.org/verify Validation stamp: 

Date: 02/04/2021 Test Report Form Number: 14GB000116CANIS02A

BRITISH COUNCIL idp Cambridge Assessment English

IELTS multi-layered approach to security



Alerts for test takers

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Be aware of scammers.
Don't opt for fake IELTS certificates.

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Don't fall victim to scammers.
Look after yourself.

idp | IELTS



Don't let a scam take away
your future.

Social media alerts warn test takers against websites advertising the production of fake documents
REPORT A SCAM: security.ielts@idp.com

Validity

- Test construction guidelines
- Pre-testing
- Reliability measures
- Test statistics
- Internal consistency measures and Standard Error of Measurements (SEM)
- Research activities

Validity

External Research

PDF

PDF

PDF

PDF

- Equivalency
- Examiners and Scoring - IELTS Examiner certification
- Examiners and Scoring - Speaking
- Examiners and Scoring - Writing
- IELTS Test - Listening and Reading
- IELTS Test - Speaking
- IELTS Test - Writing
- Impact and Washback - IELTS on Computer
- Impact and Washback - Impact theory and practice
- Impact and Washback - Improvement in test scores
- Impact and Washback - Performance data of candidates and IELTS
- Impact and Washback - Predictive validity
- Impact and Washback - Stakeholder attitudes
- Impact and Washback - Test preparation
- Impact and Washback - Use of test scores
- Scoring
- Technology
- Test Comparisons
- Test delivery

Test Provider

- IELTS and CEFR
- IELTS and PTE
- 2 comparison studies

Concordance

Test User

- Score comparisons
- Construct Comparison



Questions & Answers