A. Introduction

This policy establishes English language proficiency requirements for the admission of international students to the University of Colorado Denver and the responsibility of the university to determine that international student applicants possess a level of proficiency in English necessary to succeed academically. The university is responsible for certifying to the US Department of Homeland Security that this determination has been made, in accordance with US immigration laws, for students requiring visa documents. With properly documented evidence of English language proficiency, the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) within the Office of International Affairs (OIA) will certify to the US Department of Homeland Security, as part of the Certification of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Visa Status (Form I-20) or for Exchange Visitor Visa Status (Form DS-2019), that the student has the required level of English language proficiency.

B. Policy Statement

All academic schools, colleges, centers, departments, or programs making admission decisions regarding international students are responsible, in consultation with the International Admissions unit in OIA, as appropriate, for determining, as part of the admission process, that the applicant has the required proficiency in English to successfully undertake the proposed course of study and for working with International Admissions to record the determination in ISIS for each admitted student.

C. Governing Practices

Applicants will be considered to have the required English language proficiency if they meet one of the following criteria:

1. The applicant is a citizen of a country whose official language is English.
a. These countries include Australia, Belize, Botswana, Canada (except Quebec), Commonwealth Caribbean, Ghana, Great Britain, India, Ireland, Kenya, New Zealand, Nigeria, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

2. The applicant has obtained a composite score of 75 or above on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Internet-Based Test (iBT), or a composite score of 537 or higher on the TOEFL paper-based (pBT), including obtaining minimum sub scores (see below), for both undergraduate and graduate programs.
   a. The admissions committee shall review all sub scores to ensure that a minimum sub score has been obtained in each category:
      1. Reading: Minimum score of 15
      2. Listening: Minimum score of 14
      3. Speaking: Minimum score of 19
      4. Writing: Minimum score of 20
   b. Graduate academic departments and/or programs may require a higher level of English language proficiency based on the specific needs of the discipline, and are responsible for determining that applicants have such proficiency. No academic department of program, however, may admit a student below the established policy minimums. If a higher level of proficiency is required, this must be clearly documented and published in all marketing materials for the academic department or program, including Web sites. In addition, the graduate academic department or program must notify the International Admissions unit in OIA of any decision to require a higher level of English language proficiency in order to ensure this is reflected in OIA marketing and recruitment materials.

3. The applicant has obtained a composite score of 6.5 or above on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), including obtaining minimum sub scores (see below), for both undergraduate and graduate programs.
   a. The admissions committee shall review all sub scores to ensure that a minimum sub score has been obtained in each category:
      1. Reading: Minimum score of 5.5
      2. Writing: Minimum score of 5.5
      3. Speaking: Minimum score of 5.5
      4. Listening: Minimum score of 5.5
   b. Graduate academic departments and/or programs may require a higher level of English language proficiency based on the specific needs of the discipline, and are responsible for determining that applicants have such proficiency. No academic department of program, however, may admit a student below the established policy minimums. If a higher level of proficiency is required, this must be clearly documented and published in all marketing materials for the academic department or program, including Web sites. In addition, the graduate academic department or program must notify the International Admissions unit in OIA of any decision to require a higher level of English language proficiency in order to ensure this is reflected in OIA marketing and recruitment materials.

4. The applicant has graduated from the University of Colorado Denver’s ESL Academy with a letter of recommendation from the Director of the ESL Academy.

1 (See Appendix A) These sub score minimums reflect the bottom threshold for intermediate performance in Reading and Listening on a scale of High, Intermediate and Low, as well as the lower threshold of fair performance in Speaking and Writing on the scale of Good, Fair, Limited, and Weak.

2 (See Appendix B) No sub scores should fall lower than one full point from the composite minimum required for admission.
5. The applicant has graduated from a foreign institution where the language of instruction for the post-secondary degree(s) was English.
   a. The applicant must provide a letter from the home institution verifying this information if
      the language of instruction is not clearly indicated on the official academic transcript.

6. The applicant has graduated from and/or completed a minimum of 1 year of secondary school in
   the US.
   a. All freshman applicants who apply for admission immediately following graduation from a
      high school in the US are required to submit SAT/ACT results.

7. The applicant has graduated from a US accredited school abroad with English as the medium of
   instruction.
   a. The applicant must provide a letter from the home institution verifying this information if
      the language of instruction is not clearly indicated on the official academic transcript.

8. The applicant was previously enrolled as a degree-seeking student at an accredited institution in
   the US and is able to demonstrate English language proficiency by providing a transcript that
   records transferable semester-long English Composition 1 and 2 with an average grade of 80%
   (B) or better.

9. The applicant has earned a bachelor’s degree in the US or has successfully completed a
   minimum of 2 semesters of full-time study in a master’s program at an accredited institution in
   the US and is able to demonstrate English language competency via their transcripts from the
   US institution.

D. Exceptions
Appendix A:
TOEFL Sub Score Explanations
## Converting Rubric Scores to Scaled Scores for the Writing and Speaking Sections of the TOEFL iBT

**Writing Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>Scaled Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
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</table>

**Speaking Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>Scaled Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.50</td>
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<td>3.33</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.33</td>
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<td>0.16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Performance on the Speaking and Writing sections of the TOEFL iBT is evaluated based on scoring rubrics of 0 to 5 for each of the two writing tasks and 0 to 4 for each of the six speaking tasks. The tables above show how the mean rubric scores of the two writing tasks and the mean rubric score of six speaking tasks are converted to a scaled score of 0 to 30.
Percentile Data


Standard Error of Measurement

When a group of test takers who have the same ability take the test, they will not necessarily receive the same scores. Instead, they will receive scores that are close to each other and close to their true ability.

The standard error of measurement (SEM) is an estimate of how much a test score differs from a test taker’s true ability. SEMs from TOEFL iBT test administrations for 2005–2006 are available at www.ets.org/toefldata.html.

