

Introducing

IELTS

Instructors Pack

Introducing IELTS

The clear task in front of any IELTS instructor on their first day of a new class is, **get to know your students, and their requirements.** In most classes you will more than likely have a mix of **General Training (GT)**, and **Academic** S's.

From past experience we have noticed that **Weekend Morning** classes have a tendency to be an equal mix. **Weekend Afternoon** classes are primarily **GT** and **Evening** classes are again, an equal mix. Whereas, the **Intensive** classes that run on weekday mornings lean more towards **Academic.**

Teaching both courses at the same time is not the ideal situation for an instructor to be in, and some would consider it to be unfair on the teacher and the S's. However, it can be done! If you have a mixed group, telling your students from day 1 that **ALL** S's on a **IELTS** course will be able to complete both **GT** and **Academic task 1** writing tasks will make your life in the classroom easier. (Allocating mixed **task 1** writing tasks as homework assignments consolidates this for the S's).

There are mostly two levels of student that take **IELTS**. Intermediate and Upper Intermediate. It has been proven that candidates can become Upper-Int S's **if** they are prepared to work hard.

Not having done an introduction to **IELTS** can be a little daunting. Being well-prepared for your first lesson will help you combat those nerves.

How you use this, is entirely up to you. Every instructor presents material in a different way. No-one expects you be a '**clone**' of anyone else. Using the materials provided for an introduction class, will be informative for new **S's**, as well being clear cut for you the instructor.

LESSON PLAN**Induction Day:****Warm-up:**

Introduce yourself briefly. *Nothing too personal.*

Get to know the **S's**. Their reasons for taking **IELTS**, and desired band scores. Ask **S's** what they think their strengths and weaknesses in English are. Some **S's** may have taken the exam before (some more than once), remind them that the course is about **training NOT testing**. Taking the exam too often can (and will) reduce their scores.

The main task is to find out what your S's know about the exam.

Have they taken the exam before?

What is their desired band score?

What level they think they are?

RULES:

Language 1: (L1 interference) is their enemy from here on in. Only English will be used when they are at the course. They need to eat, sleep, think and breathe English prior to taking the exam. Using Turkish (or their mother tongue) will only hold their spoken English back.

Mobile Telephones: will not be tolerated in the classroom. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Make sure everyone has your schools telephone number, and inform the S's anyone needing to contact them during class hours can have the number.

Chewing gum: you cannot speak with you mouth full, it's rude to do so, and it will not be allowed in the exam.

Erasers: Contrary to popular belief, erasing incorrect answers and replacing them with the correct ones, does not help S's in any way. However, crossing through the error with one line will! This will help the S's to be aware of their mistakes. This is the place to make mistakes and learn from them – don't use an eraser in the classroom, **S's** don't need a perfect note-book!

FORMAT:

Allocate the **IELTS Exam Format** and **descriptors**. Go through each module of the exam and what is expected of them. Use the **FAST INTRODUCTION** to **IELTS**.

The format of the exam is a vital part of the studying process. Even though some S's may have taken the exam before (*we usually get them after their first attempt*) most **S's** are not aware of what the actual exam or test day consists of.

BAND SCORES:

Allocate the breakdown of **band scores**. Put examples of previous scores on the board. (This shows **S's** what can be achieved – there are also **REAL** examples on our web-site).

LESSON PLAN**What is IELTS?**

Ask the **S's**, "What is **IELTS**?" What do they know about the **format** of the *IELTS* exam? "**IELTS stands for International English Language Testing System**. It is an English language proficiency exam which measures the ability of test-takers to communicate in the four basic language skills.

How many sections are there?	It consists of 4 modules
What are they?	Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking
How long does the test take?	2 hours 45 minutes
The total test duration is around	2 hours and 30 minutes for Listening, Reading and Writing modules. . (Give S's the IELTS format here – and FORMAT DESCRIPTORS - go through it with them)

BOARD WORK: The board should look a little like this: (**S's** will pay more attention if they are given a visual explanation of each module).

