

INTERNATIONAL EXAMS WRITING

Anna Saraeva
Anastasia Propalova

IELTS™

Test	Version	Purpose
IELTS	Academic**	This test is for test takers wishing to study at undergraduate or postgraduate levels, and for those seeking professional registration in the UK.
IELTS	General Training	This test is for test takers wishing to migrate to the UK and for those wishing to train or study below degree level.
IELTS Life Skills	A1	This test is for those who need to prove their English speaking and listening skills as part of their application to UK Visas and Immigration for 'family of a settled person' visas.
IELTS Life Skills	A2 *	This test is for those who need to prove their English speaking and listening skills as part of their application to UK Visas and Immigration for extension to Family, Spouse or Partner visa.
IELTS Life Skills	B1	This test is for those who need to prove their English speaking and listening skills as part of their application to UK Visas and Immigration for indefinite leave to remain or citizenship.



**IELTS
Life Skills**

What is the format of the IELTS Life Skills test?

You take the test with another test taker and one Examiner. Your own performance on both speaking and listening will be assessed during this one session.

Why does IELTS Life Skills only cover Speaking and Listening?

The new test has been designed to meet specific immigration requirements for which applicants only need to demonstrate speaking and listening skills.

How long does the IELTS Life Skills test take?

IELTS Life Skills at CEFR Level A1 takes 16-18 minutes and Level B1 is 22 minutes.

Discussions on **subjects:**

- personal details/
experiences
- family and friends
- buying goods
- work
- health
- leisure
- education/
training
- transport
- housing
- weather

IELTS Academic

IELTS Academic measures English language proficiency needed for an academic, higher learning environment. The tasks and texts are accessible to all test takers, regardless of what each test taker has studied in the past.

Listening* (30 minutes)

- Four recorded monologues and conversations

Reading (60 minutes)

- Three long reading passages with tasks
- Texts may include diagrams, graphs or illustrations
- Texts are taken from books, journals, magazines and newspapers

Writing (60 minutes)

- Writing task of at least 150 words where the test taker must summarise, describe or explain a table, graph, chart or diagram
- Short essay task of at least 250 words

Speaking* (11 to 14 minutes)

- Face-to-face interview without disruptions or distractions
- Includes short questions, speaking at length about a familiar topic and a structured discussion

* The Listening and Speaking components are the same for both IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training.

IELTS General Training

IELTS General Training measures English language proficiency in a practical, everyday context. The tasks and texts reflect both workplace and social situations.

Listening* (30 minutes)

- Four recorded monologues and conversations

Reading (60 minutes)

- Section 1 contains two or three short factual texts
- Section 2 contains two short, work related, factual texts
- Section 3 contains one longer text on a topic of general interest
- Texts are authentic taken from notices, advertisements, company handbooks, official documents, books and newspapers

Writing (60 minutes)

- Letter writing task of at least 150 words
- Short essay task of at least 250 words

Speaking* (11 to 14 minutes)

- Face-to-face interview without disruptions or distractions
- Includes short questions, speaking at length about a familiar topic and a structured discussion

* The Listening and Speaking components are the same for both IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training.

	GENERAL TRAINING	ACADEMIC
TIMING	60 min	60 min
NUMBER OF WORDS	Task 1 – at least 150 words Task 2 – at least 250 words	Task 1 – at least 150 words Task 2 – at least 250 words
TASKS	Task 1 – an informal, semi-formal or formal letter Task 2 – a semi-formal/neutral discursive essay	Task 1 – description of visual information from a graph/table/chart/diagram Task 2 – an academic or semi-formal/neutral style essay

General Training

Writing Task 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

You work in an international company. You need to take some time off work.

Write a letter to your employer. In your letter

- explain why you need this time off
- give details of when you want the time off
- say who can do your work when you are away

Write at least 150 words.

You do **NOT** need to write any addresses.

