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IELTS Preparation – Things to Know

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The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is a testing system that assesses the language ability of a candidate who aspires to study or work in a country where English is the predominant language of communication. This testing system has two versions, namely, the Academic Version and the General Training Version. It is important for an aspirant to know all about the grading system while pursuing IELTS Preparation.

The Academic version is for candidates who want to pursue higher education in universities or other institutions. It is also for professionals, namely medical doctors and nurses who aspire to pursue further studies or practice in a country where English is the prime language of communication.

The General training version is meant for candidates who wish to undertake non-academic training or achieve work experience or immigration. If you are undertaking an IELTS exam, note that there is no minimum passing score for this test. The result is issued in the form of band levels from band 1 to band 9, indicating a non-user to expert user level. For various institutes the threshold for passing is different.

Basics of IELTS Preparation

The test is divided into four parts in a particular sequence. Each IELTS aspirant has to complete the four modules, namely Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking, to be eligible for a band score. After attempting the test, you will get an IELTS Test Report Form (TRF), indicating your band level. For all students, the Listening and speaking modules remain the same, while the writing and reading modules differ, based on whether you are taking up an academic or general training test.

Listening test

The listening test consists of four sections and takes about 30-40 minutes. A candidate would have to listen to a recorded conversation and submit answers. The level of difficulty increases with each section. Usually, the test would consist of a monologue or a dialogue, which would start with a short introduction enlightening the listeners about the situation. You will get some time to answer the questions. You cannot go back to the recorded tape, once you are done with a section.

Reading test

The reading test consists of three sections and you have got 60 minutes to read the three passages and answer the questions. Each section will carry between 13 and 14 questions, overall 40 questions.

Writing test

Like the reading test, this is also a 60 minute activity that is bifurcated into two subparts. You will be asked to write a report/letter and an essay. Be sure to practice essay and letter writing while preparing for IELTS.

Speaking test

This is a 15-minute test and consists of three sections. The first section is a personal interview round, where you will be asked about your hobbies, interests, why you want to take up IELTS exam and other generic questions. The second section is a cue card talk session. You would be given a topic card and have one minute to prepare your speech. The third section is a discussion between you and the examiner, typically a subject you must have spoken in section two.

The IELTS test is 2 hours and 45 minutes and the test continues one after another.

We shall look at other important topics, such as online IELTS preparation, IELTS sample test etc. in our next blog. Keep looking this space for more on IELTS practice test.

Category:Spoken English /Advanced English

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