Listening: 40 minutes - 40 Questions – plus 10 minutes transfer time. (This is a good opportunity to introduce the answer sheet)

Reading: 60 minutes – 40 Questions – NO ADDITIONAL transfer time. (Answers should be written on the answer sheet as they do the exam)

Writing: 60 minutes - 2 TASKS

TASK 1

GT – Letter ACADEMIC – Data report at least 150 words

10 words per line

X 15 lines = 150 words


TASK 2

ESSAY at least 250 words

10 words per line

X 25 lines = 250 words



- **Speaking: 11–14 minutes – 3 parts**

WARM Up - CUE CARD - DISCUSSION

The first three modules - Listening, Reading and Writing (always in that order) - are completed in one day, and in fact are taken with no break in between. The Speaking Module may be taken on the same day (possibly in a different location) or, seven days before or after the other Modules.

As you put the information on the board, get **S's** to pay attention to the descriptors for each module. Remind them there is no **pass** or **fail** in *IELTS*. Allocate **BAND SCORE sheets** – ask **S's** where they think they are **NOW** in each module? You could also use the **format completion task** to wrap up this section.

IELTS is scored over the **4 modules**.

(putting these examples on the board gives S's an idea of how they will be scored)

The following, are **REAL EXAMPLES** from *students* who took the IELTS exam in 2010 and 2011.

Real Example 1:

Listening	7
Reading	6
Writing	6
Speaking	5.5
Overall Band	6

The scores are added together in this case **24.5** and divided by **4 = 6.125**

This is then rounded to the nearest figure to give **the overall score - 6**

Real Example 2:

Listening	7
Reading	6.5
Writing	6
Speaking	6.5
Overall Band	6.5

The scores are added together in this case **26** then divided by **4 = 6.5**
This is then rounded to the nearest figure giving the overall score of - **6.5**

Most candidates require a minimum of **6.5** (Some universities) (**A**), Banks (**GT**))
This is achievable, though requires work from the candidate themselves. They should have the objective **7** as their **desired band score** opposed to what **they need**.

Real Example 3:

Listening	7.5
Reading	6.5
Writing	6.5
Speaking	6
Overall Band	6.5

The scores are added together in this case **26.5** and divided by **4 = 6.625**
This is then rounded to the nearest figure to give **the overall score - 6.5**

Real Example 4:

Listening	7
Reading	7.5
Writing	6.5
Speaking	7
Overall Band	7

The scores are added together in this case **28** then divided by **4 = 7**
This is then rounded to the nearest figure giving the overall score of - **7**

LONG INTRODUCTION – *The information is a little more detailed – how you use this is entirely up to you. Using the **fast introduction** works well for a presentation, the detailed information should answer the questions you could be asked about **IELTS**.*

EXAM DAY

If your exam is at an Istanbul location, you should arrive at 8:15am. You will be taken to an exam room and your ID documents will be checked.

LISTENING

The Listening Test is the first thing you have to do when you take an IELTS exam. The Listening Test has 4 sections. Each section contains 10 questions, there are 40 questions in total. The test lasts about 30 minutes, then you have an extra 10 minutes to transfer your answers to an answer sheet.

Here are some of the problems students have with **IELTS Listening**:

- You only have **ONE** chance to listen to the recording.
- Correct spelling is important.
- A variety of English accents are used.
- There are 'distractors' in some of the questions.
-

LISTENING

A full IELTS Listening Test is **30 minutes** long.

- There are **4 parts** to the listening test and a total of **40 questions**
- The listening test is on a CD. You listen to the CD **only once**.
- You should write your **answers** on the IELTS listening question sheet.
- You have 10 minutes to write your answers on the answer sheet.
- The topics of the first two parts of the listening test are social.
First you listen to a conversation between 2 people and then you listen to 1 person speaking (monologue).
- The topics of the second two parts are educational or training related.
In the third part you listen to up to 4 people having a conversation.
- In the fourth part you listen to 1 person speaking again.
- The IELTS Listening Test uses a range of different native-speaker English accents.
- One mark is given for each correct answer to the 40 questions. The number of answers you get correct is converted to an IELTS test band score.
- You should be careful when you answer the IELTS Listening Test questions because poor spelling and grammar will give you a lower IELTS listening score.

