

2018年12月18日ワーキンググループにて確認依頼を頂戴いたしました2点に関しまして、下記の通りご説明と関連情報をお送りいたします。

記

IELTS の問題作成をしております、IELTS パートナーのケンブリッジ大学英語検定機構は Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual: 英国政府の資格と試験に関する監査機関) から資格授与団体としての認定を受けています。(別添資料1と2)

政府からの認定を受けるために、IELTS パートナーの3団体(ケンブリッジ大学英語検定機構、ブリティッシュ・カウンシル、IDPIELTSオーストラリア)は、Ofqual「General Conditions of Recognition」(すべての資格授与団体に課されるルール: 以下ルールと記載)に沿って試験の実施運営を行っています。このルールでは、第三者機関(出版社を含む)との関係についても規定されています。IELTS は Ofqual の監査を定期的に受け、English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) qualifications として英国政府が定める基準を満たす英語資格であることが証明されています。

Ofqual の規定に関するサイト:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/awarding-organisations-understanding-our-regulatory-requirements>

また、様々な国の移民局や政府機関などからの要請により、IELTS は Ofqual のルールを基に、さらに厳しい規定を独自に設定し、世界的に試験の実施運営を行っています。(別添資料 3)

1. 各試験団体における試験対策問題集作成の基本的な考え方

＜確認の観点＞

- ・問題集に掲載する問題と実際に出題する問題との関係性はどのようなものか
(基本的な考え方や同一問題又は類似問題出題の考え方など)
- ・英語力が向上していないのに点数が取れるような対策となっていないか

A. 問題集作成に関するOfqualのルールとIELTSの取り組み

- ・ Ofqual Handbook「General Conditions of Recognition」のSection C(別添資料 4)に下記の通りルールが示されています。

Condition C3 Arrangements with publishers 出版社との調整

C3.1 Where an awarding organisation has in place an endorsement process, the awarding organisation must:

(a) take all reasonable steps to ensure that the endorsement process does not have an Adverse Effect, and

(b) publish the criteria which it uses to decide whether or not to endorse a particular resource.

→ 資格授与団体は、悪い影響(利益誘導など)が出ないよう適切な段階を経て、承認基準を明確化し、出版物に対する承認を行うこと

C3.2 For the purposes of this condition, an 'endorsement process' is a process by which the awarding organisation endorses resources which are designed to support the preparation of Learners and persons likely to become Learners for assessments for a qualification which it makes available or proposes to make available

→資格授与団体が「承認プロセス」行うことにより、試験準備をしている学習者や受験を検討している学習者を支援する教材の提供を推進し、教材が入手しやすい状況にすることをめざすものとする

- IELTSは上記の規定に沿って、ケンブリッジ大学出版局から主に準備教材の出版を行っています。ケンブリッジ大学出版はケンブリッジ大学内の組織ですが、英語検定機構からは独立しています。IELTSは過去問を公開しておらず、教材に実際の試験問題が使用されることはありません。試験問題として使用しなかった素材は再編集し、研究や出版用に利用しており、ケンブリッジ大学出版の教材はこういった素材を利用しています。
- 「公式(Official)」として出版されているIELTSの問題集はケンブリッジ大学出版の「Official IELTS Practice Materials」のみです。この問題集は、IELTSパートナー3団体が認めている模擬試験体験ができる問題集で、解答の解説は短く添えられているのみで、「テストで良い点を取るためのテクニック」といった指導はしていません。また、翻訳本は出版されていません。

B. ブリティッシュ・カウンシルに係る日本での問題集作成について

ブリティッシュ・カウンシルでは出版社等からの依頼により、IELTS試験対策問題集の作成をお手伝いしております。Ofqual のルールを遵守し、ブリティッシュ・カウンシル英国本部からの承認と助言を基に、日本のブリティッシュ・カウンシルが係わって国内で作成出版された問題集は下記のとおりです。

- 1) IELTSブリティッシュ・カウンシル公認問題集 (旺文社編ISBN978-4-01094080-8)
 - 2) IELTSブリティッシュ・カウンシル公認・本番形式問題3回分 (旺文社編ISBN9-01-094200-0)
 - 3) ライティング・スピーキングも怖くないIELTS完全対策(大阪大学出版ISBN978-4-87259-588-8)
- 旺文社から出版されている1)と2)に収録された問題は、中国の北京言語大学が中国のブリティッシュ・カウンシルの監修で出版した問題集「IELTS Essential Guide」のために作成したものです。日本で翻訳をし、旺文社で日本人学習者向けの解説を付加しています。日本のブリティッシュ・カウンシルは翻訳と解説文の監修を行っています。
 - 大阪大学出版から出版されている3)に収録されている問題は、IELTSが2006年に出版したDVD「IELTS Score Explained」から引用しています。ブリティッシュ・カウンシルは全体の監修と、ライティングの解答例作成に協力をしています。解答例は、ブリティッシュ・カウンシル上海オフィスで教員研修を担当していた職員(試験官・採点者・試験実施部門ではない)が行いました。

2. 問題漏洩などの不正を疑われないために注意して取り組んでいること

＜確認の観点＞

- ・どのような漏洩対策を行っているか
- ・関係規定はあるか

A. OfqualのルールとIELTSについて

不正防止に関する規定はOfqual Handbook「General Conditions of Recognition」のSection A(別添資料5)に示されており、英国の大学進学のための資格試験A-Levelを含むすべての資格授与団体はこのルールに沿って試験の実施を行い、IELTSも問題漏えいが起こらない対策をシステム化して全世界でおこなっています。

- 対策例 (別添資料 3 : Ensuring quality and fairness in international language testing 9ページ)
 - 1) IELTSパートナー機関による相互監査
The conditions of IELTS test centre operation include a comprehensive audit programme involving both scheduled site audits and spot audits, without prior warning, to ensure test centre operations are maintained at a consistently high level.

In 2006, the British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia established the Cross Partner Audit Programme as an additional measure to help ensure consistent service delivery across the global IELTS network. This programme enables spot audits to be conducted by IDP: IELTS Australia of centres managed by the British Council and by the British Council of test centres managed by IDP: IELTS Australia. The same audit documentation and reporting procedures are used by both partners for auditing all test centres across the global IELTS network.

→IELTSのテストセンターへの監査は、事前通知をしたうえで行う場合と、通告なしに突然行われる場合がありますが、どちらの場合にも安全性を高いレベルで担保したうえで試験運営がされていることが求められます。2006年からはより客観的に正確な監査を行うためにブリティッシュ・カウンシルとIDPとの相互監査システムも導入されています。

2) 試験問題の取り扱い

- ・ Every test version includes a unique combination of questions – no two versions of the test are the same.
- ・ Restricted user rights among test centre staff ensure access to test materials is controlled.

→異なる出題内容(テストバージョン)の使用。テストセンター内でのテスト問題取扱者を限定。

B. ブリティッシュ・カウンシルと英検でのとりくみ

ブリティッシュ・カウンシルが独自に作成した試験実施規定(IELTSの規定を厳格化)の導入により安全性を担保しています。

• 対策例

- 1) 試験監督者、採点者の管理
- 2) 試験問題管理施設の厳格な規定
- 3) 試験問題移動・開封・破棄に関する記録と管理
- 4) 不正にかかわる世界的な調査プラットフォームの構築
- 5) 組織内での定期的な監査と指導
- 6) 利益誘導や漏えいに対する規定とトレーニング
- 7) 国外での採点
- 8) 受験者と採点者の直接的な接触禁止規定の順守
- 9) ブリティッシュ・カウンシルIELTSグローバルチームによる英検テストセンターの監査と指導

以上、不明な点がありましたらお知らせください。

23 May 2016

Nick Beresford-Knox
Cambridge English Language Assessment
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

Office of Qualifications
and Examinations Regulation
Spring Place
Coventry Business Park
Herald Avenue
Coventry CV5 6UB

Telephone 0300 303 3344
Textphone 0300 303 3345
public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/ofqual

Dear Mr Beresford-Knox,

Cambridge English Language Assessment

Thank you for your email of 10 May 2016.

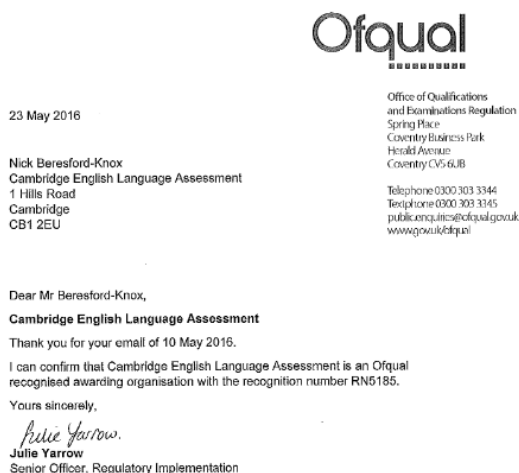
I can confirm that Cambridge English Language Assessment is an Ofqual recognised awarding organisation with the recognition number RN5185.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Yarrow.
Julie Yarrow

Senior Officer, Regulatory Implementation

Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual: 英国政府の資格と試験に関する監査機関)
英文別添資料の和文説明と公開情報



上記は、2016 年 5 月に Ofqual がケンブリッジ大学英語検定機構を RN5185 にて資格授与団体として登録した旨を記したものです。Ofqual は本登録をもって、IELTS が英国政府が定める基準を満たす英語資格であることを証明しています。IELTS で証明される英語力は、英国内での資格認定のための枠組みに参照され、バンドスコアごとに下記の通り表記されインターネット上で情報が公開されています。

<https://register.ofqual.gov.uk/Search?category=Qualifications&query=IELTS&status=Available%20to%20learner>
[S](#)

Qualification Number	Qualification Title	Owner Organisation Recognition Number	Owner Organisation Name	Qualification Level	Qualification Sub Level	EQF Level	Qualification Type	Qualification Status
500/2451/6	Cambridge English Entry Level Certificate in English (IELTS 4.0-5.0) (Entry 3) (ESOL)	RN5185	Cambridge Assessment English	Entry Level	Entry 3	Level 1	English For Speakers of Other Languages	Available to learners
500/2637/9	Cambridge English Level 1 Certificate in English (IELTS 5.5-6.5) (ESOL)	RN5185	Cambridge Assessment English	Level 1	None	Level 2	English For Speakers of Other Languages	Available to learners
500/2703/7	Cambridge English Level 2 Certificate in English (IELTS 7.0-8.0) (ESOL)	RN5185	Cambridge Assessment English	Level 2	None	Level 3	English For Speakers of Other Languages	Available to learners
500/2771/2	Cambridge English Level 3 Certificate in English (IELTS 8.5-9.0) (ESOL)	RN5185	Cambridge Assessment English	Level 3	None	Level 4	English For Speakers of Other Languages	Available to learners

**Ensuring quality
and fairness
in international
language testing**

IELTS™



An overview of the International English
Language Testing System (IELTS).

www.ielts.org

Ensuring quality and fairness in international language testing

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is trusted by organisations all over the world as an accurate, reliable and fair measure of English language proficiency. Developed by world leaders in language assessment and test delivery, IELTS is supported by ongoing international research in applied linguistics, language pedagogy and language assessment.