Contacting ETS

Visit the TOEFL Website at www.ets.org/toefl

- Get the latest information about the TOEFL iBT
- Take a tour of the test
- View a sample test
- Download important publications such as the Information and Registration Bulletin for TOEFL iBT, TOEFL iBT Tips, and TOEFL iBT At a Glance
- Download an official list of approved TOEFL score recipients
- Check out the list of upcoming teacher workshops, conferences, and student fairs
- Sign up for the TOEFL mailing list to receive updates

Test Taker Contact

- E-mail: toefl@ets.org
- Phone: 1-877-863-3546 (toll free in the United States, U.S. territories, and Canada) or 1-609-771-7100 (all other locations)

All Others

If you are an advisor, ESL teacher, or score-receiving institution or agency:

- E-mail: TOEFLNews@ets.org
- Phone: 1-609-683-2008
Performance Feedback for Test Takers

The TOEFL iBT Performance Feedback and Advice for Improvement tables on pages 56–69 of the TOEFL iBT contain useful information for test takers about how their TOEFL iBT scores on each section of the test relate to their skill level. The Performance Feedback column lists the feedback that is provided on the TOEFL iBT score reports for each skill level. The Advice for Improvement column includes excerpts from the detailed suggestions for English-language practice and study that are available under Improve Your Skills in the Learners and Test Takers section of the TOEFL website.

In addition, approximately 2,300 TOEFL iBT test takers have provided ETS with self-evaluations of their English-language abilities in reading, listening, speaking, and writing after they have taken the TOEFL iBT. These evaluations have been compiled into a list of English Language Competency Descriptors, which are also available on the TOEFL website. Score users, English-language programs, and test takers can use these descriptors to help understand the language ability of test takers at each major score level for each of the skill sections on the TOEFL iBT, as well as the total score.
# Reading Skills

## LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH (22–30)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test takers who receive a score at the <strong>HIGH</strong> level, as you did, typically understand academic texts in English that require a wide range of reading abilities regardless of the difficulty of the texts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Test takers who score at the **HIGH** level, typically:

- have a very good command of academic vocabulary and grammatical structure;
- can understand and connect information, make appropriate inferences and synthesize ideas, even when the text is conceptually dense and the language is complex;
- can recognize the expository organization of a text and the role that specific information serves within the larger text, even when the text is conceptually dense; and
- can abstract major ideas from a text, even when the text is conceptually dense and contains complex language.

## ADVICE FOR IMPROVEMENT

Read as much and as often as possible. Make sure to include academic texts on a variety of topics written in different genres and with different degrees of conceptual density as part of your reading.

- Read major newspapers, such as *The New York Times* or *Science Times*, and websites (National Public Radio [NPR] or the BBC).
- Write summaries of texts, making sure they incorporate the organizational pattern of the originals.

Continually expand your vocabulary. Continually practice using new words you encounter in your reading. This will help you remember both the meaning and correct usage of the new words.
## INTERMEDIATE (15–21)

Test takers who receive a score at the **INTERMEDIATE** level, as you did, typically understand academic texts in English that require a wide range of reading abilities, although their understanding of certain parts of the texts is limited. Test takers who receive a score at the **INTERMEDIATE** level typically:

- have a good command of common academic vocabulary, but still have some difficulty with high-level vocabulary;
- have a very good understanding of grammatical structure;
- can understand and connect information, make appropriate inferences, and synthesize information in a range of texts, but have more difficulty when the vocabulary is high level and the text is conceptually dense;
- can recognize the expository organization of a text and the role that specific information serves within a larger text, but have some difficulty when these are not explicit or easy to infer from the text; and
- can abstract major ideas from a text, but have more difficulty doing so when the text is conceptually dense.

## LOW (0–14)

Test takers who receive a score at the **LOW** level, as you did, typically understand some of the information presented in academic texts in English that require a wide range of reading abilities, but their understanding is limited. Test takers who receive a score at the **LOW** level typically:

- have a command of basic academic vocabulary, but their understanding of less common vocabulary is inconsistent;
- have limited ability to understand and connect information, have difficulty recognizing paraphrases of text information, and often rely on particular words and phrases rather than a complete understanding of the text;
- have difficulty identifying the author’s purpose, except when that purpose is explicitly stated in the text or easy to infer from the text; and
- can sometimes recognize major ideas from a text when the information is clearly presented, memorable or illustrated by examples, but have difficulty doing so when the text is more demanding.

---

**Read as much and as often as possible.**

**Study the organization of academic texts and overall structure of reading passages.** Read an entire passage from beginning to end.

- Pay attention to the relationship between the **main ideas** and the **supporting details**.
- Outline the text to test your understanding of the structure of the reading passage.
- Write a summary of the entire passage.
  - If the text is a comparison, be sure that your summary reflects that. If the text argues two points of view, be sure both points of view are reflected in your summary.
- Continually expand your vocabulary by developing a system for recording unfamiliar words.
  - Group words according to topic or meaning and study the words as a list of related words.
  - Study roots, prefixes and suffixes; study word families.
  - Use available vocabulary resources, such as a good thesaurus or a dictionary of collocations (words commonly used together).

**Develop a system for recording unfamiliar words.**

- Group words into lists according to topic or meaning and review and study the words on a regular basis so that you remember them.
- Increase your vocabulary by analyzing word parts; study roots, prefixes and suffixes; study word families.

**Study the organization of academic texts and overall structure of a reading passage.** Read an entire passage from beginning to end.