To solve these problems, you need to do a lot of **listening** and **spelling** practice. There are also some exam tips and techniques that we can give you. Listening practice, however, will help you just as much as exam techniques.

If you want to have "**a good ear**", you need to listen to as much English as possible.

This is where we use **bbc 6 minute English** and www.ted.com for practice activities.

The **BBC** listenings are beneficial to section **1** and **3**, **ted talks** are good practice for section **2** and **4**.

READING

The Reading Test is immediately after the Listening Test. You **do not** get a break. There are 3 sections in the Reading Test. Each section has 13 or 14 questions, making 40 questions in total. The test lasts 60 minutes, and in that time you must write your answers on an answer sheet. There is **NO** transfer time!

The Academic and General Training tests are slightly different. You will find a description of both exams on the **FORMAT** sheet.

A full IELTS Reading Test is 60 minutes long.

- There are 3 parts to the reading test and a total of 40 questions.
- The complete IELTS Reading Test has between 2000 and 2750 words.
- You write your answers directly on the IELTS reading answer sheet.
- The IELTS **Academic** reading texts are taken from books, newspapers, articles and magazines.
- The IELTS **General Training** reading texts are of 3 types. The first text is about social survival, the second about work survival and the third is about a general topic.
- You do not need any specialist knowledge of each topic to be able to answer the IELTS reading questions.
- One mark is given for each correct answer to the 40 questions. The number of answers you get correct is converted to an IELTS test band score.
- You should be careful when you answer the IELTS Reading Test questions because poor spelling and grammar will give you a lower IELTS reading score.

DO NOT leave any **BLANK** spaces – 5 blank spaces can cost you a full band score.

Here are some of the problems students have with **IELTS Reading**:

- **Time** is the biggest problem. Many students don't manage to finish the test.
- The texts are long and contain some difficult vocabulary.

IELTS Reading is really a test of your vocabulary. If your knowledge of English words and phrases is good, you will do well.

There are tips and techniques that can help you work quickly and handle the difficult question types. The best way to improve your IELTS reading score, however, is to read as much as you can, and do a lot of vocabulary work.

WRITING

The IELTS Writing Test should commence after the Reading Test. There are 2 parts to the Writing Test, and you have a total of 60 minutes to complete them both.

You should spend 20 minutes on **IELTS Writing Task 1**. You must write 150 words or more. The good news is that you can quickly learn how to write a Task 1 **report /letter**. We will make sure you know exactly what is expected of you in the exam.

Writing to work on:

- How to structure a good Task 1 **report/letter**.
- How to decide what information to include in your description.
- The words, phrases and grammatical structures for describing graphs, charts, tables, diagrams and maps.
- The correct format for a good letter

In the second part of the IELTS **Academic** Writing Test, you have to write 250 words. You should spend 40 minutes on this task. Writing Task 2 is worth more than Task 1, so you need to do it well. The **General Training** writing task 2 is no different.

Most students prepare phrases for introducing and linking ideas. What they should be doing is prepare good ideas and opinions for a variety of IELTS topics.

Both the **Academic** and **General Training** tasks are marked using the same 4-part system.

- These 4 parts are basically: how well you answer the question, how well you organise and link your answer, how good your vocabulary is, and how good your grammar is.
- Most people, including native speakers, require a lot of practice before they are able to write very good answers to these IELTS writing test questions.

Writing to work on:

- How to structure a good Task 2 essay.
- Preparation of ideas, opinions and good vocabulary for each IELTS topic.
- How to build and link sentences to create coherent paragraphs.
- Common mistakes in grammar and word usage.

