



「雅思考官教雅思」系列

# 跟雅思考官练写作

**A Sensible Approach to**

# **IELTS Writing**

Tom Macri

北京语言文化大学出版社

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# 出版说明

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“雅思考官教雅思”系列首批推出《跟雅思考官练写作》和《跟雅思考官练口语》。雅思的听力、口语、阅读、写作四项考试中,听力和阅读为客观性考试,有标准答案,对错分明;而口语和写作考试为非客观性考试,虽然对评分标准有详细的描述,但标准的掌握及得分的判定却取决于考官。对于一篇雅思作文或一位雅思考生在口试中的表现,考官将怎样评判,评判的侧重点是什么,加分或减分的理由是什么;中国考生在雅思口语和写作考试中常犯的错误是什么,这些错误反映了什么问题,需要进行什么样的训练才能克服,……所有这些疑问,你都会在《跟雅思考官练口语》和《跟雅思考官练写作》中找到答案。

这两本书的作者 Tom Macri 先生为加拿大籍英语教学专家,加拿大蒙特利尔 Concordia 大学教育学系英语外语教学专业毕业。担任过多年雅思考官,并取得雅思考官培训官资格,在中国从事英语教学工作 6 年。书中深入浅出的解说、独到的分析、幽默的举例、精要的练习,定能让广大雅思考生获益匪浅。

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# PREFACE

Most IELTS candidates in China seem to think that to pass IELTS they need to memorize a sizeable number of words, a few phrases and a few tricks. Many IELTS “schools” promise methods that guarantee success. Sometimes they offer money back guarantees if candidates do not pass. They gamble on the fact that some will pass in any event, and that is where their money comes from, but what they really offer the candidate is ridiculous. Sometimes, they offer books that are random photocopies from other people’s IELTS books. They stress memorization of sentences that examiners can easily throw out, since they are not what shows that one can speak a language. They teach “tricks” that actually burden the student and make the examination even more complex. This is not a sensible approach to IELTS.

A sensible approach to IELTS must be based on the criteria of the examination and the criteria are not based on evaluating memory. What is evaluated is the performance of the candidate with the language he or she actually possesses.

The purpose of this book is to prepare the student to respond to the criteria of the IELTS examiner and be well aware of what is expected before getting to the examination. Although some language can be learned from studying this book, it is not an English language book. It is a book to prepare for IELTS that addresses the specific problems that Chinese IELTS candidates have.

Rather than memorizing, as you will see, IELTS requires thinking. IELTS goes beyond measuring the level of your vocabulary, your grammar or your idioms. IELTS wants to see that you can actually function in an English-speaking environment.

There are three things you must not forget when you go to your examination: your identity card, a pencil and . . . your head.

For that and other reasons, the purpose of this book is to be understood and not memorized. Understanding what you need to do is the first step in doing it properly.

Tom Macri

# 序 言

大多数雅思考生似乎认为,要想通过雅思考试,就需要记忆相当数量的词、短语和一些诀窍。许多雅思“学校”也承诺其所教授的方法能保证考生成功。有时他们向考生承诺通不过就退款。他们这是在打赌,赌的是这样一个事实,即无论如何总会有一些考生通过考试——这就是学校的财源,但他们教授给考生的却是荒谬至极的东西。有时他们发给考生一些从别的雅思书籍中复印后随意拼凑起来的书;他们强调背记句子,而这些背记的句子很容易被考官识别而不计入成绩,因为背记句子不能表明一个人能够说一种语言。他们教授所谓的“诀窍”,但这些诀窍事实上成了考生的负担,也使考试变得更加复杂。这不是一个明智的备考雅思的方法。

明智的备考雅思的方法必须以考试的评分标准为基础,而雅思的评分标准并不是基于对记忆力的评估,而是要评估考生对语言的实际掌握的能力。

本书的目的是让考生针对雅思考官的评分标准来备考,从而在参加考试之前,对所期待的应答有充分的认识。虽然考生从本书中也能学到一些语言知识,但本书不是语言教材,而是一本针对中国雅思考生的具体问题而编写的雅思备考用书。

考生们会认识到,雅思要求的是思维,而不是记忆。雅思检验的不仅仅是你的词汇、你的语法、你的成语,雅思要看看你在一个说英语的环境中是否能够真正游刃有余。

当你去赴考时,有三样东西是不能忘带的:身份证、铅笔、和……脑子。

为此,以及其他原因,本书的目的是要考生理解,而不是记忆。因为理解你需要做什么,是做好一件事的首要步骤。

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# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction to the IELTS Writing Test

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The Writing Test is the last of the three tests you will be taking the morning of your examination, after Listening and Reading.

### The Tasks

You will have one hour to perform two tasks. They are called **Task 1** and **Task 2**.

The tasks are different for Academic and General Training candidates.

