

# IELTS

## Writing Band Descriptors

Updated May 2023

Please visit [IELTS.org](https://ielts.org) for updates



---

# Writing Task 1

# Band Descriptors

# IELTS Writing Task 1 Band Descriptors

## Scoring criteria for Academic and General Training tests

A script must fully fit the positive features of the descriptor at a particular level. **Bolded text** indicates negative features that will limit a rating.

Band Score	Task Achievement	Coherence & Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range & Accuracy
9	<p>All the requirements of the task are fully and appropriately satisfied.</p> <p>There may be extremely rare lapses in content.</p>	<p>The message can be followed effortlessly.</p> <p>Cohesion is used in such a way that it very rarely attracts attention.</p> <p>Any lapses in coherence or cohesion are minimal.</p> <p>Paragraphing is skilfully managed.</p>	<p>Full flexibility and precise use are evident within the scope of the task.</p> <p>A wide range of vocabulary is used accurately and appropriately with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features.</p> <p>Minor errors in spelling and word formation are extremely rare and have minimal impact on communication.</p>	<p>A wide range of structures within the scope of the task is used with full flexibility and control.</p> <p>Punctuation and grammar are used appropriately throughout.</p> <p>Minor errors are extremely rare and have minimal impact on communication</p>
8	<p>The response covers all the requirements of the task appropriately, relevantly and sufficiently.</p> <p>(Academic) Key features are skilfully selected, and clearly presented, highlighted and illustrated.</p> <p>(General Training) All bullet points are clearly presented, and appropriately illustrated or extended.</p> <p>There may be occasional omissions or lapses in content.</p>	<p>The message can be followed with ease.</p> <p>Information and ideas are logically sequenced, and cohesion is well managed.</p> <p>Occasional lapses in coherence or cohesion may occur.</p> <p>Paragraphing is used sufficiently and appropriately.</p>	<p>A wide resource is fluently and flexibly used to convey precise meanings within the scope of the task.</p> <p>There is skilful use of uncommon and/or idiomatic items when appropriate, despite occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation.</p> <p>Occasional errors in spelling and/or word formation may occur, but have minimal impact on communication.</p>	<p>A wide range of structures within the scope of the task is flexibly and accurately used.</p> <p>The majority of sentences are error-free, and punctuation is well managed.</p> <p>Occasional, non-systematic errors and inappropriacies occur, but have minimal impact on communication.</p>
7	<p>The response covers the requirements of the task.</p> <p>The content is relevant and accurate – there may be a few omissions or lapses. The format is appropriate.</p> <p>(Academic) Key features which are selected are covered and clearly highlighted but could be more fully or more appropriately illustrated or extended.</p> <p>(Academic) It presents a clear overview, the data are appropriately categorised, and main trends or differences are identified.</p> <p>(General Training) All bullet points are covered and clearly highlighted but could be more fully or more appropriately illustrated or extended. It presents a clear purpose. The tone is consistent and appropriate to the task. Any lapses are minimal.</p>	<p>Information and ideas are logically organised and there is a clear progression throughout the response. A few lapses may occur.</p> <p>A range of cohesive devices including reference and substitution is used flexibly but with some inaccuracies or some over/under use.</p>	<p>The resource is sufficient to allow some flexibility and precision.</p> <p>There is some ability to use less common and/or idiomatic items.</p> <p>An awareness of style and collocation is evident, though inappropriacies occur.</p> <p>There are only a few errors in spelling and/or word formation, and they do not detract from overall clarity.</p>	<p>A variety of complex structures is used with some flexibility and accuracy.</p> <p>Grammar and punctuation are generally well controlled, and error-free sentences are frequent.</p> <p>A few errors in grammar may persist, but these do not impede communication.</p>

# IELTS Writing Task 1 Band Descriptors

## Scoring criteria for Academic and General Training tests

A script must fully fit the positive features of the descriptor at a particular level. **Bolded text** indicates negative features that will limit a rating.