- Look at connections between sentences; look at how the end of one sentence relates to the beginning of the next sentence.
- Look for the **main ideas** and **supporting details** and pay attention to the relationship between them.
- Outline a text to test your understanding of the structure of a reading passage.
  - Begin by grouping paragraphs that address the same concept.
  - Write one sentence summarizing the paragraphs that discuss the same idea.
  - Write a summary of the entire passage.
## Listening Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>HIGH (22–30)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>YOUR PERFORMANCE</strong></td>
<td>Test takers who receive a score at the <strong>HIGH</strong> level, as you did, typically understand conversations and lectures in English that present a wide range of listening demands. These demands can include difficult vocabulary (uncommon terms, or colloquial or figurative language), complex grammatical structures, abstract or complex ideas and/or making sense of unexpected or seemingly contradictory information. When listening to lectures and conversations like these, test takers at the <strong>HIGH</strong> level typically can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- understand main ideas and important details, whether they are stated or implied;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- distinguish more important ideas from less important ones;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- understand how information is being used (for example, to provide evidence for a claim or describe a step in a complex process);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- recognize how pieces of information are connected (for example, in a cause-and-effect relationship);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- understand many different ways that speakers use language for purposes other than to give information (for example, to emphasize a point, express agreement or disagreement, or convey intentions indirectly); and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- synthesize information, even when it is not presented in sequence, and make correct inferences on the basis of that information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADVICE FOR IMPROVEMENT</strong></td>
<td>Further develop your listening ability with daily practice in listening in English and by challenging yourself with increasingly lengthy listening selections and more complex listening material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Listen to different kinds of materials on a variety of topics:</td>
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<td>- Focus on topics that are new to you.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Listen to academic lectures and public talks.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Listen to audio and video material on TV, radio and the Internet.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Listen to programs with academic content, such as NOVA, BBC and NPR broadcasts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Listen to conversations, phone calls and phone recordings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Take live and audio-recorded tours (e.g., of museums).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Listen actively:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Take notes as you listen for main ideas and important details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Make predictions about what you will hear next.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Summarize.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Write down new words and expressions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- For the more difficult material you have chosen to listen to, listen several times:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. First listen for the main ideas and key details;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Then listen again to fill in gaps in your understanding; to understand the connections between ideas, the structure of the talk and the speakers’ attitude; and to distinguish fact from opinion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Performance Feedback for Test Takers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERMEDIATE (14–21)</th>
<th>LOW (0–13)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test takers who receive a score at the <strong>INTERMEDIATE</strong> level, as you did, typically understand conversations and lectures in English that present a wide range of listening demands. These demands can include difficult vocabulary (uncommon terms or colloquial or figurative language), complex grammatical structures and/or abstract or complex ideas. However, lectures and conversations that require the listener to make sense of unexpected or seemingly contradictory information may present some difficulty. When listening to conversations and lectures like these, test takers at the <strong>INTERMEDIATE</strong> level typically can:</td>
<td>Test takers who receive a score at the <strong>LOW</strong> level, as you did, typically understand the main idea and some important details of conversations. However, test takers at the low level may have difficulty understanding lectures and conversations in English that involve abstract or complex ideas and recognizing the relationship between those ideas. Test takers at this level also may not understand sections of lectures and conversations that contain difficult vocabulary or complex grammatical structures. Test takers at the <strong>LOW</strong> level typically can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- understand explicitly stated main ideas and important details, especially if they are reinforced, but may have difficulty understanding main ideas that must be inferred or important details that are not reinforced;</td>
<td>- understand main ideas when they are stated explicitly or marked as important, but may have difficulty understanding main ideas if they are not stated explicitly;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- understand how information is being used (for example, to provide support or describe a step in a complex process);</td>
<td>- understand important details when they are stated explicitly or marked as important, but may have difficulty understanding details if they are not repeated or clearly marked as important, or if they are conveyed over several exchanges among different speakers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- recognize how pieces of information are connected (for example, in a cause-and-effect relationship);</td>
<td>- understand ways that speakers use language to emphasize a point or to indicate agreement or disagreement, but generally only when the information is related to a central theme or is clearly marked as important; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- understand, though perhaps not consistently, ways that speakers use language for purposes other than to give information (for example, to emphasize a point, express agreement or disagreement, or convey intentions indirectly); and</td>
<td>- make connections between the key ideas in a conversation, particularly if the ideas are related to a central theme or are repeated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- synthesize information from adjacent parts of a lecture or conversation and make correct inferences on the basis of that information, but may have difficulty synthesizing information from separate parts of a lecture or conversation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Practice listening in English daily. Gradually increase the amount of time that you spend listening, as well as the length of the individual listening selections.**

- Listen to different kinds of materials on a variety of topics:
  - Listen to conversations and phone recordings.
  - Listen to audio and video material on tape/DVD or recorded from TV, radio and the Internet.
  - Listen to programs with academic content, such as NOVA, BBC and NPR broadcasts.
  - Listen to short programs with some academic content.
  - Listen to recordings on topics that are familiar to you.
  - Listen to recordings of English lessons.
  - Listen to audio and video material on tape/DVD or recorded from TV, radio and the internet.
  - Listen to different kinds of materials on a variety of topics.
  - Listen to recordings that are familiar to you.

**Listen actively:**

- Make predictions about what you will hear next.
- Summarize.
- Write down new words and expressions.
- Take notes as you listen for main ideas and important details.

For more difficult material, listen several times:

1. First listen with English subtitles, if they are available;
2. Then, without subtitles, listen for the main ideas and key details;
3. Then listen again to fill in gaps in your basic understanding and to understand the connections between ideas, the structure of the talk and the speakers’ attitude.

**Listen several times to each recording:**

1. First listen with English subtitles, if they are available;
2. Then, without subtitles, listen for the main ideas and key details;
3. Then listen again to fill in gaps in your basic understanding and to understand the connections between ideas.
# Speaking Skills

## Speaking About Familiar Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>GOOD (3.5–4.0)</th>
<th>FAIR (2.5–3.0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>YOUR PERFORMANCE</strong></td>
<td>Your responses indicate an ability to communicate your personal experiences and opinions effectively in English. Overall, your speech is clear and fluent. Your use of vocabulary and grammar is effective with only minor errors. Your ideas are generally well developed and expressed coherently.</td>
<td>Your responses indicate you are able to speak in English about your personal experiences and opinions in a mostly clear and coherent manner. Your speech is mostly clear with only occasional errors. Grammar and vocabulary are somewhat limited and include some errors. At times, the limitations prevent you from elaborating fully on your ideas, but they do not seriously interfere with overall communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **ADVICE FOR IMPROVEMENT** | Look for opportunities to speak to native speakers of English. Interaction with others will improve your speaking ability.  
- Ask a native speaker to provide feedback on your pronunciation problems (if any). | Think about topics related to student life (what type of classes you enjoy taking, what is the best place to study, where you would prefer to live [dorm or off campus]).  
- Write down two reasons to explain your preference; practice speaking for one minute about each topic, using connecting words or phrases to help explain your opinion (“the reason I prefer,” “this is important to me because”).  
- Practice speaking for a limited time on different topics without a lot of preparation. Make a list of some general speaking topics (people you admire, places you enjoy visiting, things you enjoy doing).  
- Then think of a specific example for each topic (a parent, the market, reading books).  
- Talk about each one for one minute, explaining what you admire or enjoy about each.  
- Repeat your responses to each topic two or three times to build up fluency. |
### LIMITED (1.5–2.0)

Your responses indicate some difficulty speaking in English about everyday experiences and opinions. Listeners sometimes have trouble understanding you because of noticeable problems with pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. While you are able to respond partially to the questions, you are not able to fully develop your ideas, possibly due to limited vocabulary and grammar.