**General Training** candidates have to write a **letter** (Task 1) and an **essay** (Task 2).

**Academic** candidates have to write a **report** based on statistical information (Task 1) and an **essay** (Task 2).

**It is recommended that you spend about 20 minutes on Task 1 and 40 minutes on Task 2.** If you spend longer than 20 minutes on Task 1, for example, you will have less time to perform Task 2.

**Task 1** should contain a minimum of **150 words**; **Task 2**, a minimum of **250**.

**Task 2** is more important than Task 1, therefore you may want to do your Task 2 first.

## **The Writing Booklet**

You will be given a booklet to write on.

You will find a copy of your IELTS booklet in appendix 1 at page 135.

At the top of the booklet, you will write your name, in pinyin, together with the date, your candidate number and other information. You will be told exactly what to write at the time of the test.

You will write Task 1 on pages 1 and 2. Pages 3 and 4 will be for Task 2.

## **The Question Sheet**

After your writing booklet, you will be given a question sheet containing the description of your tasks.

You will find copies of your question sheet in appendix 2 at page 141.

Immediately, after receiving the question sheet, you can start writing.

As stated above, you will have one hour to complete both tasks. 20 minutes are recommended for Task 1, but you can take half an hour to complete it. If you do, that will leave you with half an hour only for Task 2.

Task 2 is more important than Task 1. For example, if your mark for Task 1 is 6 and that for Task 2 is 5, your final mark will be a 5. Therefore, you may wish to write Task 2 before you write Task 1. That is not a problem. You are free to write either task first.

## **Important Notes**

### **Writing in pencil:**

Bring pencils together with an eraser and a sharpener when you go to IELTS. You are allowed to write by pen but, if you do, your paper will contain many cross-outs and it will look very messy. A messy paper is hard to read and may cause you to lose points!

### **Counting words:**

You have to make sure that you write the minimum number of words for each task. You can prepare for this even before you get to IELTS:

In appendix 1, you find a copy of the booklet with some technical alterations: the pages are a little smaller than the actual size but the lines for you to write on are of actual length. Fill a few lines with your normal writing. Count the words you wrote and divide by the number of lines. That is your average of words per line.

Now, figure out how many lines you need to write both 150 (Task 1) and 250 (Task 2) words. Add four or five lines for the empty lines between paragraphs (see details in the following chapters). When you get to IELTS, as soon as you receive your booklet, count the lines you need for each task and put a mark there. Now, you know how much you need to write.

### **Returning material:**

When you are told to stop writing, do stop right away and pass your papers towards the front. Adding two or three words at the end will not really change your mark and may make an examiner angry.

Return all the papers including the question sheet. If you used the question sheet to write on, do not worry; nobody will look at it.

### **Memorizing:**

Memorizing whole sentences and trying to make them fit into what you are writing is a very bad idea. Examiners can easily recognise sentences that you have memorized. Those sentences will not be counted and you will find yourself with fewer words than you thought you had. In any event, your mark will be based on what you have written yourself, not what someone else has written and you have memorized.

The IELTS examination does not measure what you can remember. What it measures is how well you use the language you know in unpredictable circumstances. That is because IELTS wants to see how well you can manage on your own in an English speaking country.

Therefore, do not try to give answers that you think will please your examiner. The examiner really does not care what you think, he/she only cares about how well you can express what you think.

You will find that thinking is necessary in all aspects of IELTS.

### **Political correctness:**

Sometimes, you may find something strange in the questions you are asked. For example, an actual IELTS question in one of the past exams stated:

***Your neighbour plays their music very loud . . .***

You may think that there is a grammar problem here. *Your neighbour plays* means one person, but *their music* seems to talk about more than one person.

It is common, nowadays, to use the plural instead of repeatedly using *he/she* or *his/her* or *him/her*. So, *Your neighbour plays their music very loud* means the same as *Your neighbour plays his/her music very loud*.

## **Summary**

Module	Tasks	Task content	Recommended time	Minimum length
ACADEMIC	Task 1	Write a report based on statistical information	20 minutes	150 words
	Task 2	Write an essay	40 minutes	250 words
GENERAL TRAINING	Task 1	Write a letter	20 minutes	150 words
	Task 2	Write an essay	40 minutes	250 words



# CHAPTER 2

## The IELTS General Training Task 1

---

Your General Training IELTS Task 1 will consist of writing a letter.

Your letter should be at least 150 words long, and you should write it in about 20 minutes.

### Marking Criteria

When marking, your examiner will read your letter from three different points of view:

#### **Content**

#### **Organization and Cohesion**

#### **Vocabulary and Structure**

Let us have a closer look:

#### **Content has to do with...**

... fulfilling your task as described in the task description.

#### **Organization has to do with...**

... organizing your paragraphs, and **Cohesion has to do with...**  
... how well sentences and clauses hold together.