Begin your letter as follows:

Dear ... ,

Academic Writing Task 1

Sample question

Cinema Attendance

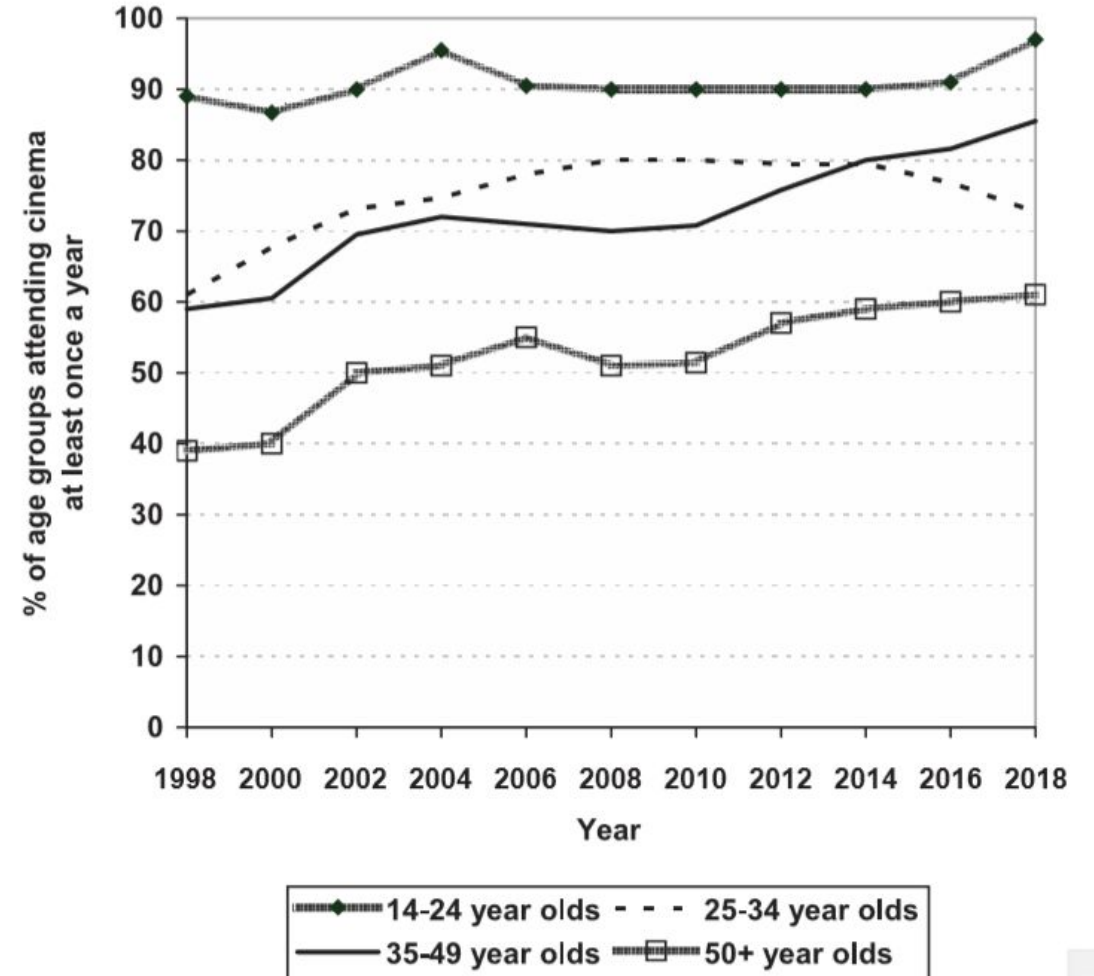
You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The graph below gives information about cinema attendance in Australia between 1998 and the present, with projections to 2018.

Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 150 words.

Cinema attendance by age group



General Training

Writing Task 2

Shopping

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task. Write about the following topic:

Shopping is becoming more and more popular as a leisure activity. However, some people feel that this has both positive and negative effects.

Why is shopping so popular?

What effects does its increase in popularity have on individuals and on society?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

Academic Writing Task 2

Sample question

International Tourism

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

International tourism has brought enormous benefit to many places. At the same time, there is concern about its impact on local inhabitants and the environment.

Do the disadvantages of international tourism outweigh the advantages?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.



TOEFL®

About TOEFL Test

- TOEFL (The Test of English as a Foreign Language) is a standardized test designed to measure the ability to understand and to use English.
- The TOEFL test is a registered trademark of Educational Testing Service (ETS) and is administered worldwide.

