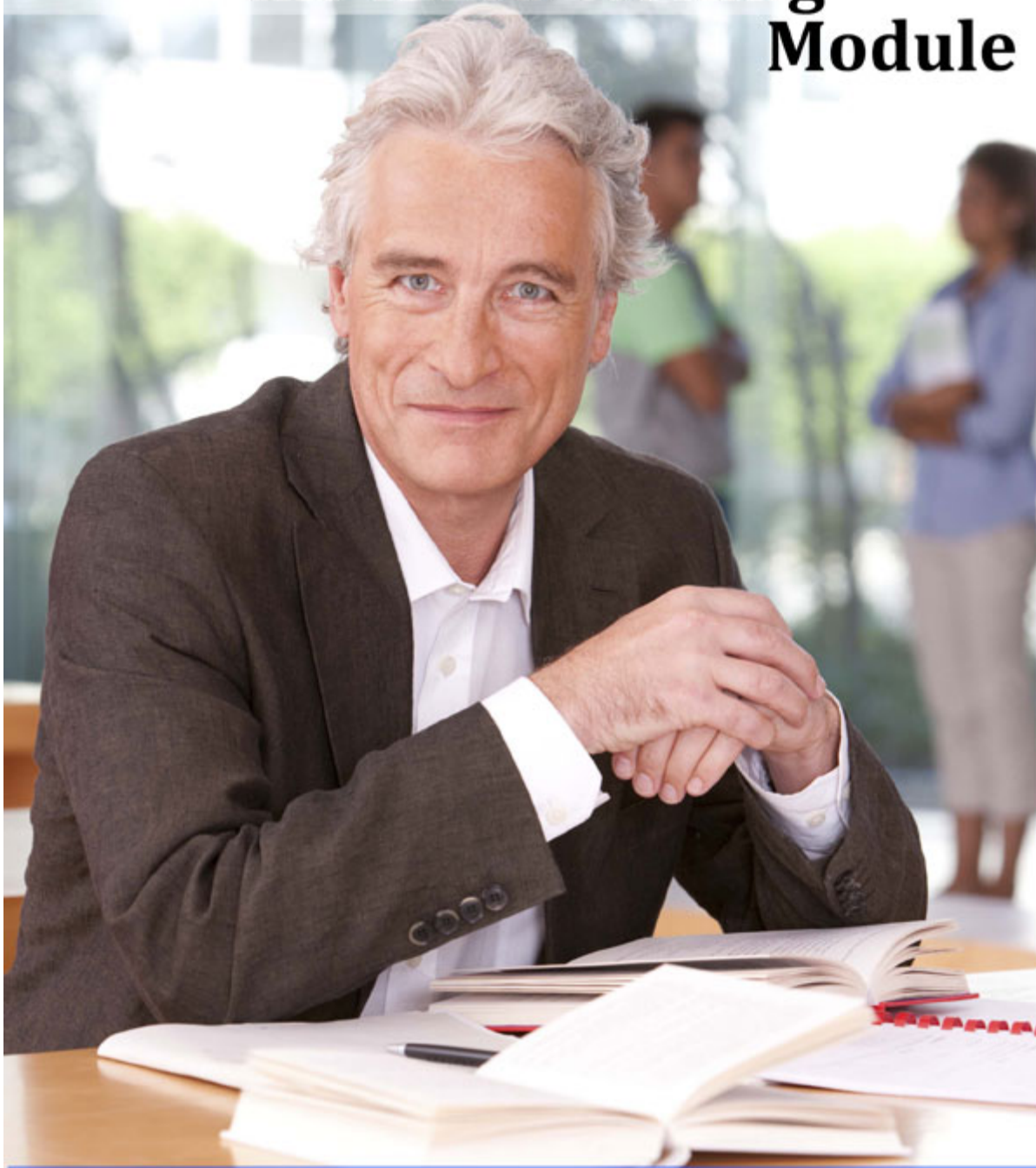


Learn From The Examiner

# How To Pass the IELTS Writing Module



By Former IELTS Examiner

# **Learn From The Examiner**

# **How to Pass the**

# **IELTS Writing**

# **Module**

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## 1. Introduction

This book is designed to help IELTS candidates raise their IELTS writing scores by an entire band, enabling them to get the mark they require for their future life. This document has been put together by a former IELTS Writing Examiner who has experience of marking many thousands of IELTS writing tests and has been thereby able to identify the simple errors which the majority of candidates make again and again.