Band Score	Task Achievement	Coherence & Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range & Accuracy
6	<p>The response focuses on the requirements of the task and an appropriate format is used.</p> <p>(Academic) Key features which are selected are covered and adequately highlighted. A relevant overview is attempted. Information is appropriately selected and supported using figures/data.</p> <p>(General Training) All bullet points are covered and adequately highlighted. The purpose is generally clear. There may be minor inconsistencies in tone.</p> <p>Some irrelevant, inappropriate or inaccurate information may occur in areas of detail or when illustrating or extending the main points.</p> <p>Some details may be missing (or excessive) and further extension or illustration may be needed.</p>	<p>Information and ideas are generally arranged coherently and there is a clear overall progression.</p> <p>Cohesive devices are used to some good effect but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical due to misuse, overuse or omission.</p> <p>The use of reference and substitution may lack flexibility or clarity and result in some repetition or error</p>	<p>The resource is generally adequate and appropriate for the task.</p> <p>The meaning is generally clear in spite of a rather restricted range or a lack of precision in word choice.</p> <p>If the writer is a risk-taker, there will be a wider range of vocabulary used but higher degrees of inaccuracy or inappropriacy.</p> <p>There are some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but these do not impede communication.</p>	<p>A mix of simple and complex sentence forms is used but flexibility is limited.</p> <p>Examples of more complex structures are not marked by the same level of accuracy as in simple structures.</p> <p>Errors in grammar and punctuation occur, but rarely impede communication</p>
5	<p>The response generally addresses the requirements of the task. The format may be inappropriate in places.</p> <p>(Academic) Key features which are selected are not adequately covered. The recounting of detail is mainly mechanical. <b>There may be no data to support the description.</b></p> <p>(General Training) All bullet points are presented but one or more may not be adequately covered. The purpose may be unclear at times. The tone may be variable and sometimes inappropriate.</p> <p>There may be a tendency to focus on details (without referring to the bigger picture).</p> <p>The inclusion of irrelevant, inappropriate or inaccurate material in key areas detracts from the task achievement.</p> <p>There is limited detail when extending and illustrating the main points.</p>	<p>Organisation is evident but is not wholly logical and there may be a lack of overall progression. Nevertheless, there is a sense of underlying coherence to the response.</p> <p>The relationship of ideas can be followed but the sentences are not fluently linked to each other.</p> <p>There may be limited/overuse of cohesive devices with some inaccuracy.</p> <p>The writing may be repetitive due to inadequate and/or inaccurate use of reference and substitution.</p>	<p>The resource is limited but minimally adequate for the task.</p> <p>Simple vocabulary may be used accurately but the range does not permit much variation in expression.</p> <p>There may be frequent lapses in the appropriacy of word choice, and a lack of flexibility is apparent in frequent simplifications and/or repetitions.</p> <p>Errors in spelling and/or word formation may be noticeable and may cause some difficulty for the reader.</p>	<p>The range of structures is limited and rather repetitive.</p> <p>Although complex sentences are attempted, they tend to be faulty, and the greatest accuracy is achieved on simple sentences.</p> <p>Grammatical errors may be frequent and cause some difficulty for the reader.</p> <p>Punctuation may be faulty.</p>

# IELTS Writing Task 1 Band Descriptors

## Scoring criteria for Academic and General Training tests

A script must fully fit the positive features of the descriptor at a particular level. **Bolded text** indicates negative features that will limit a rating.

Band Score	Task Achievement	Coherence & Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range & Accuracy
4	<p>The response is an attempt to address the task.</p> <p>(Academic) Few key features have been selected.</p> <p><b>(General Training) Not all bullet points are presented.</b></p> <p>(General Training) The purpose of the letter is not clearly explained and may be confused. <b>The tone may be inappropriate.</b></p> <p><b>The format may be inappropriate.</b></p> <p>Key features/bullet points which are presented may be irrelevant, repetitive, inaccurate or inappropriate.</p>	<p>Information and ideas are evident but not arranged coherently, and there is no clear progression within the response.</p> <p>Relationships between ideas can be unclear and/or inadequately marked. There is some use of basic cohesive devices, which may be inaccurate or repetitive.</p> <p>There is inaccurate use or a lack of substitution or referencing.</p>	<p>The resource is limited and inadequate for or <b>unrelated to the task</b>. Vocabulary is basic and may be used repetitively.</p> <p>There may be inappropriate use of lexical chunks (e.g. memorised phrases, formulaic language and/or language from the input material).</p> <p>Inappropriate word choice and/or errors in word formation and/or in spelling may impede meaning.</p>	<p>A very limited range of structures is used.</p> <p><b>Subordinate clauses are rare and simple sentences predominate.</b></p> <p>Some structures are produced accurately but grammatical errors are frequent and may impede meaning.</p> <p>Punctuation is often faulty or inadequate.</p>
3	<p>The response does not address the requirements of the task (possibly because of misunderstanding of the data/diagram/situation).</p> <p>Key features/bullet points which are presented may be largely irrelevant.</p> <p>Limited information is presented, and this may be used repetitively.</p>	<p>There is no apparent logical organisation. Ideas are discernible but difficult to relate to each other.</p> <p>Minimal use of sequencers or cohesive devices. Those used do not necessarily indicate a logical relationship between ideas.</p> <p>There is difficulty in identifying referencing.</p>	<p>The resource is inadequate (which may be due to the response being significantly underlength).</p> <p>Possible over-dependence on input material or memorised language.</p> <p>Control of word choice and/or spelling is very limited, and errors predominate. These errors may severely impede meaning.</p>	<p>Sentence forms are attempted, but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate (except in memorised phrases or those taken from the input material). This prevents most meaning from coming through.</p> <p><b>Length may be insufficient to provide evidence of control of sentence forms.</b></p>
2	<p>The content barely relates to the task.</p>	<p>There is little relevant message, or <b>the entire response may be off-topic</b>.</p> <p>There is little evidence of control of organisational features.</p>	<p>The resource is extremely limited with few recognisable strings, apart from memorised phrases.</p> <p>There is no apparent control of word formation and/or spelling.</p>	<p>There is little or no evidence of sentence forms (except in memorised phrases).</p>
1	<p><b>Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1.</b></p> <p><b>The content is wholly unrelated to the task.</b></p> <p>Any copied rubric must be discounted.</p>	<p><b>Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1.</b></p> <p>The writing fails to communicate any message and appears to be by a virtual non-writer.</p>	<p><b>Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1.</b></p> <p>No resource is apparent, except for a few isolated words.</p>	<p><b>Responses of 20 words or fewer are rated at Band 1.</b></p> <p>No rateable language is evident.</p>
0	<p>Should only be used where a candidate did not attend or attempt the question in any way, used a language other than English throughout, or <b>where there is proof that a candidate's answer has been totally memorised.</b></p>			