About TOEFL Test

The four-hour test consists of the following four sections, each measuring one of the basic language skills (while some tasks require integrating multiple skills) and all tasks focus on language used in an academic, higher-education environment.

- Reading
- Listening
- Speaking
- Writing

Writing Section

- ability to use writing to communicate in an academic environment;
- two tasks: integrated and independent;
- 50 min.



Integrated Writing

- Read —read a short text of about 230-300 words on an academic topic (3 min);
- Listen —listen to a lecture discussing the same topic from a different perspective (2 min);
- Write —write a 150-225-word summary in response to the following question (20 min).

Critics say that current voting systems used in the United States are inefficient and often lead to the inaccurate counting of votes. Miscounts can be especially damaging if an election is closely contested. Those critics would like the traditional systems to be replaced with far more efficient and trustworthy computerized voting systems.

In traditional voting, one major source of inaccuracy is that people accidentally vote for the wrong candidate. Voters usually have to find the name of their candidate on a large sheet of paper containing many names—the ballot—and make a small mark next to that name. People with poor eyesight can easily mark the wrong name. The computerized voting machines have an easy-to-use touch-screen technology: to cast a vote, a voter needs only to touch the candidate's name on the screen to record a vote for that candidate; voters can even have the computer magnify the name for easier viewing.

Another major problem with old voting systems is that they rely heavily on people to count the votes. Officials must often count up the votes one by one, going through every ballot and recording the vote. Since they have to deal with thousands of ballots, it is almost inevitable that they will make mistakes. If an error is detected, a long and expensive recount has to take place. In contrast, computerized systems remove the possibility of human error, since all the vote counting is done quickly and automatically by the computers.

Finally some people say it is too risky to implement complicated voting technology nationwide. But without giving it a thought, governments and individuals alike trust other complex computer technology every day to be perfectly accurate in banking transactions as well as in the communication of highly sensitive information.

Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they oppose specific points made in the reading passage.

Independent Writing

- write an essay of at least 300 words in response to the question (30 min)

Types of essay:

- choice
- description
- agreement / disagreement
- imagination

Independent Writing

Choice

example

If you had to live on a desert island and could have only one book to read, what would it be? Explain your answer, using specific reasons and details.

Independent Writing

Description

example

If you could change one thing about your city, what would it be?

Independent Writing

Imagination

example

Imagine that you have received some land to use as you wish. How would you use this land? Use specific details to explain your answer.