Some hard work on these areas can make a big difference to your writing score.

SPEAKING

The IELTS Speaking Test is the final part of the exam. The test lasts between **11 and 14 minutes**. You will be interviewed by an examiner who will record your conversation. Timing is strictly controlled by the examiner, so don't be surprised if he or she interrupts you during an answer. You may have your speaking test on a different day.

There are 3 parts to the Speaking Test:

WARM –UP Introduction/ interview: around 10 questions in 4 to 5 minutes.

- In Part 1 of the IELTS Speaking Test you may be asked questions about yourself, your family, where you live, your work or study etc. This part lasts for 4-5 minutes.

CUE – CARD Short presentation: talk for 2 minutes with 1 minute to prepare.

- In Part 2 of the speaking test you are given a card usually containing a 4-part question. You are expected to speak for between 1 and 2 minutes about this question. You have 1 minute to prepare your answer and you can make notes if you want to. This part lasts for 3-4 minutes in total.

Discussion: around 5 questions in 4 to 5 minutes.

- Part 3 of the speaking test is the most difficult part. You will be asked by the examiner to discuss some questions usually connected to Part 2 of the test. You have no time to prepare and you are expected to give immediate answers.

Preparation is the key to a good score in IELTS Speaking. Different skills are tested in each part, so you need to know exactly what to do.

All three parts of the IELTS Speaking Test are marked using the same 4-part system.

These 4 parts are basically: how **fluently you speak** and **link your ideas together**, how **good your vocabulary is** (this is not the time to get clever with vocabulary – use the words you know and use them well), how well you use your **spoken grammar**, and how good your **pronunciation** is.

Practice is the **key** to a good IELTS band score.

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam: Exam Format

<p>Listening Time: 30 minutes</p> <p>Candidates listen to a number of recorded texts once only. The texts increase in difficulty as the test progresses. They include a mixture of conversations and dialogues and feature a variety of English accents. The candidates are given a limited time to read the questions before listening. After the listening test candidates are given 10 minutes to transfer their answers to an answer sheet.</p> <p>N.B marks are not generally awarded for incorrect spelling of answers. Occasionally marks are awarded for particular variants of spelling.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Academic Reading Time: 60 minutes</p> <p>There are three reading passages with different kinds of questions to answer. Texts are taken from books, magazines, journals and newspapers, all written for a non-specialist audience. Answers are recorded on an answer sheet within the hour.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">General Training Reading Time: 60 minutes</p> <p>The texts are based on the type of material candidates would be expected to meet on a daily basis in an English speaking country. They are taken from sources such as newspapers, advertisements, instruction manuals and books. Answers are recorded on an answer sheet within the hour.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Academic Writing Time: 60 minutes</p> <p>For the first task, candidates write a report of around 150 words based on material found in a graph, chart, table or diagram, demonstrating their ability to describe and explain data. For the second task candidates write an essay of around 250 words in response to a given topic. They are expected to demonstrate an ability to discuss issues, construct an argument and use the appropriate tone and register.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">General Training Writing Time: 60 minutes</p> <p>The first task requires candidates to write a letter either asking for information, or explaining a situation. The second task is an essay of around 250 words, and is written in response to a given title. Candidates are expected to be able to present their own ideas and challenge other ideas, using appropriate tone and register.</p>
<p>Speaking Time 11-14 Minutes</p> <p>The test takes the form of a one-to-one interview between the candidate and the examiner. Candidates are asked questions, speak for one to two minutes on a given topic (one minute is given for making notes and preparing what you want to say), and answer further questions expressing opinion and speculation.</p>	

BAND SCORES

There is no **pass** or **fail** in IELTS. Candidates are graded from **1** to **9** for each part of the test. The results then produce an **Overall Band Score**. *IELTS* scores have a recommended validity period of two years.