## Vocabulary has to do with...

... how well you use the words you know (**not** how many words you know), and **Structure has to do with...**

... grammar errors and errors that interfere with understanding. It also has to do with your capacity to use longer complex sentences rather than only short ones.

Of course, you will want to try to satisfy all of the examiner's criteria. Therefore, it will be a good idea to deal with them one by one.

## Marking Criteria

**Content — Did you include everything you were supposed to include in your letter?**

**... and did you do it in an appropriate way?**

Your examiner will want to see that you did everything your task description asks you to do and did not leave anything out. Here is an example of an IELTS General Training Task 1 question:

*You have a friend in another country, and he/she has decided to come and visit you in your hometown. Your friend has written to you asking for advice about the weather at the time he/she will be coming and what kind of clothes he/she needs to bring.*

*Write a letter to your friend and provide the requested information.*

The first thing you should do, after quickly reading the question, is underline the key words and phrases that summarize the things you must not forget to mention in your letter.

In the case above, you should:

1. *provide the requested information*
2. *talk about the weather in your hometown at the time of the visit*
3. *make suggestions for clothes to bring*

If you underline the relevant words, your task description will look like this:

*You have a friend in another country, and he/she has decided to come and visit you in your hometown. Your friend has written to you asking for advice about the weather at the time he/she will be coming and what kind of clothes he/she needs to bring.*

*Write a letter to your friend and provide the requested information.*

Notice that all IELTS Writing test descriptions are divided in two parts.

The first part gives details of the background situation. The second part tells you specifically what to do.

When underlining key words and phrases, **it is a good idea to start from the second part of the task description.**

In the case above, the first thing you underline is **provide the requested information**. After that, you start from the beginning of the first part of the question and underline as necessary.

At this point, you can do a little underlining exercise. This will also give you a chance to see a few more examples of IELTS Task 1 questions.

**Proceed to Exercise 2.1 at page 87.**

## Marking Criteria

### Content — Tone or register

Another thing that your examiner will be looking at, from the point of view of content, is the tone of your letter and whether it is appropriate to the circumstances.

That is to say that:

If you write to a friend your attitude and choice of words should be friendly.

If you write to someone who is not a friend, you will want to sound more businesslike or respectful, but without overdoing it and kissing anybody's feet.

Finally, if you are writing to complain about something you should sound firm without sounding impolite.

## Marking Criteria

### Content — Salutation

A letter salutation usually starts with **Dear** . . .

There are many different ways to salute people you write to, in English, but

for the purposes of IELTS, you can limit yourself to one of the following five possible formulas:

1. **Dear Peter** (or **Mary**, or **John** etc. ), when writing to a friend, or a brother or sister.

2. **Dear Mother** (or **Mom**) or **Dear Father** (or **Dad**) when writing to parents (very rare at IELTS).

3. **Dear Mr. Brown** (or **Smith**, or **Parkinson** etc. ) when writing to a male person whose name you are expected to know.

4. **Dear Ms. Brown** (or **Smith**, or **Parkinson** etc. ) when writing to a female person whose name you are expected to know. (In the case of professors or doctors, instead of Mr. and Ms. , you can use **Professor** or **Doctor** followed by a family name for either men or women. )

5. **Dear Sir/Madam**, when writing to someone whose name and gender (sex) you are not aware of.

Often, actually, your IELTS question sheet will tell you to:

*Start your letter with Dear . . . ,*

or

*Start your letter with Dear Sir/ Madam .*

It will also tell you that *you should not write your own address in the letter .*

This is because addresses are not considered in the word count and, therefore, if write your address, you will be wasting your time for nothing.

You can now do a little exercise in finding the appropriate salutation for different General Training Task 1 questions.

Proceed to Exercise 2.2 at page 88.

## Marking Criteria

### Organization — Paragraphs, sentences and clauses

Your letter should be well organized. The paragraphs should be coherent (in the right order) so as to make sense.



Your sentences should sometimes be linked together using link words.

Avoid too many simple one-clause sentences (sentences with only one subject and one verb).

## Marking Criteria

### Organization — Organizing paragraphs

In order to see how to properly organize paragraphs, let us look at the possible purposes of a letter.

True, you may need to write a letter of complaint or a letter of apologies, or one of introduction but . . . .

. . . from the point of view of paragraph content, your letter will have one or more of four possible purposes:

to **inform**  
to **inquire**  
to **request**  
to **persuade**

Let's have a good look at each of them.

To **inform** means to **give information**. For example:

*The tape recorder I bought does not work properly*

To **inquire** means to **ask for information**. For example:

*Can you please let me know what you can do about my tape recorder ?*

To **request** means to **ask for something or a service**. For example:

*Please exchange my recorder or give me a refund .*

To **persuade** means to **give someone good reasons to do what we request**. For example:

*If I do not get a new recorder , or my money back , I will report you to the Better Business Bureau . (Note that persuasion is not appropriate except in cases where you have already made a request and got no satisfaction.)*