

# A guide to the IELTS modules

IELTS is divided into four modules, taken in the order below.

## Listening

(30 minutes)

In each section you will hear a recording. The four sections become progressively more difficult and each recording is played once only. There are pauses to divide the recording into smaller parts. For each part you need to answer a series of questions of one type. References to examples of each question type are given in the table.

Section	Number of items	Text type	Task types
1	10	social or transactional conversation (2 speakers)	completing notes, table, sentences, diagram, flow chart or summary (page 15)
2	10	talk or speech on social needs (1 speaker)	short-answer questions (page 75)
3	10	conversation in educational context (2–4 speakers)	various kinds of multiple-choice questions (page 62)
4	10	talk or lecture on topic of general interest (1 speaker)	labelling parts of a diagram (page 51) matching lists (page 39) sentence completion (page 27)

## Academic Reading

(60 minutes)

The three passages contain 2000–2750 words in total and become progressively more difficult, but they are always suitable for non-specialist readers. If any technical terms are used, they will be explained in a glossary. References to examples of each question type are given in the table.

Passage	Number of items	Text type	Task types
1	11–15	topics of general interest	various kinds of multiple-choice questions (page 48)
2	11–15	non-specialist articles or extracts from books, journals, magazines and newspapers	short-answer questions (page 12) sentence completion (page 12)
3	11–15	one, at least, has detailed logical argument	classification (page 142) matching headings with paragraphs or sections of text (page 24) completing notes, sentences, tables, summary, diagram or flow chart (page 12) matching lists/phrases (page 72) locating information with paragraphs (page 144) true/false/not given (text information) (page 36) yes/no/not given (writer's views) (page 36)

## Academic Writing

(60 minutes)

There is no choice of task, either in Part 1 or 2, so you must be prepared to write about any topic. However, the topics in the exam are of general interest and you do not need to be an expert to write about them. References to examples of each task type are given in the table.

Task	Time	Format	Task types
1	20 minutes	150-word report, describing or explaining a table or diagram (page 18)	presenting information based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• data, e.g. bar charts, line graph, table</li><li>• a process/procedure in various stages</li><li>• an object, event or series of events</li></ul>
2	40 minutes	250-word essay, responding to written opinion/problem (page 30)	presenting and/or discussing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• your opinions</li><li>• solutions to problems</li><li>• evidence, opinions and implications</li><li>• ideas or arguments</li></ul>

## Speaking

(11–14 minutes)

You will be interviewed, on your own, by one Examiner, and the conversation will be recorded on audio cassette. The three-part structure of the interview is always the same, although the topics will vary from candidate to candidate. References to examples of each main part are given in the table.

Part	Time	Format	Task types
1	4–5 minutes	familiar discussion (page 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction, ID check</li><li>• You answer questions about familiar topics: yourself, your home/family, job/studies, and interests.</li></ul>
2	3–4 minutes	extended speaking (page 28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You are given a topic verbally and on a card. You have a minute to prepare a talk.</li><li>• You speak for 1–2 minutes on the topic, e.g. a person, place, object or event.</li><li>• You answer one or two follow-up questions.</li></ul>
3	4–5 minutes	topic discussion (page 40)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You answer verbal questions, discussing more abstract ideas linked to the topic of Part 2.</li></ul>