This guide is intended for staff in educational institutions, government departments, professional bodies, and for employers who require evidence of the English language proficiency of their applicants, as well as for English language teachers. It provides an overview of some of the key features of IELTS and how they contribute to reliable, relevant and fair language assessment – from the production of test materials, through test delivery, evaluation of test taker performance and test outcomes.

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For further information please visit www.ielts.org or refer to the 'Further Support' section of this brochure.



More than 9,000 organisations worldwide accept IELTS. Find their IELTS requirements online at www.ielts.org/recognition

IELTS overview

The IELTS test assesses the English language proficiency of people who want to study or work where English is the language used. It provides a fair, accurate and relevant assessment of language skills based on well-established standards and covers the full range of ability, from the beginner through to a very high level of proficiency.

IELTS tests come in two types: Academic or General Training. Test takers can choose either type of test according to their educational and professional goals as well as any visa requirements. Both tests comprise four separate parts that assess each of the four language skills – listening, reading, writing and speaking.

IELTS results are reported on a nine-band scale (see page 18). This scale has remained consistent and acquired general currency around the world over the past three decades.

IELTS for UK Visas and Immigration

Find out how the IELTS result can be used for this purpose at www.ielts.org/uk. For more information on going to or staying in the UK, visit www.gov.uk

IELTS is jointly owned by the British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and Cambridge English Language Assessment. Benefiting from the shared expertise of these three global partners, IELTS combines the world-renowned language and research expertise of Cambridge English Language Assessment and the test delivery, security and examination expertise of the British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia.

- IELTS is the world's most popular high-stakes English language test with over **2.5 million** tests each year.
- **More than 9,000 organisations** in over **140** countries recognise and use IELTS for selection purposes.
- IELTS is offered at more than 1,000 locations worldwide including over 50 locations in the USA.
- Test questions are developed by English as a second language specialists in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the US.
- Test questions are based on authentic materials sourced from all over the world.

Average test scores

Average IELTS test scores by country and first language, are available to download at www.ielts.org/data

Test format

IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training

Test takers can choose between two tests – IELTS Academic or IELTS General Training.

IELTS Academic is suitable for people planning to study in higher education or seeking professional registration. This option is a test of general academic English and assesses whether a test taker is ready to study or train in English. (More information about IELTS Academic is available on page 12.)

IELTS General Training is suitable for test takers planning to train, undertake work experience or study at below degree level in English-speaking environments. This option emphasises language survival skills in a broad social and workplace context.

IELTS Academic

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

Listening* (30 minutes)

- Four recorded monologues and conversations

Reading (60 minutes)

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

Writing (60 minutes)

- Writing task of at least 150 words where the test takers 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

* The Listening and Speaking components are the same for both IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training.

IELTS General Training

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

Listening* (30 minutes)

- Four recorded monologues and conversations

Reading (60 minutes)

- Five or six texts of varying length with tasks
- Section 1 contains two or three short factual texts
- Section 2 contains two short, work-related, factual texts
- Section 3 contains one longer text on a topic of general interest
- Texts are authentic (e.g. taken from notices, advertisements, company handbooks, official documents, books and newspapers)

Writing (60 minutes)

- Letter writing task of at least 150 words
- 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

* The Listening and Speaking components are the same for both IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training.

A detailed breakdown of the test format can be found in the *Guide for educational institutions, governments, professional bodies and commercial organisations* and the *Information for Candidates* booklets, both available at www.ielts.org

Read more

- Read about the different uses of IELTS on pages 12-15.
- Learn more about IELTS scoring and assessment criteria on pages 18-19.

Related research

Davies, A. (2008). *Studies in English Language Testing Volume 23 – Assessing academic English: Testing English proficiency 1950-1989 – the IELTS solution*. Cambridge: Cambridge ESOL/ Cambridge University Press.

A test of four skills

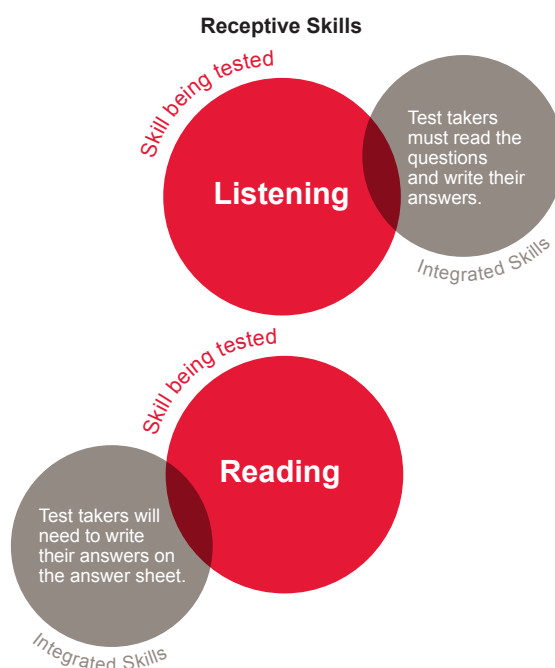
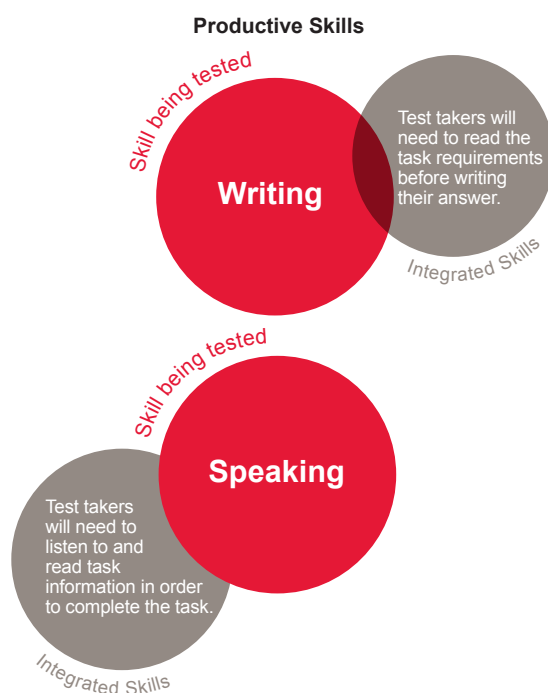
IELTS is a task-based test covering the four language skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking). IELTS test takers receive individual scores for each of the four test components. The average of the four provides the overall band score.

Each of the four components is carefully designed to focus on one particular skill. This results in a more equitable form of task design when compared with tests that assess multiple skills simultaneously and makes it easier to control task difficulty across the many different test versions produced each year.

For the organisations that require evidence of English language proficiency, the IELTS approach ensures that the score given for each component of the test is a clear and fair reflection of the test taker's ability in each of the four skills. This can be of particular value for professions where some language skills are deemed to be more important than others. For example in Canada, nurses are required to achieve a higher band score in their IELTS Speaking and Writing test while teachers in Australia are required to achieve higher scores in their IELTS Speaking and Listening test. (Read more about this topic on page 14).

While IELTS focuses on testing the four skills individually, there is inevitably an element of integration in each component in the same way that language skills are integrated in the real world. Test tasks often entail the use of other skills and are therefore 'integrated' to some degree, for example:

- In the Writing and Speaking components, information that is read or heard helps shape the test taker's own production. However, this is carefully controlled to ensure that the test taker is not required to carry out extensive or complex reading and listening in order to respond to the task. This is particularly important because a score for each skill is being reported and it would be unfair to test takers if their performance in one skill area was compromised by their lack of proficiency in another.
- Tasks in the Reading and Listening components can involve note-taking, labelling and completion of tables or flow charts. Nonetheless, it is important that any task or test items should focus on reading or listening and should not require detailed writing.



Related research

Nakatsuhara, F. (2011). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 12 – The relationship between test-takers listening proficiency and their performance on the IELTS test*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Hawkey, R., Green, A. and Unaldi, A. (2011). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 11 – An investigation of the process of writing IELTS Academic Reading Test items*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Weir, C., Hawkey, R., Green, A. and Devi, S. (2009). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 9 – The cognitive processes underlying the academic reading construct as measured by IELTS*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Taylor, L. and Falvey, P. (2007). *Studies in Language Testing Volume 19 – IELTS Collected Papers: Research in speaking and writing assessment*. Cambridge ESOL/Cambridge University Press.

Research Notes Issue 18 (2004) – IELTS, Some frequently asked questions. Cambridge ESOL/Cambridge University Press.

Davies, A. et al. (1999). *Dictionary of English Language Testing*. Cambridge ESOL/Cambridge University Press.

The international English language test

IELTS has been developed in close consultation with academics, professional bodies and immigration authorities from around the world to ensure that it is relevant and fair to test takers regardless of cultural background or where they have learnt English.

This international approach to test development extends across all aspects of the test.

- IELTS accepts all standard varieties of English.
- IELTS tasks are written and edited by an international team of language experts.
- A range of native-speaker English accents is used in the Listening test.
- Test tasks draw upon a broad range of authentic content from around the world (books, newspapers, magazines, the internet etc.).

Face-to-face Speaking test

A face-to-face Speaking test is the most effective means of assessing speaking skills.

The IELTS Speaking test is conducted one-on-one with a qualified and trained examiner who interacts with and assesses the test taker's communicative skills in English. (For more information about IELTS examiners please refer to pages 10 and 11.)

The face-to-face format prompts a more realistic performance from test takers, who are not simply responding to recorded cues from a computer. Institutions and employers are therefore better able to identify test takers who can communicate effectively in English.

The face-to-face Speaking test format is supported by a substantial body of academic research into test taker language and behaviour. Test takers also regularly indicate that they prefer to take a face-to-face Speaking test rather than a computer-mediated test.



Watch samples from IELTS Speaking tests on the *IELTS Scores Guide* DVD, available to order from www.ielts.org/institutions

Related research

Brown, A. and Hill, K. (2007). *Studies in Language Testing Volume 19 – Interviewer style and candidate performance in the IELTS oral interview*. Cambridge: UCLES/Cambridge University Press.

Brown, A. (2006). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 6 – An examination of the rating process in the revised IELTS Speaking Test*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Lazaraton, A. (2002). *Studies in Language Testing Volume 14 – A qualitative approach to the validation of oral language tests*. UCLES/Cambridge University Press.

