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Guide to IELTS UKVI

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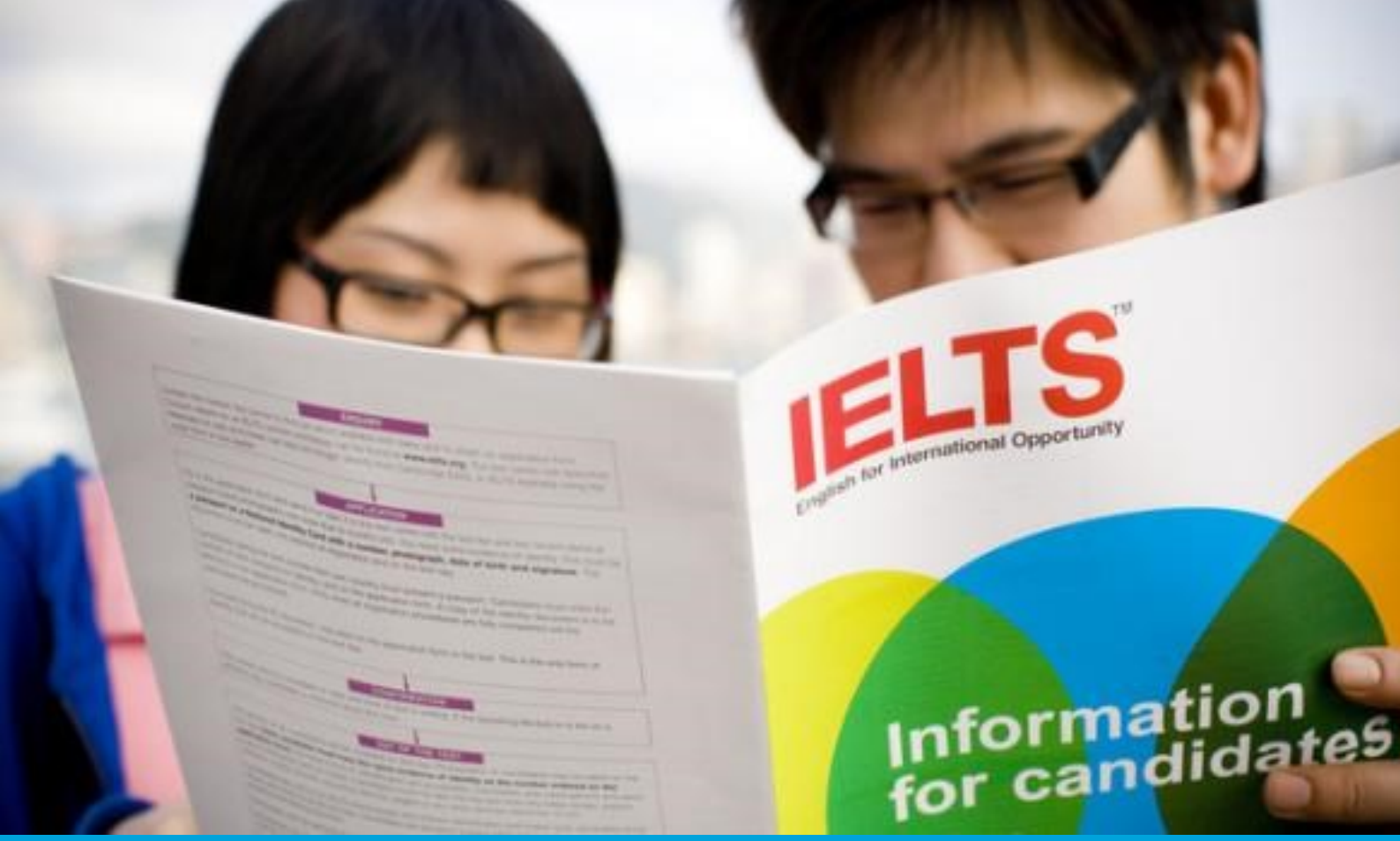

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1. Booking your UKVI IELTS Test

Overview of the New IELTS Test Requirements from 6th April 2015

Due to the changes made by the UK Visas and Immigration, you need to make sure that you take your IELTS Test in the **Approved Secure** IELTS test centres, to prevent problems with their future UK visa applications.

The Reason for these changes:

The secure IELTS test for visa purposes is designed to meet certain administrative requirements that are specified by UK visas and immigration. The test report forms will be slightly different, to show that test takers have taken the test at a secure UK Visa session. The actual IELTS language test taken is the same, with the same content , examiners, format, level of difficulty and scoring.