Give yourself about 20 seconds to think about what you did yesterday. After 20 seconds, begin to recount what you did. Try to talk for one minute.

- Pay attention to your use of the past tense.
- Try to use connecting words and phrases, such as “first,” “then,” “while I was.”

Give yourself about 20 seconds to think about what you will probably do tomorrow. Try to talk for one minute. After 20 seconds, begin to talk about what you are planning to do.

### WEAK (0–1.0)

Your responses are incomplete. They contain little or no content and are difficult for listeners to understand.

Practice speaking about different topics without a lot of preparation.

Write down several questions about various topics (for example, about your family, your hobbies, your friends or your school). Select a question and answer it aloud.

Think of a story that you are familiar with. Tell the story to several different people. Try to tell the story faster each time.
### Speaking Skills

#### Speaking About Campus Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>GOOD (3.5–4.0)</th>
<th>FAIR (2.5–3.0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YOUR PERFORMANCE</td>
<td>Your responses indicate an ability to speak effectively in English about reading material and conversations typically encountered by university students. Overall, your responses are clear and coherent, with only occasional errors of pronunciation, grammar or vocabulary.</td>
<td>Your responses demonstrate an ability to speak in English about reading material and experiences typically encountered by university students. You are able to convey relevant information about conversations, newspaper articles and campus bulletins; however, some details are missing or inaccurate. Limitations of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation at times cause difficulty for the listener. However, they do not seriously interfere with overall communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ADVICE FOR IMPROVEMENT | Look for opportunities to build your fluency in English.  
- Take risks and engage others in conversation in English whenever possible.  
- Join an Internet chat room.                                                                                                                                  | Practice speaking English about everyday topics that are important to students’ lives. This will develop your fluency and confidence.  
- Find a speaking partner. Set aside time each week to practice speaking with your partner in English.  
- If you can’t find a native English speaker, find a friend who wants to practice speaking English and promise to speak only English for a certain period of time.  
- Read articles from campus newspapers that can be found on the Internet. Discuss the articles with a speaking partner or friend. Practice summarizing the articles and expressing your opinions about the articles. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIMITED (1.5–2.0)</th>
<th>WEAK (0–1.0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your responses indicate that you have some difficulty speaking in English about information from conversations, newspaper articles, university publications and so on. While you are able to talk about some of the key information from these sources, limited grammar and vocabulary may prevent you from fully expressing your ideas. Problems with pronunciation make it difficult for listeners to understand you at times.</td>
<td>Your responses are incomplete. They include little or no information about the topic. Your speech is often difficult for listeners to understand, and the meaning is unclear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop friendships with people who want to speak English with you. Interaction with others will improve your speaking ability. If you can’t find a native speaker, find a friend who wants to practice speaking English and promise to speak only English for a certain period of time.</td>
<td>Take a conversation class. This will help improve your fluency and pronunciation in English.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Speaking Skills

### Speaking About Academic Course Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>GOOD (3.5–4.0)</th>
<th>FAIR (2.5–3.0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>YOUR PERFORMANCE</strong></td>
<td>Your responses demonstrate an ability to communicate effectively in English about academic topics typical of first-year university studies. Your speech is mostly clear and fluent. You are able to use appropriate vocabulary and grammar to explain concepts and ideas from reading or lecture material. You are able to talk about key information and relevant details with only minor inaccuracies.</td>
<td>Your responses demonstrate that you are able to speak in English about academic reading and lecture material, with only minor communication problems. For the most part, your speech is clear and easy to understand. However, some problems with pronunciation and intonation may occasionally cause difficulty for the listener. Your use of grammar and vocabulary is adequate to talk about the topics, but some ideas are not fully developed or are inaccurate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **ADVICE FOR IMPROVEMENT** | Record yourself and then listen and transcribe what you said.  
- Read a short article from a newspaper or textbook. Record yourself summarizing the article.  
- Transcribe the recording and review the transcription. Think about other ways to say the same thing. | Practice speaking for a limited time on different academic topics.  
- Read a short article from a newspaper or textbook. Write down key content words from the article.  
- Write down 2 or 3 questions about the article that include the content words.  
- Practice answering the questions aloud. Try to include the content words in your response.  
- After practicing, record your answers to the questions. |
### Performance Feedback for Test Takers

#### LIMITED (1.5–2.0)

In your responses, you are able to use English to talk about the basic ideas from academic reading or lecture materials, but, in general, you include few relevant or accurate details. It is sometimes difficult for listeners to understand your responses because of problems with grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Overall, you are able to respond in a general way to the questions, but the amount of information in your responses is limited and the expression of ideas is often vague and unclear.

- Practice speaking about current events.
- Read newspaper articles, editorials and cultural events in English. Share the information that you read with a friend in English.
- Visit a university class and take notes in the class. Then use your notes to tell a friend about some of the information you heard in English.
- Develop your academic vocabulary. Write down important new words that you come across while reading or listening and practice pronouncing them.
- Listen to a weather report and take notes on what you heard. Then give the weather report to a friend in English.

#### WEAK (0–1.0)

Your responses are incomplete. They include little or no information about the topic. Your speech is often difficult for listeners to understand, and the meaning is unclear.