O'Loughlin, K. (2001). *Studies in Language Testing Volume 13 – The equivalence of direct and semi-direct speaking tests*. UCLES/Cambridge University Press.

Qian, D. (2009). *Language Assessment Quarterly Volume 6, Issue 2 – Comparing direct and semi-direct modes for speaking assessment: Affective effects on test takers*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

**The IELTS face-to-face
Speaking test format
prompts a more realistic
performance from
test takers.**



Test production

Continual research-based improvement

The success of IELTS rests on attention to four key test qualities – validity, reliability, impact and practicality. These four factors have been the subject of a great deal of research involving academics, administrators, teachers and other practitioners throughout the world for more than 40 years.

The IELTS partners lead an extensive programme of international research designed to ensure the quality and continual improvement of IELTS tests.

Advances in applied linguistics, language pedagogy, language assessment and technological capabilities constantly challenge test developers to review, refine and reshape their approaches to test design, development, delivery and evaluation. The steady evolution of IELTS clearly demonstrates how such factors shape the development of a large-scale, high-stakes language test.

The IELTS research programme ensures:

- the ongoing usefulness and contemporary relevance of the test for organisations that use IELTS results
- that IELTS contributes more broadly to the growing understanding of the nature of language proficiency and its place within linguistics and language education.

Internal research

Internal research activities are managed by Cambridge English Language Assessment's Research and Validation group and are co-ordinated within a framework for ongoing test development and validation.

Cambridge English Language Assessment makes a valuable contribution to the wider field of language assessment through a number of presentations and publications, in particular, ***Studies in Language Testing (SiLT)***. SiLT is a series of academic volumes that addresses a diverse range of important issues and new developments in language testing and assessment that are of interest to test users, developers and researchers. For more information, go to www.cambridgeenglish.org/silt.

Research relating to IELTS test development and validation activities is also published in ***Research Notes (RN)***. For more information, go to www.cambridgeenglish.org/researchnotes

External research

The IELTS research programme, jointly funded by IDP: IELTS Australia and the British Council, ensures an ongoing relationship with the broader linguistics and language testing community and demonstrates the IELTS partners' commitment to continuous improvement of the test.

Since 1995, more than 100 external studies by over 130 researchers around the world have attracted funding under this scheme. Selected reports are published in print and online in ***IELTS Research Reports*** www.ielts.org/researchers

The IELTS partners lead an extensive programme of international research designed to ensure the quality and continual improvement of the test.

Annual research grants

Every year, individuals and education institutions with relevant experience are invited to apply to undertake IELTS-related research projects. Details of available grants, awards and application guidelines can be found online at www.ielts.org/researchers

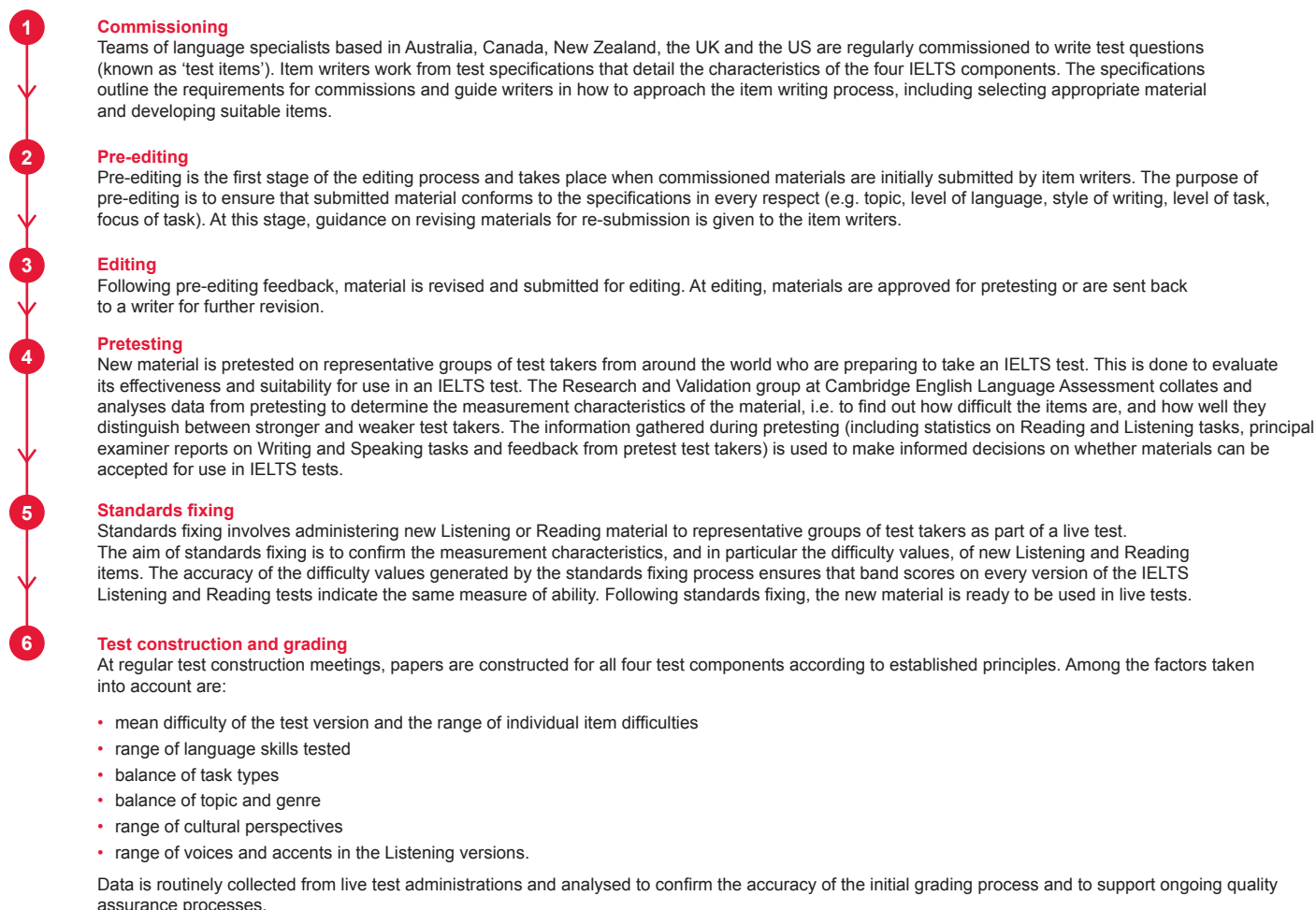


Production of test materials

The IELTS test production process is based on the ethical standards described in the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) Code of Practice and on the systems and processes outlined in the Cambridge English Language Assessment *Principles of Good Practice*.

These ensure appropriate qualitative standards for the production of test materials, involving the judgement of qualified specialists and quantitative statistical standards for the selection of suitable test material, as well as the maintenance of consistent levels of test difficulty over time.

Test production process



Ensuring appropriateness of topics

IELTS test materials are designed to be accessible to all test takers irrespective of their nationality, age, gender or first language. Topics or contexts of language use that might introduce a bias against any group of test takers are proscribed in the test specifications.

The pretesting stage (described in the diagram above) provides an additional check that all materials used in IELTS tests are appropriate to the culturally diverse international IELTS candidature.

Related research

Cambridge English Principles of Good Practice, January 2013. Cambridge: Cambridge English Language Assessment. Available from www.cambridgeenglish.org/principles

Marshall, H. (2006). *Research Notes 23, 3-5 – The Cambridge ESOL item banking system*. Cambridge ESOL.

O'Loughlin, K. (2000). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 3 – The impact of gender in the IELTS oral interview*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Green, T. and Hawkey, R. (2011). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 11 – An empirical investigation of the process of writing Academic Reading test items for the International English Language Testing System*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Test delivery

Availability

- IELTS is available at more than **1,000** locations worldwide including more than 50 locations in the USA.
- There are **48 test dates per year**.
- Test fees are usually payable in local currency.
- Many IELTS test centres will deliver testing for groups of test takers onsite at their workplace or educational institution.
- Many test centres offer online booking as well as face-to-face customer support with booking the test.

Search for IELTS test centres around the world at www.ielts.org

IELTS for UK Visas and Immigration

Find out how the IELTS result can be used for this purpose at www.ielts.org/uk. For more information on going to or staying in the UK, visit www.gov.uk

Every test version includes a unique combination of questions – no two tests are the same.

Test takers with special requirements

To ensure that language proficiency is assessed fairly and objectively, IELTS provides a comprehensive service for test takers who have special requirements including hearing, visual and learning difficulties. These services include:

- modified and enlarged test papers
- Braille papers
- a hearing-impaired (lip-reading) version of the Listening test
- extra time
- a scribe to write answers on a test taker's behalf
- use of assistive technology.

Results delivery

- Results for test takers can be previewed online on the 13th calendar day after their test.
- Test Report Forms are posted or are available for pick-up from the test centre **13 calendar days** after the test.
- Only one copy of the Test Report Form is sent to the test taker.
- A test taker may request to have their Test Report Form automatically sent to five institutions of their choice free of charge.



IELTS is available in more than 1,000 locations in over 140 countries

Security

IELTS is a high-stakes test that leads to educational and professional opportunity at home and overseas. IELTS takes a multi-layered approach to test security, including measures before test day, on test day and after test day. These mechanisms ensure that the integrity of the test is upheld at all times.

While some examples of IELTS security measures are shared here, many others cannot be disclosed to the public.

Test centre selection

Each prospective IELTS test centre goes through a rigorous selection process and agrees to a stringent set of contractual conditions.

Test centre audits

The conditions of IELTS test centre operation include a comprehensive audit programme involving both scheduled site audits and spot audits, without prior warning, to ensure test centre operations are maintained at a consistently high level.

In 2006, the British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia established the Cross Partner Audit Programme as an additional measure to help ensure consistent service delivery across the global IELTS network. This programme enables spot audits to be conducted by IDP: IELTS Australia of centres managed by the British Council and by the British Council of test centres managed by IDP: IELTS Australia. The same audit documentation and reporting procedures are used by both partners for auditing all test centres across the global IELTS network.

High-resolution
photography and
biometric systems
are used to verify the
identity of test takers.

Identity authentication

- Every test taker must present a valid identity document before being accepted to sit a test.
- A high-resolution photograph of each test taker is captured at registration. This ensures that the photograph which appears on the Test Report Form is that of the person who sat the test.
- Biometric systems are used to capture and record each test taker's finger scan at test registration and before entry to the test. This finger scan is checked on test day to verify test taker identity and ensure that the same person sits all four components of the test.

Test materials

- Every test version includes a unique combination of questions – no two versions of the test are the same.
- Restricted user rights among test centre staff ensure access to test materials is controlled.