- Nurses Must only take the exam at an approved secure IELTS test centre (for example run by The British Council/IDP, IELTS Australia and Cambridge English Language Assessment)
- This IELTS test will be accepted by the NMC (7.0 in all modules)
- This IELTS test will be accepted for UK Visa entry clearance to travel to the UK (you must confirm at the test centre at the time of registration that you wish to use it for these purposes)
- The IELTS test will be valid for 2 Years
- Nurses cannot take the new 'IELTS Life Skills Test' as this is NOT suitable for the NMC registration or their Visa entry to the UK.
- If a nurse has already taken the IELTS before 5th April 2015, they may be able to use this for their Visa application up to 5th November 2015 (please check with UKVI before making your Visa application)
- From 6th April 2015, if the IELTS test is not taken at an approved secure test centre, the nurse will have to retake their IELTS again before applying for their UK Visa

Find your Nearest Test Centre:

Visit: http://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/book-your-test/book-now

The IELTS Test that will need to be selected is UKVI Only.

Please select your Country and find your nearest approved/secure test centre.

You can book your IELTS, find further information and Fees by visiting this website.

2. IELTS Results Process

Your IELTS results will be available 13 days after your test and recorded on a Test Report Form. You can preview your results online and some centres can also provide a preview by SMS alert.
The IELTS results process ensures the Test Report Form detailing your results will be posted to you 13 days after the test. Some test centres will let you collect your results in person. Centres are not permitted to give results over the phone or by fax or email.

You will only receive one Test Report Form. Keep it safe: replacements cannot be issued.
Test centres can send copies of your Test Report Form to up to five recognising organisations for you free of charge.
Find out more about the Test Report Form.

Your IELTS scores– NMC Requirements

In order to register with the UK NMC (Nursing Midwifery Council) you are required to achieve at least a total scoring of 7.0 in all modules.
These are for Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading.
You must ensure a score of 7.0 is reached otherwise you will have to re-take your IELTS again.

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3.How to prepare for the IELTS test...

IELTS measures your reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, and assesses your ability to communicate for work, study or life in an English-speaking country.

The first step is to make sure you understand the IELTS test format. You need to know what will be expected of you on test day.

Understand the IELTS test format

- **Study the test format to make sure that you know what to expect**
- **Look carefully at the content of each part of the IELTS test: listening, reading, writing and speaking.**
- **Get to know the different types of questions that you may be asked in each part.**

Once you are familiar with the IELTS test format, you will need to undertake a number of focused preparation activities.

Recommended preparation activities

- **Examine the IELTS practice test papers and answers.**
- **Take practice tests under timed conditions.**
- **Practice with the IELTS online preparation resources, available free when you book your test with the British Council.**
- **Buy IELTS self– study books and materials.**
- **Consider taking an IELTS preparation course.**
- **Review our IELTS test day advice.**

4. Understand the IELTS test format

Take the time to understand the IELTS test format. There are two versions of the test: IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training.
YOU MUST ENSURE YOU SELECT THE IELTS ACADEMIC TEST

You will take the first three parts of the test all on one day in the following order:
1. Listening
2. Reading
3. Writing
4. Speaking

There are no breaks between the first three tests. You will take the Speaking test either on the same day, or 7 days before or after that, depending on local arrangements. A range of native-speaker accents (North American, Australian, New Zealand and British) are used in the Listening test, and all standard varieties of English are accepted in responses in all parts of the test.

5. IELTS Academic

There are two versions of the test- Academic and General Training.
You must ensure you select the Academic IELTS Test!

IELTS Academic

IELTS Academic measures English language proficiency needed for an academic, higher learning environment. The tasks and tests are accessible to all test-takers, irrespective of their subject focus.

Listening* (30 minutes, plus 10 minutes extra to transfer your answer to your answer sheet)
- Four recorded monologues and conversations

Reading (60 minutes)
- Three long reading passages with tasks
- Texts range from descriptive and factual to the discursive and analytical
- Includes non-verbal material such as diagrams, graphs or illustrations
- Texts are authentic (e.g. taken from books, journals and newspapers)

Writing (60 minutes)
- Writing task of at least 150 words where the candidate must summarise, describe or explain a table, graph, chart or diagram
- Short essay task of at least 250 words

Speaking* (11 to 14 minutes)
- Face-to-face interview
- Includes short questions, speaking at length about a familiar topic and a structured discussion

6. Understand the Listening Test

You will be listening for a purpose and hear a variety of accents.
A variety of voices are used in the IELTS Listening test, so you might hear Australian, British, New Zealand or North American accents. You will be listening to a pre-recorded CD-ROM, and the passages that you hear will increase in difficulty as you go through the test.