- Increase your vocabulary and improve your grammar in your speech.
- Study basic grammar rules so that your speech is grammatically correct.
- As you learn new words and expressions, practice pronouncing them clearly. Record yourself as you practice.
Writing Skills

Writing Based on Reading and Listening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>GOOD (4.0–5.0)</th>
<th>FAIR (2.5–3.5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|             | You responded well to the task, relating the lecture to the reading. Weaknesses, if you have any, might have to do with:  
  - slight imprecision in your summary of some of the main points, and/or  
  - use of English that is occasionally ungrammatical or unclear.                                                                                     | You responded to the task, relating the lecture to the reading, but your response indicates weaknesses, such as:  
  - an important idea or ideas may be missing, unclear or inaccurate; and/or  
  - it may not be clear how the lecture and the reading passage are related; and/or  
  - grammatical mistakes or vague/incorrect uses of words may make the writing difficult to understand.        |
| YOUR PERFORMANCE |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                           |
|             | Continue to improve your ability to relate and convey information from two or more sources. For example, practice analyzing reading passages in English.  
  - Read two articles or chapters on the same topic or issue, write a summary of each, and then explain the ways they are similar and the ways they are different.  
  - Practice combining listening and reading by searching for readings related to talks and lectures with teacher or a friend. | Practice finding main points.  
  - Ask a friend to record news and informational programs in English from the television or radio, or download talks or lectures from the Internet.  
    - Listen and take notes. Stop the recording about every 30 seconds to write out a short summary of what you heard.  
    - Replay the recording to check your summary. Mark places where you are not sure if you have understood what was said or if you are not sure you have expressed yourself well. |
| ADVICE FOR IMPROVEMENT |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                           |
LIMITED (1.0–2.0)

Your response was judged as limited due to:
- failure to understand the lecture or reading passage;
- deficiencies in relating the lecture to the reading passage; and/or
- many grammatical errors and/or very unclear expressions and sentence structures.

Read and listen to academic articles and other material in your own language. Take notes about what you read and hear.
- Begin by taking notes in your own language and then take notes in English.
- Summarize the points in complete English sentences.
- Ask your teacher to review your writing and help you correct your errors.
- Gradually decrease the time it takes you to read the material and write these summaries.
- Practice typing on a standard English (QWERTY) keyboard.
## Writing Skills

### Writing Based on Knowledge and Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>GOOD (4.0–5.0)</th>
<th>FAIR (2.5–3.5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>YOUR PERFORMANCE</strong></td>
<td>You responded with a well-organized and developed essay. Weaknesses, if you have any, might have to do with:</td>
<td>You expressed ideas with reasons, examples and details, but your response indicated weaknesses, such as:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- use of English that is occasionally ungrammatical, unclear or unidiomatic, and/or</td>
<td>- you may not provide enough specific support and development for your main points;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- elaboration of ideas or connection of ideas that could have been stronger.</td>
<td>- your ideas may be difficult to follow because of how you organize your essay or because of the language you use to connect your ideas; and/or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- grammatical mistakes or vague/incorrect uses of words may make the writing difficult to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADVICE FOR IMPROVEMENT</strong></td>
<td>Continue to improve your ability to express opinions by studying the ways that published writers express their opinions.</td>
<td>Write a response to an article or essay in English, taking the opposite viewpoint.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Read articles and essays written by professional writers that express opinions about an issue (for example, a social, environmental or educational issue).</td>
<td>- Outline your response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Identify the writer’s opinion or opinions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Notice how the writer addresses possible objections to the opinions, if the writer discusses these.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Note the methods you use to support your ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Make sure your supporting ideas are clearly related to your main point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Note what method you use to develop each of your supporting points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Make sure you have developed each of your points in detail. Is there anything more you could have said to strengthen your points?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIMITED (1.0–2.0)

You attempted to express your opinion, but your response indicates notable deficiencies, such as:

- Your response contains insufficient detail;
- Your ideas and your connections of ideas are difficult to understand because of many grammatical errors and/or very unclear expressions and sentence structure; and/or
- Your response is only marginally related to the question that was asked.

Study the organization of good paragraphs and essays. A good paragraph discusses ONE main idea. This idea is usually written in the first sentence, which is called the topic sentence. In essay writing, each paragraph should discuss one aspect of the main idea of an essay.

- Write paragraphs in English that focus on one main idea and contain several complete sentences that explain or support that idea.
- Ask your teacher to review your paragraphs for correctness.
Appendix B:
IELTS Guide for Educational Institutions, Governments, Professional Bodies, and Commercial Organizations
Guide
for educational institutions, governments, professional bodies and commercial organisations
IELTS. Ensuring quality, consistency and fairness in international language testing

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is a test that measures the language proficiency of people who want to study or work in environments where English is used as a language of communication.

IELTS provides a valid and accurate assessment of the four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. An easy to use 9-band scale clearly identifies proficiency level, from non-user (band score 1) through to expert (band score 9).

IELTS treats all candidates with the utmost fairness and respect by actively avoiding cultural bias and by accepting all standard varieties of native-speaker English, including North American, British, Australian and New Zealand English.

Fair and consistent delivery of the test is ensured by secure technology and the continual monitoring of examiners and test results as well as test centre management and facilities.

This high quality and secure test helps organisations like yours (whether an educational institution, government professional body or commercial organisation) identify people with the appropriate level of English language proficiency.

**Contents**

- A choice of two modules to better meet your needs 1
- Helping you select the right people from around the world 2
- The test you can trust 4
- Meeting your needs 6
- Continual research based development 8
- The four components of IELTS 10
- The IELTS 9-band scale 12

Each year, more IELTS tests are taken than any other high stakes English language tests.

IELTS is the four-skills test that has become the world’s most popular English language proficiency test. IELTS offers a choice of two versions, to serve both academic and non-academic purposes.

The format each module takes has remained consistent since 1995.

You can select the module that best suits the needs of your organisation.

**Academic module**

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

**General Training module**

IELTS General Training module measures English language proficiency in a practical, everyday context. The tasks and texts reflect both workplace and social situations.

*The Listening and Speaking components are the same for both modules.*
Helping you select the right people from around the world

Over 6,000 organisations in 135 countries rely on IELTS to help select the right people. These recognising organisations include:

- all universities and the vast majority of education providers in Australia, New Zealand and the UK, as well as most universities in Canada
- more than 3,000 higher educational institutions and programmes in the US
- immigration authorities in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the UK
- professional registration bodies worldwide, covering areas such as accounting, engineering, law, medicine and nursing

- a wide range of employers from sectors such as banking and finance, government, construction, energy and natural resources, aviation, health and tourism
- universities in non-English speaking countries where English is the language of instruction.