Test results

- Systems are in place to automatically and routinely scrutinise test results. When an anomaly is identified, the test taker, test centre and any organisation that has been sent the result are notified and appropriate action is taken, which may include cancellation of a test taker's result.
- Organisations are strongly advised to use the IELTS Test Report Form Verification Service. This free, secure online service lets you:
 - » quickly verify that an applicant is presenting a genuine result
 - » conveniently download electronic Test Report Forms in batches.



The *IELTS Test Report Form Verification Service* booklet can be downloaded from www.ielts.org/verify

Further information about IELTS security protocols can be requested by contacting the IELTS partners directly or by attending an IELTS information session. Please refer to the back cover for contact details of the Stakeholder Relations teams at the British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and IELTS USA.

Read more

Read more about the measures underpinning the consistency and reliability of results on page 11.

Evaluation of test taker performance

IELTS examiners

Writing and Speaking assessments are carried out by trained and certificated examiners. The examiners work to clearly defined criteria and are subject to extensive and detailed quality control procedures. IELTS examiners worldwide are supported by the **IELTS Professional Support Network**, a system of recruitment, training, standardisation and monitoring. The Professional Support Network is jointly managed by British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia.

The Professional Support Network exists to:

- establish a clear framework for the professional support of IELTS Speaking and Writing examiners
- ensure that IELTS examiners are appropriately qualified and have the relevant professional experience (see 'Recruitment' section below)
- provide effective training for ESL teachers to enable them to carry out consistent IELTS assessments
- provide ongoing support through feedback from monitoring and through standardisation and certification, which ensures examiners maintain their high level of accuracy
- ensure that all examiners are given opportunities for professional development (e.g. the opportunity to apply to become an examiner trainer) throughout their career.

The major objectives of the Professional Support Network are for examiners to:

- rate the test takers' spoken and written performance accurately and consistently using pre-defined descriptions of performance
- consistently apply Speaking test procedures to obtain consistent, representative, valid samples of the test taker's spoken English.

Every IELTS examiner in every IELTS centre around the world is supported by this system.

The examiner system

Recruitment

The assessment of professional attributes and interpersonal skills of examiner applicants occurs at three stages in the recruitment process: application form, interview, and training. All examiners must have:

- an undergraduate degree or qualification(s) that can be demonstrated to be equivalent to an undergraduate degree
- a TEFL/TESOL qualification from a recognised institution
- substantial relevant teaching experience. The majority of this teaching experience must relate to adult students (16 years and over)

Induction

Shortlisted applicants are interviewed and, if successful, complete an induction process.

Training

Applicants who successfully complete induction proceed to training, which is carried out by an examiner trainer and lasts four days.

Certification

They then complete a certification set to demonstrate that they can apply the assessment criteria accurately and reliably and are certificated as examiners.

Year 1: Monitoring

Examiners are monitored at least once every two years. New examiners (and those who have not recently worked as IELTS examiners) are monitored three times in their first year. Monitoring is carried out by examiner trainers. All examiners receive written feedback on their rating and also on the delivery of the Speaking test. They may be required to take corrective action if any issues are raised about their performance.

Year 2: Standardisation and recertification

Standardisation sessions are held every two years and are led by an examiner trainer. Standardisation is completed at the centre and takes place as close as possible to the two-yearly recertification of the examiner. After the standardisation session, the examiners then complete a new certification set to demonstrate they can apply the assessment criteria accurately.

Systems and safeguards to ensure reliability of results

The consistency and reliability of IELTS results are safeguarded through several measures.

- **Sample monitoring of all examiners**

Examiners are monitored at least once every two years. (See 'Monitoring' on page 10, opposite).

- **Targeted monitoring of examiners**

Selected centres worldwide are required to provide samples of recordings and scripts from marked Speaking and/or Writing tests. These are then second-marked by a team of IELTS Principal Examiners/Assistant Principal Examiners and feedback is provided to each examiner.

- **Double marking at centre**

Where significant divergence is identified between Writing and/or Speaking scores and Reading and Listening scores, test taker performances are double-marked.

- **Research and validation analyses**

The Cambridge English Language Assessment Research and Validation group conducts routine analysis on each test version to ensure that the performances of test materials, test taker and examiners are in line with historical norms.

- **Enquiry on results service**

Test takers who feel that their score does not reflect their performance may apply to have their tests re-marked. An Enquiry on Result (EOR) is re-marked by a senior examiner.



IELTS examiners worldwide are managed by the IELTS Professional Support Network.

Using IELTS

IELTS for study

IELTS Academic is suitable for people planning to study in higher education or seeking professional registration. It assesses whether a test taker is ready to begin studying or training in the medium of English. Making effective use of written texts in academic work is a skill to be acquired at college or university, not one that students at all levels should be expected to possess on entry. For this reason, IELTS Academic testing reflects some features of academic language but does not aim to simulate academic study tasks in their entirety. This approach is widely supported by the institutions that recognise IELTS.

IELTS General Training is suitable for test takers planning to train, undertake work experience or study at below degree level in English-speaking environments. IELTS is also a requirement for migration to some countries.

The IELTS partners work to help university admissions departments and other test users better understand the complex relationship between English language proficiency and subsequent academic success. This includes building awareness of key influences on academic outcomes and other factors, such as provision of ongoing language and study skills and support for international students.

Related research

Hawkey, R. (2006). *Studies in Language Testing Volume 24 – Impact Theory and Practice: Studies of the IELTS test and Progetto Lingue 2000*. Cambridge: Cambridge ESOL/Cambridge University Press.

O'Loughlin, K. and Arkoudis, S. (2009). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 10 – Investigating IELTS exit score gains in higher education*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Lloyd-Jones, G., Neame, C. and Medaney, S. (2011). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 11 – A multiple case study of the relationship between the indicators of students' English language competence on entry and students' academic progress at an international postgraduate university*. British Council, and IDP: IELTS Australia.

IELTS Academic is suitable for people entering higher education or seeking professional registration in an English-speaking country.



Setting IELTS requirements for academic entry

Universities and other academic institutions are responsible for setting their own IELTS band score requirements. It is vital that these institutions have a clear understanding of the contribution that IELTS scores can make in determining an applicant's suitability for entry, including the relative importance of scores in the four skills for particular academic courses.

The IELTS partners deliver information sessions to assist academic institutions in setting appropriate IELTS band score requirements. For more information, please contact the IELTS partners (see back cover for contact details).

Further support relating to interpreting IELTS scores

Visit www.ielts.org/institutions from where you can:

- download the *Guide for educational institutions, governments, professional bodies and commercial organisations*
- order the *IELTS Scores Guide* DVD. This DVD includes examples of test takers' speaking and writing performance at different band score levels.



Related research

Breeze, R. and Miller, P. (2011). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 12 – Predictive validity of the IELTS Listening Test as an indication of student coping ability in Spain*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Golder, K., Reeder, K. and Fleming, S. (2009). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 10 – Determination of appropriate IELTS band score for admission into a programme at a Canadian post-secondary polytechnic institution*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Hyatt, D. and Brooks, G. (2009). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 10 – Investigating stakeholders' perceptions of IELTS as an entry requirement for higher education in the UK*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Khalifa, H. and Weir, C. (2009). *Studies in English Language Testing Volume 29 – Examining Reading: Research and Practice in Assessing Second Language Reading*. Cambridge University Press.

Ingram, D. and Bayliss, A. (2007). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 7 – IELTS as a predictor of academic language performance*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Elder, C. and O'Loughlin, K. (2003). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 4 – Investigating the relationship between intensive English language study and band score gain on IELTS*. IDP: IELTS Australia.

Read, J. and Hayes, B. (2003). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 4 – The impact of IELTS on preparation for academic study in New Zealand*. IDP: IELTS Australia.

IELTS for professional registration

In most countries where English is the main language of communication, evidence of acceptable English language skills is a prerequisite for international graduates/applicants seeking professional registration.

Professional registration bodies around the world trust IELTS as a quality test that has proven to be reliable, consistent and secure for more than 20 years. Research has also shown that many professional associations prefer the IELTS approach to testing speaking skills using a face-to-face test.

- IELTS is accepted by professional registration bodies and associations in Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, the US, the UK as well as many non-English-speaking countries.

- Many of the registration bodies that accept IELTS represent the health care professions, such as nursing, medicine and pharmacy, where English language competence is of critical importance.
- Other professional bodies in particular countries requiring an IELTS result include accounting, engineering, law and veterinary practice.
- A wide range of other employers from sectors such as banking and finance, government, construction, energy and natural resources, aviation and tourism also require IELTS.
- Professional associations and registration bodies that accept IELTS are listed at www.ielts.org/recognition

Setting IELTS requirements for professional registration

The level of English language proficiency required by organisations varies by profession, by country and by jurisdiction. It is up to individual professional registration bodies to determine the level of English language ability (and which type of IELTS test – Academic or General Training) they require.

Many professional registration bodies conduct their own research or seek advice from language experts to establish minimum standards of language proficiency in IELTS. Some nursing

boards make a distinction between the productive skills and the receptive skills, requiring a higher minimum score for the Writing and Speaking tests than for Listening and Reading.

The IELTS partners deliver information sessions to assist professional bodies in setting appropriate IELTS band score requirements. For more information, please contact the IELTS partners (see back cover for contact details).

Related research

Read, J. and Wette, R. (2009). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 10 – Achieving English proficiency for professional registration: The experience of overseas-qualified health professionals in the New Zealand context*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Smith, H. and Haslett, S. (2008). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 8 – Use of the IELTS General Training module in technical and vocational tertiary institutions: A case study from Aotearoa, New Zealand*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Merrifield, G. (2011). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 11 – An impact study into the use of IELTS by professional associations and registration entities: Canada, the United Kingdom and Ireland*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Singh, M. and Sawyer, W. (2011). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 11 – Learning to play the ‘classroom tennis’ well: IELTS and international students in teacher education*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

IELTS for migration

Evidence of English language proficiency is a requirement for skilled migration visas for most English-speaking countries. IELTS is accepted as evidence of English language proficiency by the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), Immigration New Zealand (INZ) and by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

IELTS for UK Visas and Immigration

Find out how the IELTS result can be used for this purpose at www.ielts.org/uk. For more information on going to or staying in the UK, visit www.gov.uk

Responding to government and stakeholder needs

IELTS testing is under continual review because of the evolving test taker pool worldwide and the increasing use of IELTS for migration purposes. For example, following extensive consultation with stakeholders in New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the UK, the Reading and Writing components of the General Training test of IELTS were changed to feature workplace settings more prominently.

Related research

Merrifield, G. (2012). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 13 – The use of IELTS for assessing immigration eligibility in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the UK*. IDP: IELTS Australia and British Council.

Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship. (2006). *Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia*, available at www.immi.gov.au/media/research/lsia/

Merrylees, B. (2003). *IELTS Research Reports Volume 4 – 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*. IDP: IELTS Australia.

IELTS is a requirement for skilled migration and permanent residency in many English-speaking countries.





IELTS scores toolkit

Contents

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• Calculating an overall band score	20
• IELTS results that are more than two years old	21
• International standards – CEFR	22

IELTS scores toolkit

IELTS nine-band scale

Each band corresponds to a level of competence in English. All parts of the test and the overall band score are reported in whole or half bands, e.g. 7.0, 8.5.

IELTS Writing and Speaking assessment criteria

Public versions of the assessment criteria for Writing and Speaking are available at www.ielts.org/criteria

9	Expert user	Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
8	Very good user	Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex, detailed argumentation well.
7	Good user	Has operational command of the language, although with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
6	Competent user	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
5	Modest user	Has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, although is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.
4	Limited user	Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
3	Extremely limited user	Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
2	Intermittent user	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.
1	Non-user	Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.
0	Did not attempt the test	No assessable information provided.

Understanding IELTS scores

IELTS scores are reported on the nine-band scale. The Academic and General Training tests are marked using the same criteria.

- The tasks and grading used for the Listening and Speaking components are the same for IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training. The more socially oriented language skills of listening and speaking are equally important in an academic study or workplace context.

- The tasks, test content and grading of the Reading and Writing components differ between IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training. This is because the distinction between 'academic' and 'general' literacy has usually been seen as most marked in reading and writing skills.

IELTS scoring summary

Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking
The IELTS Listening test contains 40 questions. Each correct item is awarded one mark. Band scores, ranging from Band 1 to Band 9, are awarded to test takers on the basis of their raw scores.	The IELTS Reading test contains 40 questions. Each correct item is awarded one mark. Band scores, ranging from Band 1 to Band 9, are awarded to test takers on the basis of their raw scores.	Examiners use detailed performance descriptors to award a band score for each of four assessment criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task Achievement (for Task 1), Task Response (for Task 2) – 25% • Coherence and Cohesion – 25% • Lexical Resource – 25% • Grammatical Range and Accuracy – 25% 	Examiners use detailed performance descriptors to award a band for each of four assessment criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency and Coherence – 25% • Lexical Resource – 25% • Grammatical Range and Accuracy – 25% • Pronunciation – 25%
Differences between IELTS Academic and General Training: No difference	Differences between IELTS Academic and General Training: The Reading component of IELTS Academic and General Training is differentiated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The texts (topic, genre, discourse type, length, number, etc.). Academic papers may contain source texts featuring more difficult vocabulary or greater complexity of style. To secure a given band score, a greater number of questions must therefore be answered correctly on a General Training Reading test. • The range of item difficulties. The Academic Reading component has more items pitched at bands 5-8, whereas IELTS General Training has more items pitched at bands 3-6. This is a reflection of the different demands of Academic and General Training discourse for language learners. 	Differences between IELTS Academic and General Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Writing component of IELTS Academic and General Training are differentiated by the tasks (topic and genre). 	Differences between IELTS Academic and General Training: No difference

Band score boundaries

Although all IELTS test materials are pretested and standards fixed before being released as live tests, there are inevitably minor differences in the difficulty level across tests. To equate different test versions, the band score boundaries are set so that all test takers' results relate to the same scale of achievement. This means, for example, that the Band 6 boundary may be set at a slightly different raw score across individual test versions.



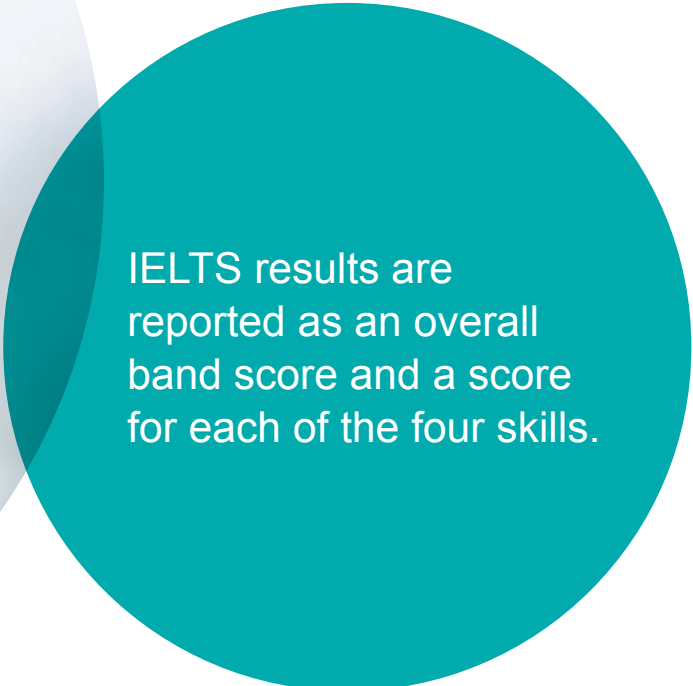
Calculating the overall band score

IELTS test takers receive a Test Report Form setting out their overall band score and their scores on each of the four components: **Listening**, **Reading**, **Writing** and **Speaking**. Each of the component scores is weighted equally. The overall band score is calculated by taking the average of the total of the four individual component scores.

Overall band scores are reported to the nearest whole or half band. The following rounding convention applies: if the average across the four skills ends in .25, it is rounded up to the next half band, and if it ends in .75, it is rounded up to the next whole band.

Some examples						
	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Average score*	Band score
Test taker A	6.5	6.5	5.0	7.0	6.25	6.5
Test taker B	4.0	3.5	4.0	4.0	3.875	4.0
Test taker C	6.5	6.5	5.5	6.0	6.125	6.0

*Average score = total of the four individual component scores divided by four.



IELTS results are reported as an overall band score and a score for each of the four skills.

IELTS results that are more than two years old

The IELTS partners recommend that a Test Report Form more than two years old should only be accepted as evidence of present level of language ability if it is accompanied by proof that the test taker has actively maintained or improved their English language proficiency. This recommendation is based upon what we know about the phenomenon of second language loss or 'attrition', a topic that is well-researched and documented in the academic literature.

The level of second language competence gained and the extent of opportunity for subsequent practice both affect how much language ability is retained or lost over a period of time. Research points to two types of attrition. At lower proficiency levels, rapid language loss occurs soon after the end of language training/exposure (for approximately two years) and then levels off, leaving a residual competency. At higher proficiency levels the reverse pattern can be observed; a few years of non-attrition followed by steady loss.

Related research

Bardovi-Harlig, K. and Stringer, D. (2010) *Studies in Second Language Acquisition Volume 32 - Variables in Second Language Attrition*. Cambridge University Press.

Weltens, B. and Cohen, A. (1989). *Studies in Second Language Acquisition Volume 11 – Language attrition research, an introduction*. Cambridge University Press.

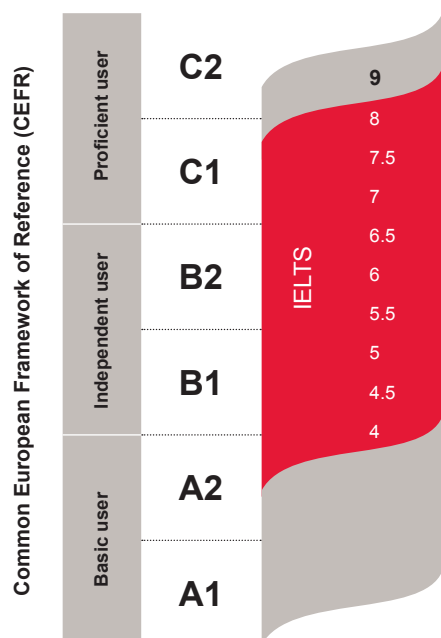
International standards – CEFR

The IELTS partners recommend that all organisations that accept IELTS results should look at the IELTS band score descriptors and use the *IELTS Scores Guide* DVD to ascertain the appropriate level of language ability required for their institution or course.

Test users may also find the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) helpful. The framework is a series of descriptions of abilities at different learning levels that can be applied to any language. It can provide a starting point for interpreting and comparing different language qualifications and is increasingly used as a way of benchmarking language ability around the world.

To help test users understand the relationship between IELTS band scores and the six CEFR levels, Cambridge English Language Assessment has conducted several studies to map the IELTS nine-band scale to the CEFR, drawing on the interrelationship between IELTS and other Cambridge English Language Assessment qualifications and the known relationship of these latter qualifications to the CEFR.

Further information can be found at www.ielts.org/cefr



Related research

Khalifa, H. and Ffrench, A. (2009). *Research Notes 37, 10–14: Aligning Cambridge ESOL examinations to the CEFR: issues and practice*. Cambridge ESOL.

Milanovic, M. (2009). *Research Notes 37 – Cambridge ESOL and the CEFR*. Cambridge ESOL.

Saville, N. (2005). *Language Assessment Quarterly, Volume 2, Issue 4 – An interview with John Trim at 80*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Further support

The IELTS partners publish a wide range of information and support materials for people interested in IELTS.

For organisations and institutions

- Visit www.ielts.org/institutions for a range of support materials including:
 - » *Guide for educational institutions, governments, professional bodies and commercial organisations* brochure
 - » *IELTS Scores Guide* (DVD)
 - » *IELTS Results Verification Service*
 - » *IELTS Guide for Agents*
 - » *IELTS Guide for Teachers*
 - » Analysis of test data
- 'Who accepts IELTS' search tool:

The IELTS website attracts over ten million visitors per year from more than 200 countries. Visitors to the site are able to find the IELTS requirements of different institutions by using the 'Who accepts IELTS?' tool. To check whether your institution is listed or to register your institution, visit www.ielts.org/recognition
- Results verification service – Organisations are advised to sign up for the free Test Report Form Verification Service to ensure that the results presented by test takers are genuine. Find out more at www.ielts.org/verify

For test takers

Face-to-face advice and support materials for test takers are available through the worldwide network of IELTS centres. Materials include *Information for Candidates* booklet and *Official Practice Materials* (for purchase) and free sample questions covering each part of the test. These resources can also be obtained via www.ielts.org/testtakers

For researchers

Visit www.ielts.org/researchers to find:

- information about IELTS research grants and awards
- analysis of past test data
- analysis of test taker performance
- information about score processing and interpretation
- examiner information
- guidance for using the Common European Framework of Reference
- teaching resources.