Band Score	Competence
Band 9: Expert user	Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
Band 8: Very good user	Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
Band 7: Good user	Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
Band 6: Competent user	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
Band 5: Modest user	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.
Band 4: Limited user	Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
Band 3: Extremely limited user	Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
Band 2: Intermittent user	No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.
Band 1: Non-user It is very rare anyone gets this score.	essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.
Band 0: Did not attempt the test	

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How many hours of study do I need to get my desired band score?

A: *Approximately 80-100 hours.*

Q: How many points do I need to get from the listening and reading to get a good band score?

A: *We estimate that between 28 and 33 correct answers will give you a good band score.*

Q: Can I improve my band score in a month?

A: *Yes. Although you do need to put in some hard work.*

For example:

If you start as a band 5 candidate – you can with practice become a 6. That's like moving from Intermediate – to Upper Intermediate. IELTS 7 is the equivalent of TELC C1.

Q: Do I need IELTS General or Academic?

A: *Before you start to prepare for the IELTS test you need to check with the organisation you would like to study with or work for. These are the best people to ask to check whether you need General or Academic IELTS.*

Q: Is there a secret to getting a good IELTS score?

A: *No! The only way to get your desired band score is practice, practice, practice. The more you practice, the better you get.*

Q: How can I improve my speaking?

A: *Again, the answer is practice. You can improve your fluency if you practice. Many students say they do not have a lot of time. You have to make time. Even ten minutes every day is better than nothing.*

SUMMARY Completion

Read the following summary of the IELTS-exam-format text and fill in the gaps using some of the words given below.

Complete the following summary. Use **ONLY ONE WORD** for each answer.

take	opportunity	have	knowledge
against	way	however	several
range	show	different	ranging
comprehension	understand	near	few
limit	although	approximately	difference

Listening

Candidates listen to (1) recorded texts which as the test progresses become increasingly difficult. These include a mixture of conversations and dialogues featuring a (2) of English accents and dialects. Candidates do not have the (3) to listen a second time. Time is given to allow candidates to read the questions and write down their answers.

Reading

Both the academic and general training reading modules (4) 60 minutes. For the academic reading, texts are from books magazines, journals and newspapers, all written for a non-specialist audience. Texts, (5)....., from the general training module are those that are met on a daily basis in an English speaking country such as newspapers, advertisements, instruction manuals and books. Answers are recorded on an answer sheet within the time (6) of one hour.

Writing

For the first task in the academic writing the candidate has to (7).....his ability to describe and explain data from a table or diagram. For the second task candidates write a short essay of (8) 250 words. The format of the general training writing is slightly(9) to that of the academic module. Rather than analyse data the candidate is expected to write a letter or explain a situation. Again the second task is a short essay of 250 words.

Speaking

Candidates are interviewed one at a time between 11 and 14 minutes and assessed on their (10)of spoken English by answering short questions, speaking at length on a familiar topic and interacting with the examiner.

This is where you realise quite quickly that even though S's have ALL the answers to the SUMMARY in the format, they will probably NOT bother to look at it to find the answers.

Answer key to summary

1 several
2 range
3 opportunity
4 take
5 however
6 limit
7 show
8 approximately
9 different
10 knowledge

You can use the quiz on either the first day, or at any time during the course. This is another way to get them to remember what is expected of them and the format of the exam. This can be done as a group, or an individual exercise.

Make sure S's have the SELF-STUDY sheet. Remind them you will ask to see it at random, and they should use it to set their goals.

The VOCABULARY SHEET can be photocopied as often as the S's need to. Encourage them to make notes of the words they 'like' or vocabulary they need reminding of.

As an instructor you will soon find that each class is different. You may get through this pack quite quickly with one group, and take a lot longer with others.

LISTENING DAY 1

Each group is expected to complete the first test from CAMBRIDGE 7 past papers. The materials are available to copy, and the AUDIO should be on the teachers computer. Follow procedure as per the exam and give them 10 minutes to transfer their answers to the answer sheet.