Purpose of the test

The IELTS Listening test is designed to assess a wide range of listening skills, including how well you:

- **Understand main ideas and specific factual information**
- **Recognise the opinions, attitudes and purpose of a speaker**
- **Follow the development of an argument**

The Listening test takes 30 minutes, you are allowed an extra 10 minutes to transfer your answers to your answer sheet.

Four sections

The IELTS Listening test is broken down into four sections:

1. You listen to a conversation between two people set in an everyday social situation, e.g. a conversation in an accommodation agency, and answer questions on your comprehension.
2. You listen to a monologue set in an everyday social situation, e.g. a speech about local facilities or a talk about the arrangements for meals during a conference.
3. You listen to a conversation between up to four people set in an educational or training context, e.g. a university tutor and a student discussing an assignment, or a group of students planning a research project.
4. You listen to a monologue on an academic subject, e.g. a university lecture.

Questions

There are 40 questions. A variety of question types is used, and you may be asked to:

- **Answer multiple choice questions**
- **Label a plan, map or diagram**
- **Fill in a form**
- **Complete a table**
- **Complete a flow-chart**
- **Give short answers**

Marking

Each correct answer receives one mark. Scores out of 40 are converted to the IELTS 9-band scale. Scores are reported in whole and half bands.

7. Understand the Reading test

You will need to read quickly and efficiently, and manage your time as you will be asked to read three different passages and respond to related questions in your IELTS Reading test.

Purpose of the test

The IELTS Reading test is designed to assess a wide range of reading skills, including how well you:

- **Read the general sense of the passage**
- **Read for the main ideas**
- **Read for detail**
- **Understand inferences and implied meaning**
- **Recognise a writer's opinions, attitudes and purposes**
- **Follow the development of an argument**

Timing

The IELTS Reading test takes 60 minutes. **You are not allowed any extra time to transfer your answers,** so write them directly on to your answer sheet. You will need to manage your time during the test because you will not be told when to start or finish each section.

Three sections

You will be given three different passages to read, each with accompanying questions. You can expect to read 2,150 - 2,750 words in total during your test.

IELTS Academic Reading test

There are **three sections** to the IELTS Academic Reading test, and each contains one long text. These are taken from books, journals, magazines and newspapers. They have been written for a non-specialist audience and are on academic topics of general interest.

They range from the descriptive and factual to the discursive and analytical. Each text might be accompanied by diagrams, graphs or illustrations, and you will be expected to show that you understand these too. A simple glossary is provided if the material contains technical terms.

8. Understand the Writing test

Write clearly, organise your ideas and use a varied vocabulary.

Purpose of the test

The IELTS Writing test is designed to assess a wide range of writing skills, including how well you:

- **Write a response appropriately**
- **Organise ideas**
- **Use a range of vocabulary and grammar accurately**

Timing

The IELTS Writing test takes 60 minutes. **Spend 20 minutes on Task 1,** and **40 minutes on Task 2**. You will need to manage your own time, so make sure you move on to Task 2 after 20 minutes.

Two tasks

There are two tasks in the IELTS Writing test. You will be asked to write at least **150 words for Task 1** and at least **250 words for Task 2.**

IELTS Academic Writing test

Write in a formal style in the IELTS Academic Writing test.

In Task 1 you will be presented with a graph, table, chart or diagram. You will be asked to describe, summarise or explain the information in your own words. This might involve describing and explaining data, describing the stages of a process or how something works, or describing an object or event.

In Task 2 you will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. You should find the issues interesting and easy to understand.

Try: Writing practice test 1 - IELTS Academic

9. Understand the Speaking Test

The Speaking test is as close to a real-life situation as an exam can get and only takes 11-14 minutes.

You will talk to a certified examiner in the IELTS Speaking test. The test is interactive and as close to a real-life situation as a test can get. A variety of accents may be used, and the test will be recorded.

Purpose of the test

The IELTS Speaking test is designed to assess a wide range of skills.
The examiner will want to see how well you can:

- **Communicate opinions and information on everyday topics and common experiences; to do this you will need to answer a range of questions**
- **Speak at length on a given topic using appropriate language**
- **Organise your ideas coherently**
- **Express and justify your opinions**
- **Analyse, discuss and speculate about issues**
  Make sure that you relax and talk fluently. You will need to speak naturally.

Marking

You will be assessed on your performance throughout the test by certificated IELTS examiners.
You will be marked on the four criteria of the IELTS Speaking Test Band Descriptors:

- Fluency and Coherence
- Lexical Resource
- Grammatical Range & Accuracy
- Pronunciation

Scores are reported in whole and half bands.
Find out more about how you can understand your IELTS scores.