IELTS for UK, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand visas and immigration

Find out how the IELTS result can be used for these purposes at:

www.ielts.org/uk
www.ielts.org/australia
www.ielts.org/canada
www.ielts.org/nz



Notes

BRITISH COUNCIL

Bridgewater House
58 Whitworth Street
Manchester M1 6BB
UK

T +44 (0) 161 957 7755
E ielts@britishcouncil.org

IDP: IELTS AUSTRALIA

Level 8
535 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
AUSTRALIA

T +61 (0)3 9612 4400
E ielts.communications@idp.com

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

1 Hills Road
Cambridge CB1 2EU
UK

[www.cambridgeenglish.org/
helpdesk](http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/helpdesk)

IELTS USA

825 Colorado Boulevard
Suite 221
Los Angeles CA 90041
USA

T +1 323 255 2771
E ielts@ieltsusa.org

IELTS is jointly owned by the British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia
and Cambridge English Language Assessment.

IELTS Bands 4-9 (NQF levels Entry 3 to Level 3) are accredited by Ofqual, England's Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation.

March 2015

1. Home (<https://www.gov.uk/>)

Ofqual Handbook: General Conditions of Recognition

From:: **Ofqual**
Published:: **12 October 2017**
Updated:: **1 November 2018, see all updates**

Section C - Third parties

Rules about arrangements with third parties, including Centres and publishers

Condition C1 - Arrangements with third parties

C1.1 Where an awarding organisation arranges for a third party to undertake, on its behalf, any part of the development, delivery or award of qualifications which the awarding organisation makes available, or proposes to make available, the awarding organisation must –

- (a) ensure that the arrangements which it establishes with that third party enable the awarding organisation to develop, deliver and award qualifications in accordance with its Conditions of Recognition, and
- (b) monitor and, where appropriate, enforce such arrangements so as to ensure that it is able to develop, deliver and award qualifications in accordance with its Conditions of Recognition.

C1.2 An awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to ensure that, in making any such arrangements, it does not impose unnecessary or unduly burdensome requirements on third parties

Guidance on Condition C1

Examples of 'positive indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- evaluates a third party's ability and willingness to act in a way that will enable the awarding organisation to comply with the conditions before entering into an arrangement with the third party;
- has arrangements with third parties that reflect the conditions appropriate to the third parties' roles (examiners, IT providers, printers and couriers, for example) that enable it to meet its Conditions of Recognition;
- has up-to-date records of the third parties with which it works and of their roles in the development, delivery and award of its qualifications;
- makes clear to the third parties with which it works what it expects of them;
- has acted quickly and appropriately when it has found third-party activity puts at risk its ability to comply with its Conditions of Recognition enforcing such arrangements where necessary;
- seeks feedback from third parties on the burden of its arrangements on them and reduces any such burden where possible.

Examples of 'negative indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is not likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- does not identify where a third party is putting its compliance with the conditions at risk;
- breaches its conditions because of the actions of a third party;
- places unnecessary requirements on its third parties.

Condition C2 - Arrangements with Centres

C2.1 Where a Centre undertakes any part of the delivery of a qualification on behalf of an awarding organisation, this condition applies in addition to the requirements in Condition C1.

C2.2 Where this condition applies, an awarding organisation must ensure that arrangements between it and the Centre include a written and enforceable agreement.

C2.3 That agreement must in particular include provisions which –

- require the Centre to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the awarding organisation is able to comply with its Conditions of Recognition,
- require the Centre to take all reasonable steps to comply with requests for information or documents made by the awarding organisation or Ofqual as soon as practicable,
- require the Centre to assist the awarding organisation in carrying out any reasonable monitoring activities and to assist Ofqual in any investigations made for the purposes of performing its functions,
- set out all the requirements with which the Centre must comply in order to continue to deliver the qualification,
- establish a sanctions policy to be applied in the event that the Centre fails to comply with these requirements,
- require the Centre to retain a Workforce of appropriate size and competence to undertake the delivery of the qualification as required by the awarding organisation,
- require the Centre to have available sufficient managerial and other resources to enable it effectively and efficiently to undertake the delivery of the qualification as required by the awarding organisation,
- require the Centre to undertake the delivery of the qualification required by the awarding organisation in accordance with Equalities Law,
- require the Centre to operate a complaints handling procedure or appeals process for the benefit of Learners,
- set out any Moderation processes that the awarding organisation will undertake or that will be undertaken on its behalf,
- specify a process to be followed in any withdrawal of the Centre (whether voluntary or not) from its role in delivering a qualification, and
- require the Centre to take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of Learners in the case of such a withdrawal.

C2.4 In the event that the Centre withdraws from its role in delivering a qualification, the awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of Learners.

C2.5 The awarding organisation must, in respect of the parts of the delivery of qualifications which the Centre undertakes:

- provide effective guidance to the Centre, and

(b) make available to the Centre any information which, for the purposes of that delivery, the Centre may reasonably require to be provided by the awarding organisation.

Guidance on Condition C2

Examples of 'positive indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- sets out clearly to Centres what it requires them to do, making necessary information available and providing appropriate support and guidance (for example training and/or publications), including:
 - the requirements the Centre must meet, including those relating to the Centre's staff;
 - the requirements the Centre must meet and the steps it must take in the event of any incident;
 - its requirements for the delivery of any part of a qualification that a Centre undertakes on its behalf, for example arrangements for security of assessments, conduct of assessments and examinations, managing assessment and examination timetabling, management of centre-assessed work and authentication of Learners;
 - its arrangements for a Centre to report to the awarding organisation instances where its requirements are not being met;
 - any service level agreements between the awarding organisation and the Centre (for example entry requirements, registration of learners and applications for Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration);
 - any requirements relating to the use of third parties by Centres (for example satellite centres or training providers);
 - its arrangements for Centres to identify, investigate and report cases of suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration to the awarding organisation and the awarding organisation's procedures for taking action;
- uses a Centre approval process which takes reasonable steps to ensure it only enters into an agreement with a Centre that has the capacity and capability to comply with its arrangements for all qualifications it will deliver. The approval process should include an assessment of the Centre's:
 - ability to comply with the awarding organisation's requirements;
 - capability to deliver the qualification to the number of Learners it aims to register;
 - internal management controls;
- maintains an up-to-date record of the Centres with which it has agreements and these agreements;
- uses an agreement with a Centre which:
 - requires the Centre to seek written approval from the awarding organisation before permitting a third party (for example training providers or satellite centres) to deliver any part of its qualifications, including its assessments;
 - places responsibility on the Centre to monitor whether any third party involved with the delivery and assessment of the qualification on its behalf has appropriate capacity and capability;
 - requires the Centre to agree in writing to its requirements before the awarding organisation approves the use of a third party;
- before agreeing to a Centre's request that a third party should be involved with the delivery of any part of a qualification, assures itself that the involvement of the third party will not put at risk the Centre's ability to comply with the agreement or the awarding organisation's ability to comply with its Conditions of Recognition;
- monitors Centres' adherence to the agreements to identify Centres that are not compliant, or that are at risk of failing to comply, including through routine and unannounced visits to Centres;
- does not approve a Centre that it cannot effectively monitor, for example because of its location;

- ensures that Centres only register Learners for qualifications whom they reasonably expect to complete the qualification and that they have the resources, capability and capacity to deliver the qualification to the expected number of Learners;
- provides information to Centres to enable them to take appropriate steps to identify and notify the awarding organisations of any disabled Learners for whom the awarding organisation may need to make a Reasonable Adjustment, in time for such adjustment to be made;
- collects and analyses appropriate data and information from Centres which helps inform its view of the risk that the Centre will not comply with its requirements;
- identifies and addresses potential or actual Centre non-compliances in a timely way;
- investigates Centres which it believes might not be, or are not, complying with its Centre agreement;
- where it identifies Centres which are not acting in accordance with the agreement, takes appropriate action to secure compliance, or where necessary, applies appropriate and proportionate sanctions;
- has a credible and effective approach to the use of sanctions that encourage compliance;
- notifies other awarding organisations and relevant agencies with a role in protecting the interests of Learners where there are issues with the actions of Centres (subject to any requirements relating to the protection of such data);
- maintains records of interactions with Centres, including, for example, those relating to inspections or malpractice investigations and monitors and manages the risks presented by these Centres;
- identifies risks to Learners arising from Centre closures or withdrawals and puts in place effective arrangements to manage risks to Learners, including arrangements to allow Learners to complete assessments, in line with the Centre's contingency plans;
- seeks feedback and keeps its arrangements with its Centres under review, using feedback to improve its procedures and ensuring that these do not impose unnecessary burdens on Centres.

Examples of 'negative indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is not likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- enters into agreements with Centres which do not have the capability, capacity or resources to act in accordance with its agreement;
- does not have written agreements with its Centres, or has agreements between the Centre and the awarding organisation which do not include all the provisions listed under C2.3;
- does not monitor Centres' compliance with the agreement in a way which would enable it to identify and take action to correct or mitigate any issues;
- does not take responsibility for the way in which assessments are delivered by Centres, including the marking and moderation of assessments;
- does not enforce the agreement or impose appropriate sanctions when a Centre has breached the agreement;
- has, and takes no action against, any Centres which:
 - are not aware of their responsibilities under this agreement;
 - do not meet the requirements set by the awarding organisation and deliver qualifications in a way that is contrary to their agreement;
 - register Learners for the qualification where the Centre does not have the capacity, capability or resources to deliver the qualification to these Learners;
 - do not enable the awarding organisation to comply with the requirements of the General Conditions, for example by misrepresenting or mis-selling qualifications;
 - have not properly dealt with complaints or appeals from Learners; does not have suitable arrangements in place to ensure that Learners are not unfairly disadvantaged if a Centre withdraws from its role in delivering the qualification.

Condition C3 Arrangements with publishers

C3.1 Where an awarding organisation has in place an endorsement process, the awarding organisation must:

- (a) take all reasonable steps to ensure that the endorsement process does not have an Adverse Effect, and
- (b) publish the criteria which it uses to decide whether or not to endorse a particular resource.

C3.2 For the purposes of this condition, an 'endorsement process' is a process by which the awarding organisation endorses resources which are designed to support the preparation of Learners and persons likely to become Learners for assessments for a qualification which it makes available or proposes to make available.

Guidance on Condition C3

Examples of 'positive indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- considers the Adverse Effects that endorsement of resources could have when developing the criteria which it uses to decide whether or not to endorse a particular resource, and seeks to prevent or mitigate those Adverse Effects through those criteria;
- gives clear guidelines to relevant staff and contractors on engagement with publishers seeking endorsement of their resources;
- takes all reasonable steps to ensure that its endorsement is signalled in the same way for all endorsed resources (through, for example, the use of its logo or text expressing the endorsement), including those produced by the awarding organisation itself or an affiliate company;
- takes all reasonable steps to ensure that publishers of endorsed resources do not market an endorsed resource in a way which implies that the resource contains privileged examiner insight or that its use is necessary for the successful completion of an assessment or qualification.