Reach out to new candidates

Let candidates know that your institution/organisation accepts IELTS results by listing the entry requirements of your institution/organisation on the IELTS website via the IELTS Global Recognition System. See page 6 for details.

International partners

IELTS is owned by a global partnership of education and language experts: the British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (Cambridge ESOL). These organisations are dedicated to academic excellence, cultural understanding, student placement and enabling success worldwide.

International consultation

IELTS has been developed in close consultation with academics, professional bodies and immigration authorities from around the world.

International content

The IELTS approach is recognised as being fair, reliable and valid to all candidates, whatever their nationality, cultural background, gender or special needs. The test questions are developed by a network of IELTS test material writers in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK and US.

International English

IELTS accepts all standard varieties of native-speaker English, including North American, British and Australian. The listening component also includes a variety of native speaker accents from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and US.

International delivery and accessibility

IELTS tests are offered up to four times a month in over 800 test venues in more than 130 countries. The cost of taking the test is set locally and payable in the local currency, making registration more convenient for candidates. Results are issued to candidates 13 calendar days after the test.

IELTS test centres can send Test Report Forms directly to your organisation or institution (provided it has been nominated by the candidate), either by mail or as an electronic download.

View the worldwide list of IELTS test centres at www.ielts.org/testcentres

Relevant test content

Over the past three decades, feedback provided by organisations and institutions which recognise IELTS has been instrumental in developing the IELTS test to better meet your needs. One such development was to introduce a choice of two IELTS modules: Academic or General Training (See page 2).

The General Training module is recognised by employers, professional bodies and immigration authorities and their feedback has influenced the content sources used. For example, section two of the Reading component of the General Training module was changed to focus more on a work context (e.g. applying for jobs, company policies, pay and conditions, workplace facilities, staff development).

Real life contexts

The IELTS test consists of questions that are relevant to the way test takers need to use English in their studies or working lives. IELTS has always included a face-to-face Speaking component which prompts the most realistic performance from candidates. The use of the face-to-face component in a high stakes test is supported by a body of current academic research and continues to set IELTS apart from other English language tests.
The test you can trust

Setting the standard
First released in 1989, IELTS is a test of all four language skills. The IELTS test has established strong credentials for consistently assessing proficiency in listening, reading, writing and speaking. The effectiveness of IELTS rests on four key test qualities:

• validity — the extent to which test results can be considered a true measure of underlying ability
• reliability — the extent to which test results are both consistent and accurate, and therefore dependable
• impact — the positive effect of a test on candidates and society as a whole
• practicality — the extent to which a test is workable in terms of the resources needed.

Evidence based
The ongoing development, improvement and validation of the IELTS test is supported by research encompassing applied linguistics, language pedagogy and language assessment.

You can read more about IELTS related research initiatives on page 8.

Strength in partnership
IELTS is jointly owned by a partnership of education and language testing experts: the British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations. Benefiting from the shared expertise of these three global partners, the IELTS test combines the world renowned language and research expertise of Cambridge ESOL and the international delivery, evaluation and security expertise of the British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia.

IELTS examiners
All IELTS examiner applicants must:
• be native speakers of English or a non-native speaker with an IELTS band score of 9 in the Speaking and Writing modules
• hold tertiary qualifications or equivalent
• hold relevant qualifications in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages or equivalent
• have at least three years’ relevant teaching experience.

Applicants fulfilling the above minimum professional requirements to become an examiner undergo a comprehensive and systematic recruitment process which includes the following stages: interview, induction, training, standardisation and certification.

Examiners attend regular training sessions and are required to formally demonstrate their marking proficiency through a re-certification process. The marking performance of the 6,000-plus IELTS examiners is systematically and regularly monitored. Examiner marking standards are maintained through the IELTS Professional Support Network, a quality assurance system designed and managed by British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia.

Rigorous test development
The IELTS test is developed to provide a fair, accurate and reliable assessment of English language proficiency for non-native speakers. The IELTS test development process ensures test consistency and fairness to all candidates regardless of their culture or where the test is taken.

Each IELTS test contains a unique combination of questions.

Every test is carefully constructed to ensure a consistent level of difficulty. This involves pre-testing (or trialling) each question on a culturally diverse range of language students to determine its suitability and fairness. Statistical analysis is then undertaken to ensure every question performs as designed.

Strict security
IELTS is a high stakes test which leads to local and international opportunity. Therefore test integrity is of paramount importance to recognising organisations and to candidates alike. The IELTS partners are scrupulous in the management of test delivery.

British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia manage the security and quality control of IELTS test centres globally, and are highly selective in the identification of prospective test centres.

Each prospective IELTS test centre must undergo a demanding selection process and agree to a stringent set of contractual conditions. IELTS test centres adhere to a detailed code of practice and strict test centre operating conditions, including a comprehensive audit programme involving onsite scheduled and/or spot audits.

• Identity resolution
Biometric registration systems are used to record candidate identity and process the results. A high resolution photograph of each candidate is taken at the time of registering for the test. This photograph is used to verify that the person who sits the test is the person that registered.

• Checking the result
The IELTS partners strongly recommend you use the Test Report Form Verification Service. This allows you to check the authenticity of paper test report form results. If you have any questions regarding a test result, follow the link as instructed by the Verification Service. For more information about the Test Report Form Verification Service see page 6.

More information relating to IELTS security protocols can be obtained by attending information sessions and face-to-face meetings organised by the IELTS partners for recognising organisations. If you have any questions, or would like to find out about information sessions in your region, please contact the stakeholder relations teams at the British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia.

“We want qualified applicants who can communicate effectively. The IELTS examination is a strong, well-constructed test that caters to this demand.”

Graduate Program Administrator, Brigham Young University, USA
Meeting your needs

Setting IELTS band score requirements for your organisation

IELTS test scores are just one element of your assessment of a candidate’s suitability to join your institution or organisation. The level of English needed to perform effectively in study, work or training varies from one situation to another. Each individual organisation can therefore set its own minimum IELTS score, depending on its own specific requirements.