Independent Writing

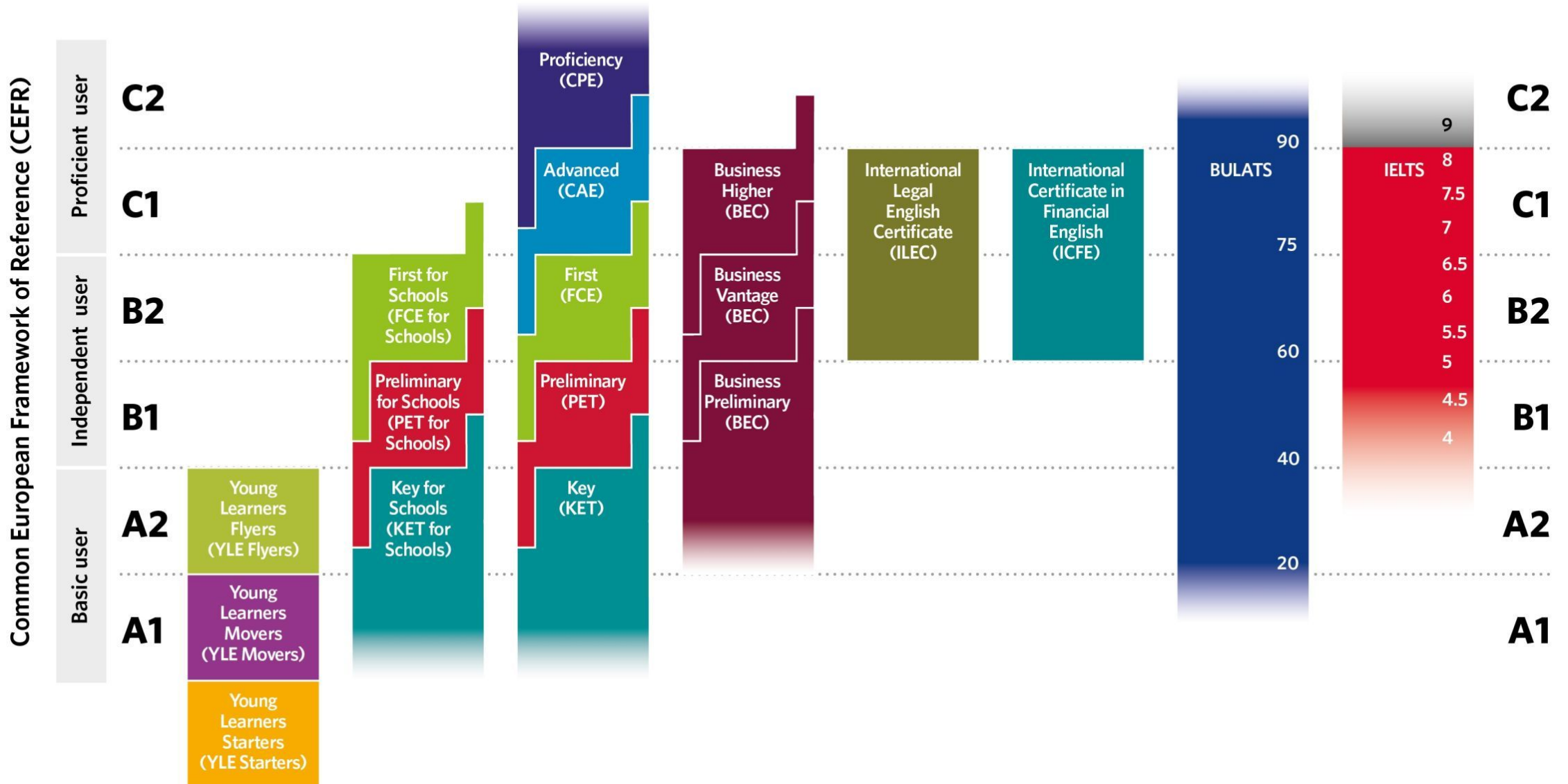
Agreement / disagreement