Examples of 'negative indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is not likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- does not consider the possible Adverse Effects that endorsement of resources could have when developing the criteria which it uses to decide whether or not to endorse a particular resource, or does not seek to prevent or mitigate those Adverse Effects through those criteria;
- does not give clear guidelines to relevant staff and contractors on engagement with publishers seeking endorsement of their resources;
- does not take reasonable steps to ensure that its endorsement is signalled in the same way for all endorsed resources (through, for example, the use of its logo or text expressing the endorsement), including those produced by the awarding organisation itself or an affiliate company;
- does not take all reasonable steps to ensure that publishers of endorsed resources do not market an endorsed resource in such a way as to imply that the resource contains privileged examiner insight or that its use is necessary for the successful completion of an assessment or qualification.

1. Home (<https://www.gov.uk/>)

Ofqual Handbook: General Conditions of Recognition

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Section A - Governance

Rules about governance of awarding organisations, including management of conflicts of interest, risks, incidents and malpractice

Condition A1 - Suitability for continuing recognition

Suitability for continuing recognition

A1.1 An awarding organisation must not, by means of any act or omission which has or is likely to have an Adverse Effect, render itself unsuitable to continue to be recognised for the award of a relevant qualification.

A1.2 For these purposes, an act or omission may include in particular one which results in the awarding organisation –

- (a) being convicted of a criminal offence,
- (b) being held by a court or any professional, regulatory, or government body to have breached any provision of Competition Law, Equalities Law, or Data Protection Law,
- (c) being held by a court or any professional, regulatory, or government body to have breached a provision of any other legislation or any regulatory obligation to which it is subject, or
- (d) becoming insolvent or subject to corporate financial restructuring.

Inactive awarding organisations

A1.3 An awarding organisation must –

- (a) ensure that, within two years of first being recognised for the award of qualifications, it has submitted to Ofqual for accreditation or directly to the Register a qualification that meets its Conditions of Recognition, and
- (b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that, once it has submitted a qualification that meets its Conditions of Recognition, no two-year period passes in which it does not award a qualification in accordance with its Conditions of Recognition.

Ensuring the suitability of Senior Officers

A1.4 An awarding organisation must ensure that each of its Senior Officers is at all times a person suitable to be engaged in that role in an awarding organisation that is recognised for the award of the relevant qualifications.

A1.5 For these purposes, a Senior Officer may in particular be unsuitable for that role by virtue of –

- (a) any criminal convictions held by him or her,

- (b) any finding by a court or any professional, regulatory, or government body that he or she has breached a provision of any legislation or any regulatory obligation to which he or she is subject,
- (c) any proceedings in bankruptcy or any individual financial arrangement to which he or she is or has been subject,
- (d) any disqualification from holding the directorship of a company or from public office, or
- (e) any finding of malpractice or maladministration, in relation to a qualification (whether a regulated qualification or a qualification which is not regulated), to which he or she is or has been subject.

Guidance on Condition A1

Examples of 'positive indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- is clear about which acts or omissions will have, or are likely to have, an Adverse Effect and is aware of the type of actions and behaviours that could cause it to happen;
- makes sure all relevant staff understand which acts or omissions will have, or are likely to have, an Adverse Effect;
- has considered the behaviours that might be unsuitable for its Senior Officers, taking into account the market in which it operates and the qualifications it provides;
- uses appropriate information and evidence to make a judgement when it checks the suitability of its Senior Officers, both at the time of appointment and at regular intervals when in post – for example as a result of up-to-date voluntary disclosure or other appropriate checks.

Examples of 'negative indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is not likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- appoints a Senior Officer without knowing, or despite knowing, they were unsuitable for the post;
- does not ensure that its Senior Officers understand, at the time of appointment and once in post, what is expected of them in order to be suitable;
- does not identify or address its Senior Officers' behaviours that make them unsuitable for the role;
- does not act promptly and appropriately when a Senior Officer becomes unsuitable for the role.

Condition A2 - Establishment in the EU or the EFTA

A2.1 An awarding organisation must ensure that it at all times –

- (a) is ordinarily resident in a member state of the European Union or the European Free Trade Association, or
- (b) is legally established, or has a substantial presence, in a member state of the European Union or the European Free Trade Association.

There is currently no guidance on complying with this Condition

Condition A3 - Safeguards on change of control

Duty on change of control

A3.1 Where there is a change of control in relation to an awarding organisation, it must –

- (a) take (and procure that every other relevant person takes) all reasonable steps to ensure that the change of control does not have an Adverse Effect, and
- (b) put in place a plan designed to ensure that the interests of Learners will be protected.

Definition of change of control

A3.2 For the purposes of this condition, a change of control takes place in relation to an awarding organisation where –

- (a) a person obtains control of the awarding organisation who did not, immediately prior to doing so, have control of it, or
- (b) the awarding organisation merges with any person.

A3.3 Where the awarding organisation is a company, sub-sections (2), (3) and (4) of section 450 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/4/section/450>) shall apply for the purpose of determining whether a person has or had control of the awarding organisation.

There is currently no guidance on complying with these Conditions

Condition A4 - Conflicts of interest

Definition of conflict of interest

A4.1 For the purposes of this condition, a conflict of interest exists in relation to an awarding organisation where –

- (a) its interests in any activity undertaken by it, on its behalf, or by a member of its Group have the potential to lead it to act contrary to its interests in the development, delivery and award of qualifications in accordance with its Conditions of Recognition,
- (b) a person who is connected to the development, delivery or award of qualifications by the awarding organisation has interests in any other activity which have the potential to lead that person to act contrary to his or her interests in that development, delivery or award in accordance with the awarding organisation's Conditions of Recognition, or
- (c) an informed and reasonable observer would conclude that either of these situations was the case.

Identifying conflicts of interest

A4.2 An awarding organisation must identify and monitor –

- (a) all conflicts of interest which relate to it, and
- (b) any scenario in which it is reasonably foreseeable that any such conflict of interest will arise in the future.

A4.3 An awarding organisation must establish and maintain an up to date record of all conflicts of interest which relate to it.

Managing conflicts of interest

A4.4 An awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to ensure that no conflict of interest which relates to it has an Adverse Effect.

A4.5 Where such a conflict of interest has had an Adverse Effect, the awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to mitigate the Adverse Effect as far as possible and correct it.

Interests in assessment

A4.6 An awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to avoid any part of the assessment of a Learner (including by way of Moderation) being undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment.

A4.7 Where, having taken all such reasonable steps, an assessment by such a person cannot be avoided, the awarding organisation must make arrangements for the relevant part of the assessment to be subject to scrutiny by another person.

The written conflict of interest policy

A4.8 An awarding organisation must establish, maintain, and at all times comply with an up to date written conflict of interest policy, which must include procedures on how the awarding organisation intends to comply with the requirements of this condition.

A4.9 When requested to do so by Ofqual in writing, an awarding organisation must promptly submit to Ofqual its conflict of interest policy, and must subsequently ensure that the policy complies with any requirements which Ofqual has communicated to it in writing.

Guidance on Condition A4

In the guidance below 'confidential assessment information' refers to both the contents of assessment materials and information about the assessment in relation to which confidentiality must be maintained under Condition G4.1.

Examples of 'positive indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- ensures that its contractual arrangements with staff and third parties who have access to confidential assessment information clearly set out any obligations on those staff and third parties to manage conflicts of interest arising from other activities that they undertake;
- puts in place contractual arrangements which require, at a minimum, staff and third parties who have, or have had, access to confidential assessment information through the assessment development process (including quality assurance) to provide details to the awarding organisation of –
 - all instances in which such a person is, or has been, a Teacher for the relevant qualification, or is employed by a Centre at which that qualification is taught or delivered (even if that person does not themselves teach or deliver the qualification); and
 - all other conflicts of interest including personal conflicts such as, for example –
 - where a child, sibling, or other close family member is due to take the assessment in relation to which the person has confidential assessment information, and
 - where a partner or other close family member is teaching, or is due to teach, the relevant qualification;
- requires such details to be provided on an ongoing basis for as long as the relevant assessment information remains confidential;

- maintains records of all conflicts (using one or more documents) and retains relevant entries for as long as the relevant assessment information remains confidential or as long as required to undertake effective monitoring, whichever is later;
- puts in place contractual arrangements requiring staff and third parties who have had access to confidential assessment information to promptly notify it if they have been, or are currently, involved in the preparation of a resource designed to support the preparation of Learners for assessments for that qualification. One example of such a resource would be a textbook for the specification. This does not apply to the preparation of teaching resources or materials by a Teacher exclusively for Learners that he or she teaches (although the awarding organisation may choose to look at such materials in order to deter and detect any breach of confidentiality);
- monitors assessments set by staff and third parties who have been involved in the preparation of a resource designed to support the preparation of Learners for assessments for that qualification, to ensure that the fitness for purpose of those assessments has not been compromised by that resource. One example of such a resource would be a textbook for the specification. This does not apply to the preparation of teaching resources or materials by a Teacher exclusively for Learners that he or she teaches (although the awarding organisation may choose to monitor such materials in order to deter and detect any breach of confidentiality).
- investigates credible concerns which come to its attention in relation to conflicts of interest.

Examples of 'negative indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is not likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- did not know that the partner of a staff member involved in the development of confidential assessment information was employed at the time as a Teacher for the qualification for which the assessment would be taken;
- did not know that a third party who it contracted to develop or quality assure confidential assessment materials was employed at the time as a Teacher for the qualification for which the assessment would be taken;
- did not know that a third party who it contracted to assist with the development of confidential questions for an assessment – who did not teach the relevant qualification at the time – later became a Teacher of that qualification before the assessment was taken;
- did not know that a third party who modified confidential assessment materials worked at the time as a private tutor in respect of the qualification for which the assessment would be taken;
- where a current Teacher holds confidential assessment information, deletes relevant information from its conflicts register where the Teacher stops teaching the relevant qualification before the assessment is taken or before any monitoring takes place

Condition A5 - Availability of adequate resources and arrangements

Ensuring the ability to develop, deliver and award qualifications

A5.1 An awarding organisation must –

- (a) ensure that it has the capacity to undertake the development, delivery and award of qualifications which it makes available, or proposes to make available, in accordance with its Conditions of Recognition, and
- (b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that it undertakes the development, delivery and award of those qualifications efficiently.

A5.2 For these purposes, an awarding organisation must establish and maintain –

- (a) arrangements which will ensure that it retains at all times a Workforce of appropriate size and competence,
- (b) arrangements for the retention of data which will ensure that adequate information is available to it at all times,
- (c) arrangements which will ensure that sufficient technical equipment and support is available to it at all times,
- (d) appropriate management resources, and
- (e) appropriate systems of planning and internal control.