READING DAY 1 or 2

There are tests for both ACADEMIC and GENERAL TRAINING – the tests are different. Allocate an answer sheet with the test, and remind S's they should write their answers as they do the exam.

Scores should be recorded.

BASIC INFORMATION

Getting to know the **FORMAT** of the exam and what is expected of you on the day, will help you achieve your desired band score.

What do you know about IELTS?

- a. How long does the entire test take to complete?
2 hours 45 minutes 2 hours 50 minutes 2 hours 55 minutes
- b. How long does it usually take to get your IELTS results?
within one week? within ten days? within two weeks?
- c. How many times do you get to hear the Listening Section?
only once? twice? three times?
- d. How many passages does the Reading test consist of?
four passages? three passages? five passages?
- e. In which Writing task might you be asked for your opinion?
Writing Task 1? Writing Task 2? both tasks?
- f. How many sections are there to the speaking test?
three parts? two parts? five parts?
- g. Which part of the Speaking test requires you to speak on a particular topic?
Part 2 Part 1 Part 3
- h. The Sub-Modules are each marked from 0 to 9. In which tests are half marks available?
Listening and Reading? Writing and Speaking? All modules?
- i. How long must you wait before applying to take the IELTS exam again?
one month? three months no restrictions?

WRITING SECTION

Some candidates will say "I don't write very well in my own language, so how am I expected to write in English?" The answer? There is no secret to **IELTS** except practice, practice, practice. Answer the questions based on the **Writing Section** of the **IELTS** exam.

- 1. Are the Task 1 questions the same for both Academic and General training?**
- 2. Should you always write a conclusion to Writing Task 1 Academic?**
- 3. Can you do the tasks in any order?**
- 4. What presentation format would you use for Task 1 GT?**
- 5. What format would you use for Task 1 Academic?**
- 6. What are two of the most important things you need for a good score in IELTS Writing Tasks?**

SPEAKING SECTION *Should you or shouldn't you?*

- a. If the examiner shakes your hand, return his or her handshake confidently.**
- b. Answer questions in short answers.**
- c. Memorise a speech on a topic to use in the exam.**
- d. Organise your reply to a topic that you are given to talk about.**
- e. Ask the examiner to repeat a question that you do not fully understand.**
- f. Read aloud the words given to you on the cue-card.**
- g. Try to impress the examiner with clever vocabulary and complex ideas.**
- h. If you have no plans for the future explain that to the examiner.**
- i. After the test is over ask the examiner to give you an idea of how well you have done.**

INTRODUCING IELTS

ANSWER KEY

BASIC INFORMATION

- a. 2 hours 45 minutes
- b. Within two weeks
- c. Three passages
- d. Once only
- e. Task 2 both GT and Academic/ letter in GT task 1
- f. 3 parts
- g. Part 2
- h. Reading and listening
- i. No restrictions

LISTENING SECTION

1. A 2. B 3. C

READING SECTION

- a. F b. T c. F d. F e. T f. T g. F

WRITING SECTION

1. No. The task 1 GT is a letter, and the Task 1 Academic is a report.
2. No. Your report is better presented with an overview after the introduction.
3. Yes, you can. Although it is not advisable. You are given 20 minutes for your report, and it is worth a third of your overall score. Your task 2 essay carries more weight towards your band score which is why they are presented in the booklet as Task 1 and Task 2.
4. Make the introduction after your salutation or greeting. P1 answer the first two parts of the task, P2 answer the next part of the task. Round off your letter with the appropriate response.

5. Introduction, Overview, and 2 body paragraphs if necessary. In this task type you only need to write about what you see. You do not need to add any extra information.
6. Candidates may come up with a variety of answers, although you should expect them to say – paraphrasing and synonyms. If they don't, then this is an opportunity to introduce the idea.

SPEAKING SECTION

Should do A D E

Shouldn't do B C F G H i

Have some FUN with the QUIZ – this can be used at any time during the course, although it works well as a warm-up to DAY 2 – and reminds S's of the format of the exam.