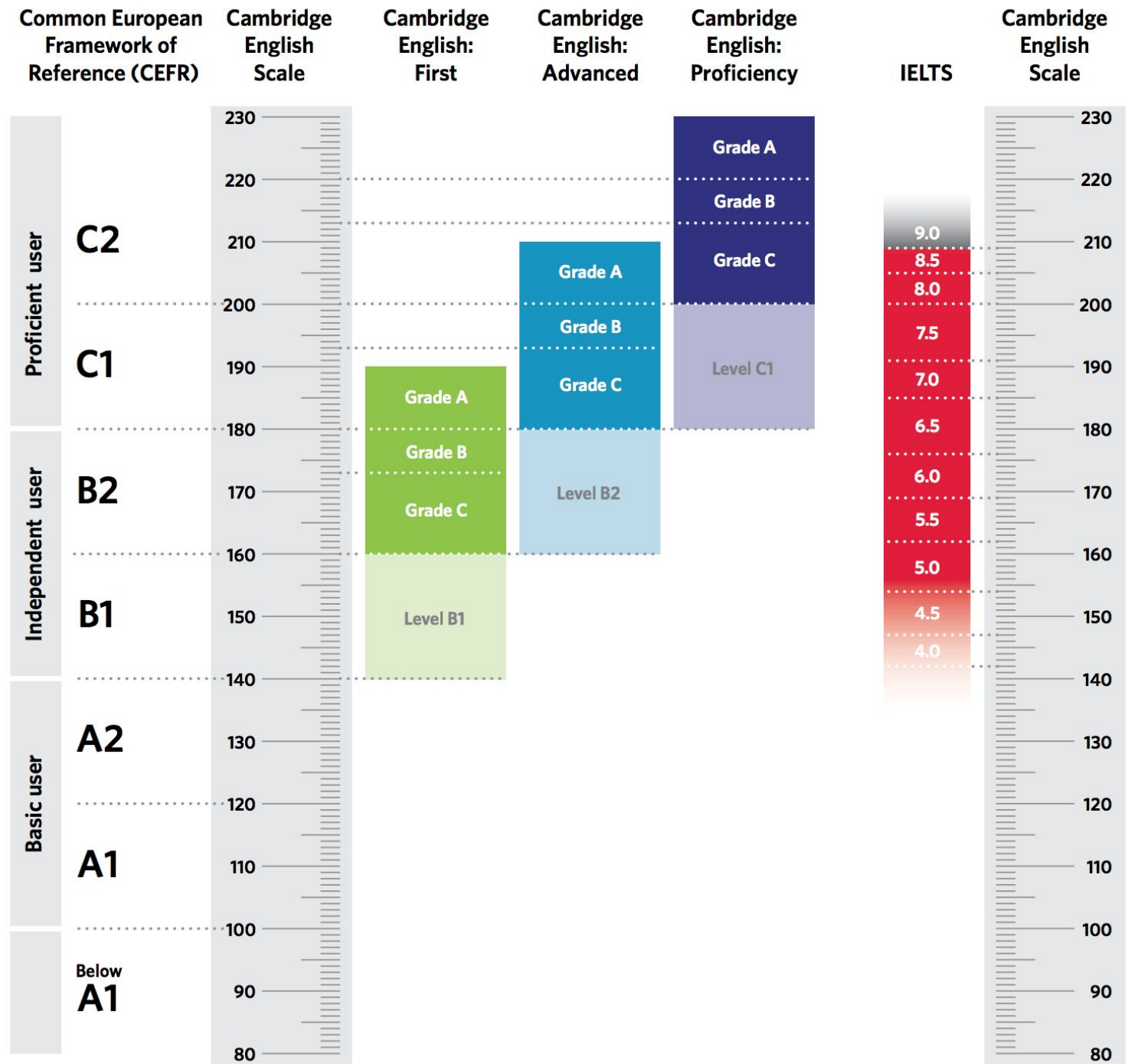
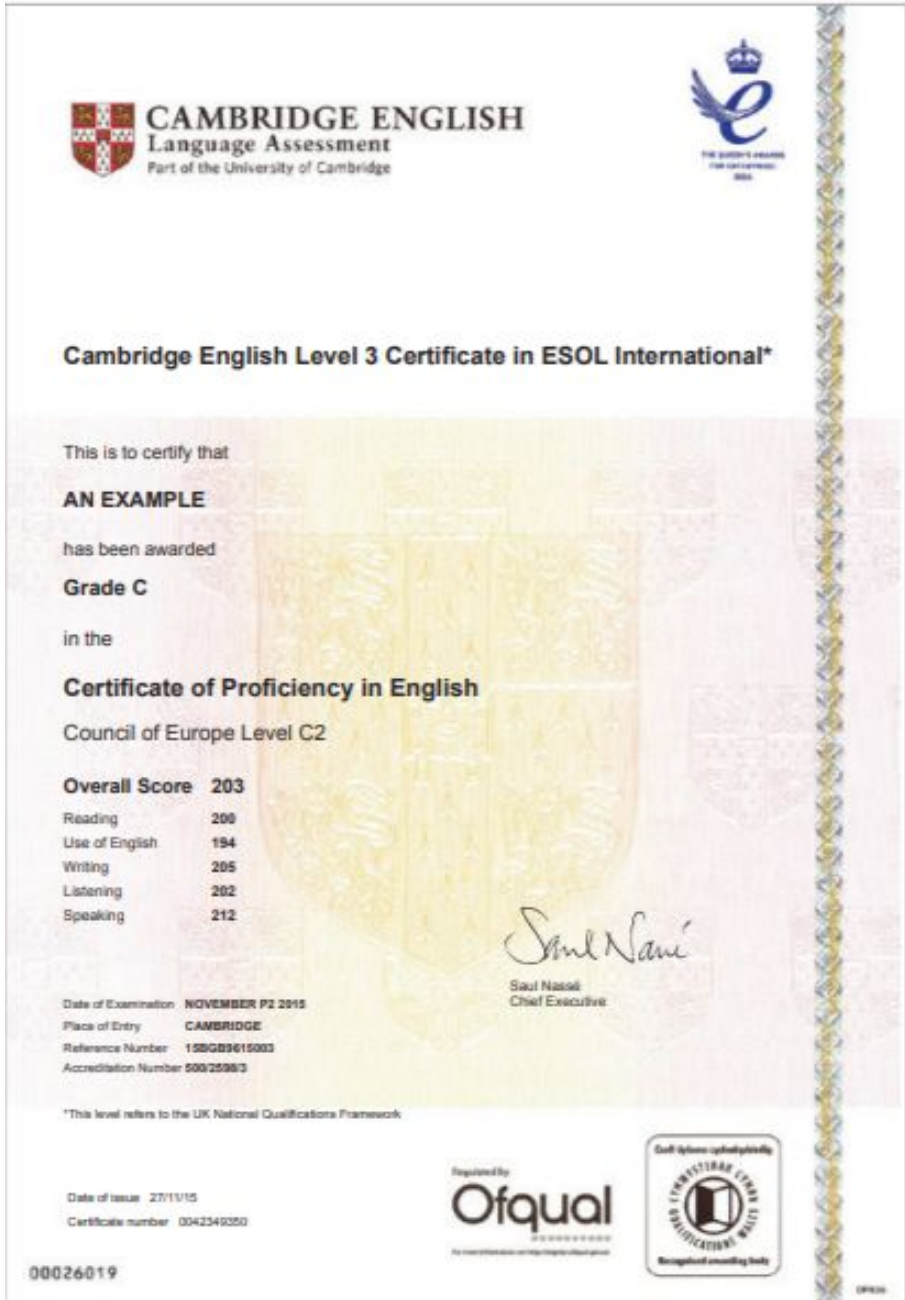
example

