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IELTS



IELTS Writing Task 2: Marking criteria

| Band | Task Achievement | Coherence and Cohesion | Lexical Resource | Grammatical Range and Accuracy |
|------|--|---|--|---|
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully addresses all parts of the task presents a fully developed position in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well supported ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention skillfully manages paragraphing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips' |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sufficiently addresses all parts of the task presents a well-developed response to the question with relevant, extended and supported ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sequences information and ideas logically manages all aspects of cohesion well uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings skillfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures the majority of sentences are error-free makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses all parts of the task presents a clear position throughout the response presents, extends and supports main ideas, but there may be a tendency to overgeneralise and/or supporting ideas may lack focus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use presents a clear central topic within each paragraph | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a variety of complex structures produces frequent error-free sentences has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses all parts of the task although some parts may be more fully covered than others presents a relevant position although the conclusions may become unclear or repetitive presents relevant main ideas but some may be inadequately developed/unclear | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately uses paragraphing, but not always logically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication |



Writing: Task 2

The Essay Structure

1. Introduction
2. Body 1
3. Body 2
4. Conclusion



The 5 question types

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Sample Question:

Professional athletes like football (soccer) and basketball players are overpaid.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Each body paragraph should present *ONE* reason which appropriately supports the opinion you expressed in your thesis statement which is included in your introduction.

DO NOT argue against yourself. Each point you make should agree very clearly with the position you take in your thesis statement



The 5 question types

2. What are the advantages and disadvantages...?

Sample Question:

An increasing number of students are choosing to spend a year away from their studies to live abroad, work, or gain some other meaningful experience before attending university.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of this choice?

Body paragraph 1: Discuss the advantages OR disadvantages.

Body paragraph 2: Discuss which ever side you did not discuss in B1

DO NOT make a recommendation or take a side unless specifically asked. Simply and objectively describe the pros and cons.



The 5 question types

3. Causes and solutions to a problem

Sample Question:

The influence of human beings on the world's ecosystem is leading to the extinction of species and the loss of bio-diversity.

*What are the primary causes of the loss of bio-diversity?
What solutions can you suggest?*

Body paragraph 1: Discuss your primary cause and a corresponding solution.

Body paragraph 2: Discuss your secondary cause and a corresponding solution.

Tip: Hedging vocab

- One reason this happened could be...
- I think it is possible that...
- It may work to try...
- I would suggest...
- This approach could help many people to...

Hedging allows you to avoid broad generalisations or overly confident recommendations



The 5 question types

4. Discuss both sides and give your own opinion...

Sample Question:

Some people prefer to save their money. Others believe that it is preferable to use their money on things that will bring them joy.

Discuss both sides and give your own opinion

Body paragraph 1: Discuss the side you disagree with.

Body paragraph 2: Discuss the side that you agree with.

Conclusion: Summarise B1 and B2. State which side is preferable

If you fail to include your opinion you will negatively affect your task response score.



The 5 question types

5. Thematic, or two-part questions

Sample Question:

Many children have access to the internet and devices like smart phones, even at very young ages. Do you think this is a good trend? What rules should children follow related to internet and gadget use?

Body paragraph 1: Answer the first question.

Body paragraph 2: Answer the second question.

These questions can be very open in their format. You may be asked to respond in a variety of different ways. READ THE QUESTION CAREFULLY!

Writing the thesis statement for this question type can be difficult. Make sure you cover each main point that you will discuss in your body paragraphs.

Sample Thesis:
Given the importance of technology in every aspect of modern life, it is important that young children gain exposure to the internet and devices, provided that parents monitor their activity carefully.



Final Tips

Academic/Formal Writing

The IELTS expects you to use an academic/formal writing style. This means you should use the same kind of language that you would when writing a report for work or an essay for school. Obviously, you would avoid using "slang" words. You would also write in complete sentences and use proper punctuation. Here are some additional features of academic/formal writing to keep in mind for Task 2:

- **Organize ideas into separate paragraphs:** You will lose points if you do not divide your essay into paragraphs.
- **Do not use contractions:** Using contractions like *don't* instead of *do not*, or *they'll* instead of *they will* is inappropriate practice for academic writing. Always use the full form.
- **Write in complete sentences:** Make sure each sentence you write has an independent clause with a subject and verb. When you write complex or compound sentences, use "connectors" like coordinating conjunctions (and, but, so, etc) or subordinating conjunctions (when, although, because, etc).
- **Avoid repetition of words and ideas:** Your ideas should move from one to the next logically, and you should show off your vocabulary by avoiding redundancy (don't repeat the same words over and over).
- **Avoid "slang:"** The English you hear in the movies or read on social media is often inappropriate for formal writing. It is a big problem to use words like "dude" or spellings like "U" (for "you") on the IELTS.
- **Thoughtful and Neutral Tone:** Academic/formal writing has a very careful and thoughtful tone. It rarely sounds angry, excited, or overly certain about an idea. It is also best to avoid broad generalizations in formal/academic compositions.





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