For more band score setting advice, see page 13.

IELTS Scores Explained DVD

This DVD includes examples of candidates’ writing specimens and filmed footage of candidates’ speaking performances at different band score levels. The DVD can be ordered via www.ielts.org.

Reach out to more candidates with the IELTS Global Recognition System

In 2010, the www.ielts.org website received over four million unique visitors from more than 200 countries. Benefit from this interest by listing your organisation or institution on the IELTS website, within the IELTS Global Recognition System. This online database lists the thousands of organisations around the world which accept IELTS results.

Listing your organisation’s URL and minimum band score requirements on the IELTS Global Recognition System database will increase your reach to millions of existing and potential test takers. This system also makes it easy for you to compare your band score requirements with those of other organisations around the world.

Registering your organisation is easy at www.ielts.org/recognition

To register you will simply need to provide the following information via the online registration form:
• contact details for your organisation
• minimum IELTS band scores required for entry to your organisation
• a relevant URL for your organisation (e.g. admissions page, international student page).

Have your IELTS minimum entry requirements changed?

If so, update your organisation’s listing on the IELTS website by completing the ‘IELTS Recognition Form’ which can be downloaded at www.ielts.org/recognition

Verify IELTS results online

The IELTS Test Report Form Verification Service is a free, secure online service which lets you:
• quickly verify that an applicant is presenting a genuine Test Report Form by checking that the results you receive match the results held on the IELTS database
• conveniently download electronic Test Report Forms in batches.

Please note: The IELTS partners recommend that a Test Report Form which is more than two years old should only be accepted if it is accompanied by proof that a candidate has actively maintained or tried to improve their English.

Gain access to the Test Report Form Verification Service at www.ielts.org/TRF

Once your organisation is accepted into the Global Recognition System, you can request access to the Test Report Form Verification Service by downloading and completing the Administrator Application Form at www.ielts.org/TRF

For further information please refer to the Test Report Form Verification Service brochure, available at www.ielts.org/institutions

Support materials

A range of support tools for organisations can be found at www.ielts.org/institutions including:
• The IELTS Annual Review
• Ensuring Quality and Fairness brochure
• Test Result Form Verification Service application form and brochure
• Analysis of test data and candidate performance
• Answers to frequently asked questions.

IELTS related research can be found at www.ielts.org/researchers

Support for test takers and teachers

The IELTS partners publish a wealth of support material for test takers and teachers.

The Official Practice Materials books (two volumes available) can be purchased at IELTS Test Centres or ordered from www.ielts.org

The Information for Candidates booklet and sample test materials can be accessed, free of charge, within the Test Takers section of the IELTS website.
Continual research based development

The IELTS partners have a longstanding commitment to remain at the forefront of developments in English language testing.

The steady evolution of IELTS is in parallel with advances in applied linguistics, language pedagogy, language assessment and technology. This ensures the ongoing validity, reliability, positive impact and practicality of the test. Adherence to these four qualities is supported by two streams of research.

Internal research

Cambridge ESOL has been creating English examinations for speakers of other languages since 1913 and has unrivalled experience in the field. Internal research activities are managed by University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations’ Research & Validation unit. The Research and Validation unit brings together specialists in testing and assessment, statistical analysis and item banking, applied linguistics, corpus linguistics, and language learning/pedagogy, and provides rigorous quality assurance for the IELTS test at every stage of development.

Through publications and presentations in the public domain the division makes a valuable contribution to the wider field of language assessment more generally. In particular, Studies in Language Testing is a series of academic volumes edited by Dr Michael Milanovic (Chief Executive of Cambridge ESOL) and Prof Cyril J Weir of the University of Bedfordshire.

It is published jointly by University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations and Cambridge University Press (CUP). The series addresses a wide range of important issues and new developments in language testing and assessment and is an indispensable resource for test users, developers and researchers. There are currently over 30 titles available; a number of these deal specifically with IELTS.

Studies in Language Testing. Volumes include:

- Volume 25: IELTS Washback in Context: Preparation for academic writing in higher education
- Volume 19: IELTS Collected Papers: Research in speaking and writing assessment
- Volume 4: The Development of IELTS: A study of the effect of background knowledge on reading comprehension

External research

An external IELTS research scheme, funded by IDP: IELTS Australia and the British Council, ensures an ongoing relationship with the broader linguistics and language testing community and demonstrates the partners’ commitment to continuous improvement of the test.

Since 1995, over 90 external studies by over 130 unique researchers from a wide cross-section of countries have attracted funding under this jointly-funded scheme.

Such research has become a key component in securing external validation of IELTS.

IELTS Research Reports include:

Below is a sample of the articles which have been published in IELTS Research Reports. The majority of IELTS-funded research is published in the IELTS Research Reports which can be accessed online through www.ielts.org/researchers/research_reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author/Organisation</th>
<th>Volume and date of publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigating IELTS exit score gains in higher education</td>
<td>Kieran O’Loughlin, Sophie Arkoudis, The University of Melbourne, Australia</td>
<td>Volume 10, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigating stakeholders’ perceptions of IELTS as an entry requirement for higher education in the UK</td>
<td>David Hyatt, Greg Brooks, The University of Sheffield, UK</td>
<td>Volume 10, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination of appropriate IELTS band score for admission into a program at a Canadian post-secondary polytechnic institution</td>
<td>Katherine Golder, British Columbia Institute of Technology, Kenneth Reeder, University of British Columbia and Sarah Fleming, Simon Fraser University, Canada</td>
<td>Volume 10, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving English proficiency for professional registration: The experience of overseas-qualified health professionals in the New Zealand context</td>
<td>John Read and Rosemary Wette, The University of Auckland, New Zealand</td>
<td>Volume 10, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An impact study into the use of IELTS as an entry criterion for professional associations in Australia, New Zealand and the USA</td>
<td>Glenys Merrifield, GBM &amp; Associates, Australia</td>
<td>Volume 8, 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS as a predictor of academic language performance, Part 1</td>
<td>David Ingram, Amanda Bayliss, University of Melbourne, Australia</td>
<td>Volume 7, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring difficulty in Speaking tasks: An intra-task perspective</td>
<td>Barry O’Sullivan, Roehampton University, UK; Cyril Weir, The University of Bedfordshire, UK; Tomoko Horai, Roehampton University, UK</td>
<td>Volume 6, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An impact study of two IELTS user groups: candidates who sit the test for immigration purposes and candidates who sit the test for secondary education purposes</td>
<td>Brent Merrylees, LTC Language and Testing Consultants Pty Ltd</td>
<td>Volume 4, 2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The four components of IELTS

Listening
30 minutes

Candidates listen to four recorded texts, monologues and conversations by a range of native speakers, and write their answers to a series of questions. These include questions which test the ability to understand main ideas and detailed factual information, ability to understand the opinions and attitudes of speakers, ability to understand the purpose of an utterance and ability to follow the development of ideas.