A5.3 For these purposes, an awarding organisation must also –

- (a) regularly review its ongoing resource requirements and make appropriate changes to take into account the findings of each review, and
- (b) adequately plan any new developments which it proposes to introduce, and allocate sufficient resources to ensure that such developments are effectively introduced.

Ensuring financial viability

A5.4 An awarding organisation must ensure that it will have available sufficient financial resources and facilities to enable it to develop, deliver and award qualifications in accordance with its Conditions of Recognition until at least the time by which every Learner for a qualification it makes available has had the opportunity to complete that qualification.

Guidance on Condition A5

Examples of 'positive indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- identifies and has in place, the resources it needs to develop, deliver and award its qualifications;
- has a system for reliably forecasting the demand for its qualifications and puts in place resources to meet this demand;
- is sufficiently flexible to act to address changes in its forecasted demand;
- acts quickly to identify and address any shortcomings in its capacity or ability to develop, deliver or award any of its qualifications that it could not reasonably have foreseen;
- collects and retains data that will allow it to meet its Conditions of Recognition, which could include, but not be limited to:
 - evidence of support for its qualifications (Condition E1);
 - qualitative and/or quantitative information from its monitoring of qualifications for features that could disadvantage particular Learners (Condition D2);
 - data that enables it to review the specified levels of attainment previously set for the qualification and similar qualifications it makes available (Condition H3);
 - the outcomes of its monitoring of its financial position and the steps it has taken to address any issues identified.

Examples of 'negative indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is not likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- does not identify or address inefficiencies in the development, delivery and award of its qualifications;
- cannot cope with demand for its qualifications;
- cannot facilitate demands from the regulator or other agencies, as required;
- fails to make appropriate amendments to the size and competence of its Workforce when it makes significant changes to the qualifications it offers;
- relies on IT systems that are prone to poor performance and/or repeated error;
- cannot access the up-to-date data it needs to be able to meet its Conditions of Recognition.

Condition A6 - Identification and management of risks

Identifying risks

A6.1 An awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to identify the risk of the occurrence of any incident which could have an Adverse Effect.

Preventing incidents or mitigating their effect

A6.2 Where such a risk is identified, the awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to –

- (a) prevent the incident from occurring or, where it cannot be prevented, reduce the risk of that incident occurring as far as is possible, and
- (b) prevent any Adverse Effect that the incident could have were it to occur or, where it cannot be prevented, mitigate that Adverse Effect as far as possible.

Contingency plan

A6.3 An awarding organisation must establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up to date written contingency plan.

A6.4 A contingency plan must be of sufficient detail and quality to allow the awarding organisation to mitigate, as far as possible, the Adverse Effect of any incident which has been identified by the awarding organisation as having a risk of occurring.

Guidance on Condition A6

Examples of 'positive indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- identifies events that might have an Adverse Effect using risk management approaches;
- knows where ownership for its approach to risk management lies within the organisation;
- reviews and updates its risks using a systematic and consistent approach;
- takes action to prevent or deal with risks that might have an Adverse Effect;
- has a contingency plan that covers:
 - the triggers for implementation of the plan;
 - the impact on other parts of the business of implementing the plan;
 - the minimum requirements to maintain development, delivery and award of its qualifications;
 - communication plans for relevant external parties;
 - what needs to be done to return to business as usual;

- tests its contingency plan to make sure it can mitigate Adverse Effects, covering areas such as key business systems and processes, and makes any necessary changes following the tests.

Examples of 'negative indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is not likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- does not systematically consider the range and type of risks that may have an impact on its regulated activities;
- has an ad hoc or inconsistent approach to identifying and managing risks that relate to preventing or mitigating Adverse Effects;
- does not actively take steps to mitigate risks it has identified;
- fails to identify a foreseeable risk—where it might be reasonably expected to do so—that could result in an Adverse Effect.

Condition A7 - Management of incidents

A7.1 Where any incident occurs which could have an Adverse Effect, an awarding organisation must (whether or not it has previously identified a risk of that incident occurring) promptly take all reasonable steps to –

- (a) prevent the Adverse Effect and, where any Adverse Effect occurs, mitigate it as far as possible and correct it, and
- (b) give priority to the provision of assessments which accurately differentiate between Learners on the basis of the level of attainment they have demonstrated and to the accurate and timely award of qualifications.

There is currently no guidance on complying with these Conditions

Condition A8 - Malpractice and maladministration

Preventing malpractice and maladministration

A8.1 An awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice or maladministration in the development, delivery and award of qualifications which it makes available or proposes to make available.

Investigating and managing the effect of malpractice and maladministration

A8.2 Where any such malpractice or maladministration is suspected by an awarding organisation or alleged by any other person, and where there are reasonable grounds for that suspicion or allegation, the awarding organisation must –

- (a) so far as possible, establish whether or not the malpractice or maladministration has occurred, and
- (b) promptly take all reasonable steps to prevent any Adverse Effect to which it may give rise and, where any such Adverse Effect occurs, mitigate it as far as possible and correct it.

Procedures relating to malpractice and maladministration

A8.3 For the purposes of this condition, an awarding organisation must –

- (a) establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, up to date written procedures for the investigation of suspected or alleged malpractice or maladministration, and
- (b) ensure that such investigations are carried out rigorously, effectively, and by persons of appropriate competence who have no personal interest in their outcome.

A8.4 Where a Centre undertakes any part of the delivery of a qualification which an awarding organisation makes available, the awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to keep under review the arrangements put in place by that Centre for preventing and investigating malpractice and maladministration.

A8.5 An awarding organisation must, following a request from such a Centre, provide guidance to the Centre as to how best to prevent, investigate, and deal with malpractice and maladministration.

Dealing with malpractice and maladministration

A8.6 Where an awarding organisation establishes that any malpractice or maladministration has occurred in the development, delivery or award of qualifications which it makes available, or proposes to make available, it must promptly take all reasonable steps to –

- (a) prevent that malpractice or maladministration from recurring, and
- (b) take action against those responsible which is proportionate to the gravity and scope of the occurrence, or seek the cooperation of third parties in taking such action.

A8.7 Where an awarding organisation has any cause to believe that an occurrence of malpractice or maladministration, or any connected occurrence –

- (a) may affect a Centre undertaking any part of the delivery of a qualification which an awarding organisation makes available, it must inform that Centre, and
- (b) may affect another awarding organisation, it must inform that awarding organisation.

Guidance on Condition A8

Examples of 'positive indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- has ways of working that reduce the risk of incidents of malpractice or maladministration occurring;
- makes sure that individuals involved in the development, delivery and award of its qualifications understand and routinely follow these ways of working;
- takes all reasonable steps to ensure that current (and former) staff and third parties do not provide information about its qualifications which is inaccurate or misleading;
- follows policies, practices and/or procedures that reduce the risk of malpractice and maladministration, covering, among other things:
 - plagiarism, collusion, tampering, breach of confidentiality of assessment materials;
 - incidents that occur outside of England (if it operates elsewhere);
- knows what to do if evidence of malpractice or maladministration comes to light, whether in the organisation itself or within a third party involved with the design, delivery or award of a qualification;
- acts quickly when it has evidence of malpractice or maladministration;
- investigates promptly any allegations for which there are reasonable grounds that current (or former) staff or third parties have provided inaccurate or misleading information to Centres or Teachers about its qualifications and, if the awarding organisation establishes that Teachers have been misinformed, takes reasonable steps to correct any misunderstandings with the Centres or Teachers that are affected;

- captures, logs and addresses all suspicions and evidence of malpractice.

The awarding organisation uses and regularly reviews a standardised investigations policy and approach that sets out:

- who investigates concerns about malpractice or maladministration;
- how an investigation is undertaken;
- how whistleblowers will be treated, and in such a way that individuals will not be prejudiced;
- when and how interested parties will be notified lawfully;
- how any interviews should be conducted;
- how facts will be gathered and evidence found, collated and stored;
- how evidence will be verified;
- how confidentiality of investigation materials is assured;
- how the records of its investigations will be presented and their accuracy assured;
- how and when any visits to Centres will be announced and undertaken;
- which principles will be followed when it undertakes an investigation with other bodies.

The awarding organisation has on record:

- clear terms of reference for the investigations that it has undertaken;
- a log of all allegations, including those that were not investigated, that it can cross-reference if new information is provided.

Where the awarding organisation finds that a Teacher has disclosed confidential assessment information, the awarding organisation ensures that, where appropriate, the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), or any organisation that carries out the same function in England or another jurisdiction, is notified. In considering whether or not such a referral is appropriate the awarding organisation considers whether:

- the Teacher in question is subject to professional regulation by the TRA or other teaching regulator; and
- the malpractice identified is serious based on the facts of the case and the seriousness of the sanction imposed by the awarding organisation.

The awarding organisation takes into account any guidance issued by the appropriate regulator. In general, a referral should be made where there was a deliberate or persistent disclosure in contravention of the requirements for the conduct of the assessment, or in breach of confidentiality of confidential assessment information, particularly where the action had, or was intended to have, a significant impact on the outcome of the assessment for at least one Learner.

The awarding organisation reminds any Centre at which the Teacher is employed of its obligation to consider a referral to the TRA. Where an awarding body has evidence that a Centre has made a referral, then it does not need to make a referral itself. If in doubt, an awarding organisation should err on the side of making a referral itself.

Where the awarding organisation finds that a person not subject to regulation by the TRA or another teaching regulator has disclosed confidential assessment information, it notifies any other professional regulator to which that person is subject, where appropriate.

Examples of 'negative indicators' that would suggest an awarding organisation is not likely to comply

The awarding organisation:

- has used an individual or Centre to assist with, or lead on, an investigation when there is a suspicion or allegation that the individual or Centre was itself connected to, or responsible for, the malpractice and/or maladministration being investigated;
- cannot demonstrate that it has taken steps to prevent repeat incidents of previous cases;
- has not followed its own procedures when investigating a matter;
- has not properly evaluated, and, where required, validated evidence collected during an investigation;
- has not contacted relevant parties that are critical to the investigation itself, or to the outcomes of the investigation;
- has not kept records and documents relating to the incident and investigation for an appropriate period;
- has not been able to enforce action it has taken against those involved in malpractice or maladministration, and cannot demonstrate a good reason why it has been unable to do so;
- has failed to take all reasonable steps to prevent its current (or former) staff or third parties from providing inaccurate or misleading information about its qualifications;
- has failed to investigate promptly allegations for which there are reasonable grounds that current (or former) staff or third parties have provided inaccurate or misleading information about its qualifications to Centres or Teachers;
- has not, where it has established that current (or former) staff or third parties have provided inaccurate or misleading information about its qualifications to Centres or Teachers, taken reasonable steps to correct any misunderstandings with the Centres or Teachers that are affected.

