What to expect on the exam day:

Overview

The IELTS test has four components.

Three components – Listening, Reading and Writing – are always taken on the same day.

The Speaking component may be sat on the same day or taken up to seven days before or after the other tests, depending on your test centre.

The IELTS test implements sophisticated, biometric security measures which protect candidates and organisations from attempts to cheat. You will go through the processes described below when you register on test day.

Arrive early

Eat a good breakfast. You will have several hours of concentration ahead of you and you will need food and drink in the morning. You may even want to bring more food or a snack with you to eat after the morning tests, especially if your Speaking test is at a later time that day. You cannot take food or drink into the test room.

You should arrive early for your IELTS test in order to allow time for you to be registered and be seated for the test. Please refer to your booking confirmation for details. If you arrive late, you may not be allowed to take the test.

Check-in your personal belongings

No personal items are to be taken into the test room. Test day staff will collect and safely store your personal belongings. Items which are forbidden from the test room include: watches, mobile phones, hand-held computers, cameras, hats, scarves, wallets, books or notes.

Identification documents

When you arrive on test day, a staff member will check your identification (ID). Your ID must be the same ID that you used when you booked the test. It must also be valid (unexpired) and have a recognisable photo of yourself.

As a secure, high-stakes test, IELTS uses the latest biometric technology to verify your identity. This means that on the day of your test we will capture your high-resolution photograph to include on your Test Report Form (TRF). We also ask for your finger scan as further measure of checking your identity. Each time you re-enter the test room (after a toilet break or for your Speaking test), your identity will be verified by simply asking you to scan your finger.

How do these measures help you on test day? These biometric tools speed up the process of verifying your identity. This means the time you spend waiting to register on test day is minimised and together with other test takers you can get settled into your seats quicker.

Entering the test room

When it is time to enter the test room, a test invigilator will guide you to your seat. You are not permitted to speak to other candidates. If you have a question, put your hand up and a staff member will assist you.

On your desk, you are only allowed to have your identification, pens/pencils, eraser and a bottle of drink in a transparent bottle.

Breaks and asking for help

You are not permitted to leave during the first or last 10 minutes of any of the test sections. If you need to leave the test room to go to the bathroom at any other time, raise your hand and ask a staff member.

If you have a problem (for example, you cannot hear the instructions, or you feel ill) raise your hand to attract the attention of the supervisor. Remember that the invigilators will not provide any explanation on the questions.

Keep track of time. There will be a wall clock in the exam room. It is essential that you keep track of time and pace yourself as you are taking the test.

End of the test

You cannot leave your seat until you have been notified by an invigilator and given permission to leave. If you finish the test early you must wait quietly until the test is finished and you are advised that you can leave. You must leave any notes and materials on the desk.

After the test

Collect your belongings. Your provisional results will be available online 5-7 days after your computer-delivered IELTS test or 13 days after your paper-based IELTS test.

Your official result will appear on your Test Report Form which will also be ready 5-7 days after your computer-delivered IELTS test or 13 days after your paper-based IELTS test.

You can collect it from the test centre or have it posted to you – depending on what was specified at the time of registration.