A variety of voices and native-speaker accents is used and each section is heard only once.

Section 1
A conversation between two people set in an everyday social context, e.g. a conversation in an accommodation agency.

Section 2
A monologue set in an everyday social context, e.g. a speech about local facilities.

Section 3
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.

Section 4
A monologue on an academic subject, e.g. a university lecture.

Reading
60 minutes

The Reading component consists of 40 questions. A variety of question types is used in order to test a wide range of reading skills.

These include reading for gist, reading for main ideas, reading for detail, skimming, understanding logical argument, recognising writers’ opinions, attitudes and purpose.

Academic module
The Academic module includes three long texts which range from the descriptive and factual to the discursive and analytical. The texts are authentic and are taken from books, journals, magazines and newspapers. These have been selected for a non-specialist audience but are recognisably appropriate for candidates entering undergraduate or postgraduate courses or seeking professional registration.

General Training module
The General Training module requires candidates to read extracts from books, magazines, newspapers, notices, advertisements, company handbooks and guidelines. These are materials candidates are likely to encounter on a daily basis in an English speaking environment.

Writing
60 minutes

Academic module
The Writing component of the Academic module includes two tasks. Topics are of general interest to, and suitable for candidates entering undergraduate or postgraduate studies or seeking professional registration.

Task 1
Candidates are presented with a graph, table, chart or diagram and are asked to describe, summarise or explain the information in their own words. They may be asked to describe and explain data, describe the stages of a process, how something works or describe an object or event.

Task 2
Candidates are asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. Responses to both tasks must be written in a formal style.

General Training module
The Writing component of the General Training module includes two tasks which are based on topics of general interest.

Task 1
Candidates are presented with a situation and asked to write a letter requesting information or explaining the situation. The letter may be personal, semi-formal or formal in style.

Task 2
Candidates are asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. The essay can be slightly more personal in style than the Academic Writing Task 2 essay.

Speaking
11 to 14 minutes

The Speaking component assesses the candidate’s use of spoken English, and takes between 11 and 14 minutes to complete. Every test is recorded. The Speaking component is delivered in such a way that does not allow candidates to rehearse set responses beforehand.

Part 1
Candidates answer general questions about themselves and a range of familiar topics, such as their home, family, work, studies and interests. This part lasts between 4 and 5 minutes.

Part 2
Candidates are given a card which asks them to talk about a particular topic. They have one minute to prepare before speaking for up to two minutes. The examiner then asks one or two questions on the same topic to finish this part of the test.

Part 3
Candidates are asked further questions connected to the topic in Part 2. These questions give the candidate an opportunity to discuss more abstract issues and ideas. This part lasts between four and five minutes.

“IELTS provides a reliable and internationally accessible means for doctors coming from overseas to demonstrate their language proficiency before they start work.”

Director of Registration and Education,
General Medical Council, UK
IELTS 9-band scale

There is no pass or fail in IELTS. Rather, all test results are reported on a clear 9-band scale (from 1, the lowest, to 9, the highest). The scale has remained consistent and acquired currency around the world over the past three decades.

Candidates receive an overall band score as well as individual scores for each test component (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking).

The IELTS test provides an accurate picture of a candidate’s language skills at a certain point in time. Language ability diminishes over time if not actively maintained.

Read more about band scores, examiners, marking and assessment criteria at www.ielts.org/researchers.

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IELTS test score guidance for educational institutions

The level of English needed for a non-native speaker student to perform effectively varies by situation and institution. That is why each individual institution should set its own minimum IELTS score for applicants, depending on specific institutional and programme requirements.

Please note: The table below gives guidance on acceptable IELTS band scores for different courses. It should be noted, however, that many diverse variables can affect performance on courses, of which language ability is but one.

Read more about band score setting on page 6 of this brochure and at www.ielts.org/institutions

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### IELTS 9-band scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Expert user</th>
<th>Very good user</th>
<th>Good user</th>
<th>Competent user</th>
<th>Modest user</th>
<th>Limited user</th>
<th>Extremely limited user</th>
<th>Intermittent user</th>
<th>Non user</th>
<th>Did not attempt the test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.</td>
<td>Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.</td>
<td>No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.</td>
<td>Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.</td>
<td>No assessable information provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.</td>
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<td>No assessable information provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.</td>
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<td>No assessable information provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.</td>
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<td>Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.</td>
<td>No assessable information provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.</td>
<td>Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.</td>
<td>No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.</td>
<td>Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.</td>
<td>No assessable information provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.</td>
<td>Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.</td>
<td>No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.</td>
<td>Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.</td>
<td>No assessable information provided.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.</td>
<td>No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.</td>
<td>Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.</td>
<td>No assessable information provided.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.</td>
<td>Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.</td>
<td>No assessable information provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.</td>
<td>No assessable information provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>No assessable information provided.</td>
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</table>

### Test Report Forms issued in England and Wales

IELTS is accredited in the UK by the government’s examinations regulator for England and Wales, Ofqual. As a condition of this accreditation, the information printed on the back of IELTS Test Report Forms issued in England and Wales is different from the information given on forms issued elsewhere in the world.
IELTS is jointly owned by the British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (Cambridge ESOL). The IELTS test is designed and set by the world’s leading experts in language assessment to give a true picture of a candidate’s language skills.