Read Speaking test advice.

Try Speaking practice test 1.

Section	**Duration**	**Information**
Part 1 Introduction and interview	4-5 minutes	The examiner will introduce him or herself and ask you to introduce yourself and confirm your identity. The examiner will ask you general questions on familiar topics, e.g. home, family, work, studies and interests. This section should help you relax and talk naturally.
Part 2 Individual long turn	3-4 minutes	The examiner will give you a task card which asks you to talk about a particular topic, including points to include in your talk. You will be given one minute to prepare and make notes. You will then be asked to talk for 1-2 minutes on the topic. You will not be interrupted during this time, so it is important to keep talking. The examiner will then ask you one or two questions on the same topic.
Part 3 Two-way discussion	4-5 minutes	The examiner will ask you further questions which are connected to the topic of Part 2. These questions are designed to give you an opportunity to discuss more abstract issues and ideas.

The Speaking test is made up of three sections:

Part 1 You will answer questions about yourself and your family.

Part 2 You will speak about a topic.

Part 3 You will have a longer discussion about the topic introduced in Part 2.

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10. Free IELTS Practice Tests

Prepare for IELTS with these free practice tests and answers.
Time yourself and develop your exam technique.
The practice tests in this section offer you the opportunity to

- get to know the test format
- experience the types of tasks you will be asked to undertake
- test yourself under timed conditions
- review your answers and compare them with model answers

Remember, you will take the Listening, Reading and Writing tests all on one day with no breaks in between, so it is important to do the practice tests under similar conditions.
Each test is presented over a number of web pages. Make sure you answer the questions and carry out the tasks on each page in the correct order.

If you prefer to practise offline, download the tests, blank answer sheets, transcripts and answers from the introductory pages.

Listening practice test 1

The IELTS Listening test will take about 30 minutes, and you will have an extra 10 minutes to transfer your answers to the answer sheet.

Reading practice test 1 - IELTS Academic

You will be allowed 1 hour to complete all 3 sections of the IELTS Academic Reading test.

Writing practice test 1 - IELTS Academic

You will be allowed 1 hour to complete two tasks in the IELTS Academic Writing test.

Speaking practice test 1

In the Speaking test, you will have a discussion with a certified examiner. It will be interactive and as close to a real-life situation as a test can get. The Speaking test is 11-14 minutes long and is in three parts.

IELTS test day advice

Prepare for your test day; success starts with IELTS
You will find the IELTS test centre staff friendly, welcoming and highly professional. They will make sure that the test is delivered fairly and securely. Follow their instructions carefully.

The week before your test

Check the start time and location of your IELTS test the week before, and make sure you know how to get there on time.
Remember, the address of your IELTS test location may be different to that of the test centre where you booked your test.
Take the time to read full details of the 'IELTS test terms and conditions' for important information about your IELTS test day.

Your IELTS test day

You need to arrive in good time for your IELTS test. If you arrive late, you may not be allowed to take the test.
Switch off your mobile phone and any other electronic devices. You will be asked to place these with other personal belongings outside the test room.
The Listening, Reading and Writing tests take 2 hours 40 minutes and there are no breaks between each part of the test.
Make sure you are prepared and have something to eat and drink beforehand. You will not be allowed to take food into the test room; you will only be allowed to take a drink in a transparent bottle.

Your identity and photographs

The IELTS test location staff will check your identity when you arrive.
Make sure you have the right ID with you. If you arrive with the wrong ID, you will not be allowed to take the test.
You may also need two recent identical passport-sized photographs.

During the IELTS test

You will only be allowed to have a pen or pencil, an eraser and your ID on your desk.
If you need to go to the bathroom during the test, put your hand up to attract the attention of the invigilator. Do not disturb other candidates.
If you have any questions during the test, raise your hand to ask for help.
When you take the Listening test, check that you can hear the test properly.
Raise your hand straightaway and let the invigilator know if you cannot hear the recording.
Please remember that you will have 10 minutes after the Listening section to fill in your answer sheet. You will not have 10 minutes after the Reading section, so please make sure that you write your answers on your Reading answer sheet as you complete each section.

At the end of the test

Stay in your seat until the invigilator gives you permission to leave the room.
If you think that there have been any issues that may have affected your performance, tell the invigilator straightaway.
If you want to make a complaint about your test day, you need to do this within one week of the test date.
Your invigilator will have a Test Day Incident Form. Please fill this in if you want to raise an issue or make a complaint.

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