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Technology has made the world a better place to live. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Cambridge English

A range of exams to meet different needs





Exam format (CAE)

Time allowed	1 hour 30 min
Number of parts	2
Number of questions	Part – one compulsory question (essay) Part 2 – one question from a choice of three
Task types	Essay, proposal, email/letter, report, review

	FCE	CAE	CPE
TIMING	1 hour 20 min	1 hour 30 min	1 hour 30 min
NUMBER OF WORDS	140-190 words (each)	220-260 words (each)	Part 1 - 240-280 words Part 2 – 280-320 words
TASKS	Part 1 – essay Part 2 – article, email/letter, report, review	Part 1 – essay Part 2 – proposal, email/letter, report, review	Part 1 – essay Part 2 – article, email/letter, report, review

What's in Part 1?

You're given an essay title and two ideas clearly linked to the title. You write an essay giving your opinions about the title, using the ideas given. You must also add a third, different idea of your own linked to the title. The title will be a subject of general interest – you won't need any specialised knowledge.

What do I have to practise?

Using language functions, such as evaluating, expressing opinions, hypothesising, justifying, persuading.

How many questions are there?

One compulsory question.

How much do I have to write?

140–190 words

Part 1 (Compulsory question)

What's in Part 1?

You read a text, then write an essay based on points included in the text. You'll be asked to explain which of the two points is more important, and to give reasons for your opinion.

What do I have to practise?

Developing points as fully as possible in order to demonstrate a range of structures, vocabulary and language functions, such as evaluating, expressing opinions, hypothesising, justifying, persuading.

How many questions are there?

One compulsory question.

How much do I have to write?

220–260 words.

Part 1

What's in Part 1?

Some material to read (two texts, each approximately 100 words). Using the information in this material, you have to write an essay.

What do I have to practise?

Writing a discursive essay in which you have to summarise and evaluate the key points contained in two texts of approximately 100 words each. Candidates must integrate a summary of these key points, an evaluation of the abstract arguments involved and their own ideas on the topic in a coherent essay.

How many questions are there?

One compulsory question.

How much do I have to write?

240–280 words

In your English class you have been talking about the environment. Now, your English teacher has asked you to write an essay.

Write an essay using **all** the notes and giving reasons for your point of view.



Every country in the world has problems with pollution and damage to the environment.
Do you think these problems can be solved?

Notes

Write about:

1. transport
2. rivers and seas
3. (your own idea)

Part 1

You **must** answer this question. Write your answer in **220 – 260** words in an appropriate style on the separate answer sheet.

- 1 Your class has attended a panel discussion on facilities which should receive money from local authorities. You have made the notes below:

Which facilities should receive money from local authorities?

