

IELTS Writing Overview

The IELTS Academic and General Writing Modules are similar in some ways and different in others. Whichever test you do, you have one hour to complete two tasks. It is the nature of the tasks that makes them different. You can see this clearly in the chart below:

	General	Academic
Task 1	Minimum 150 words Writing a letter in response to a situation – informal, semi-formal, or formal	Minimum 150 words Interpreting, describing, or comparing information presented in graphic form - a diagram, bar chart, line graph, pie chart or table
Task 2	Minimum 250 words Writing a more personal essay – possible informal style	Minimum 250 words Writing an essay on a general academic topic – formal style

In both cases, your score is based on three fundamental criteria:

- **Content:** How well do you present your arguments, ideas and evidence?
- **Quality:** How effectively are you able to communicate your ideas and thoughts?
- **Technical Aspects:** How correct is your grammar? How rich is your vocabulary? How varied are your sentences?

To complete an organized, coherent piece of writing, **you need to take 2-5 minutes to plan**. During this time, you can consider what position you will adopt,

how you're going to expand on the topic and in what order you will present your ideas. You should skip the planning activity only if you have very little time left. In such a case, you can work directly on the task itself.

Of course, grammar and vocabulary will also be assessed. Make sure you check your writing for **verb tense agreement, prepositions, word order, sentence patterns, sentence structure, and range of vocabulary**. Avoid using the same verbs, nouns, or adjectives more than once. **Do not use slang at all**. In the academic section of the IELTS, avoid contractions, which are a clear symbol of informal writing.