- museums
- sports centres
- public gardens

Some opinions expressed in the discussion:

“Museums aren’t popular with everybody!”

“Sports centres mean healthier people.”

“A town needs green spaces – parks are great for everybody.”

Write an essay discussing **two** of the facilities in your notes. You should **explain which facility it is more important** for local authorities to give money to, **giving reasons** in support of your answer.

You may, if you wish, make use of the opinions expressed in the discussion, but you should use your own words as far as possible.

Part 1

Read the two texts below.

Write an essay summarising and evaluating the key points from both texts. Use your own words throughout as far as possible, and include your own ideas in your answers.

Write your answer in 240–280 words on the separate answer sheet.

Part 2 (Situationally based writing task)

What's in Part 2?

You write a text from a choice of text types – article, email/letter, report or review. To guide your writing, you'll be given information about context, topic purpose and target reader.

What do I have to practise?

Writing different types of text that could be included in the exam.

How many questions are there?

One task to be selected from a choice of three.

How much do I have to write?

140–190 words

Part 2 (Situationally based writing task)

What's in Part 2?

You write a text from a choice of text types – letter/email, proposal, report or review. To guide your writing, you'll be given information about context, topic purpose and target reader.

What do I have to practise?

Writing the different types of text that could be included in the exam.

How many questions are there?

Three tasks, from which you must choose one.

How much do I have to write?

220–260 words.

Part 2

What's in Part 2?

A choice of four questions (2–5). For Questions 2–4, you may have to write an article, a letter, a report or a review.

What about Question 5?

If you read one of the set books and want to write about it, you may decide to try Question 5. You have a choice of two tasks, 5(a) or 5(b) for this question. You may have to write an article, essay, letter, report or a review.

What do I have to practise?

Writing different types of text as specified above, based on a given context.

How many questions are there?

One question from a choice of four.

How much do I have to write?

280–320 words

You see this announcement on an English-language website.

Articles wanted

The most useful thing I have ever learned.

What is the most useful thing you have learned?

Who did you learn it from? Why is it useful?

Write us an article answering these questions.

We will publish the best articles on our website.

Write your **article**.

You have just completed six months in a new job. In preparation for a progress meeting, you have been asked to write a report to your manager. Your report should explain what you feel you have achieved in the job so far, describe any problems you have had, and suggest any future training that would be suitable.

Write your **report**.

- 5 Write an answer to **one** of the following two questions based on **one** of the titles below. Write **5(a)** or **5(b)** at the beginning of your answer.

- (a) Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard: *Shakespeare In Love*

'A broad river divides my lovers.' Viola is in love with Will because she admires his poetry; Will is in love with Viola because she inspires his writing.

Write an essay for your English-language tutor. You should evaluate the extent to which you agree with this judgement of the relationship between Will and Viola, making reference to two or three particular events in the screenplay.

Write your **essay**.

- (b) Philip K. Dick: *Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep?*

The English book club to which you belong has asked members to write reports on books with interesting titles. You decide to write about *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* You should briefly describe the story, explain the significance of the title and assess how far the title successfully conveys what the story is about.

Write your **report**.

	IELTS GENERAL TRAINING	IELTS ACADEMIC	FCE	CAE	CPE	TOEFL
TIMING	60 min	60 min	80 min	90 min	90 min	50 min
NUMBER OF WORDS	Task 1 – at least 150 words Task 2 – at least 250 words	Task 1 – at least 150 words Task 2 – at least 250 words	140-190 words (each)	220-260 words (each)	Part 1 - 240-280 words Part 2 – 280-320 words	Task 1 (Integrated) – 150-225 words Task 2 (Independent) – at least 300 words
TASKS	Task 1 – an informal, semi-formal or formal letter Task 2 – a semi-formal/neutral discursive essay	Task 1 – description of visual information from a graph/table/chart/diagram Task 2 – an academic or semi-formal/neutral style essay	Part 1 – essay Part 2 – article, email/letter, report, review	Part 1 – essay Part 2 – proposal, email/letter, report, review	Part 1 – essay Part 2 – article, email/letter, report, review	Task 1 – essay summarizing information. Task 2 – essay in response to the question

Thank you for your attention!

That moment when you
walk into the exam room...