After finishing reading this book you will be in a strong position to prepare yourself to succeed in the IELTS Writing exam. Of course if you combine the knowledge and wisdom inside this book with completing an online Writing course at [IELTS-Blog.com](http://IELTS-Blog.com), you will greatly increase the effectiveness of this book in helping to raise your band score, and will be almost certain to raise your overall band score for the IELTS writing module.

It is important to note that all materials in this book are not original IELTS materials and have been separately produced for IELTS-Blog.com.

## 2. How to Answer Part 1 of the Academic Writing Module

Part 1 of the IELTS writing module is an easily passed part of the test if you follow the answering system explained below. Although the data presented in the questions for part 1 are always different, they all follow a very similar pattern, and so long as you actually read the question and the information provided, it should be easy to provide an impressive, higher band score answer.

**Tip 1:** It is important to remember that you only have 1 hour for the writing test, so you must make sure that you do not spend more than 20 minutes completing part 1 as it is only worth 33% of the marks available for the writing.

**Tip 2:** You will lose marks if you do not write the minimum number of words required for each answer. The words counted do not include any words of the question title and are:

Task 1: 141 words (To be safe you should do at least 150 words)

Task 2: 241 Words (To be safe you should do at least 250 words)

### Writing Task 1

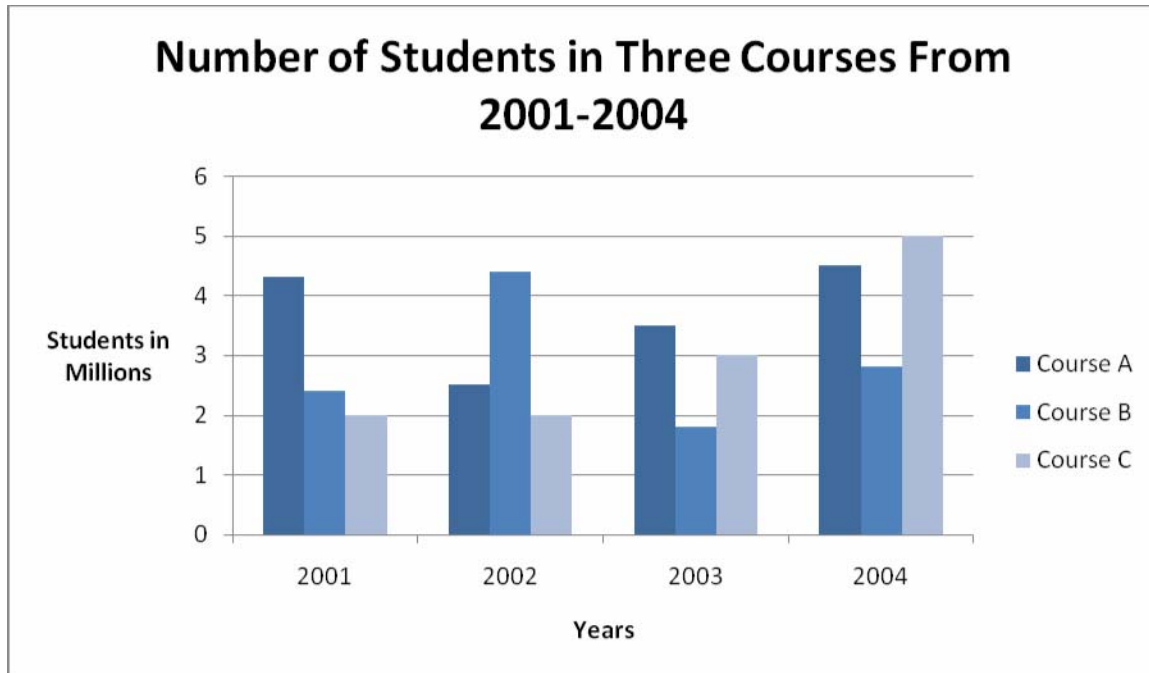
In the academic module, Task 1 is always a presentation of data on a specific topic. This is presented in the form of a graph or a diagram. Whatever the data is, the question format is always the same. So to answer part 1 question effectively and gain maximum possible marks on achieving the task requirements you should make sure that you do the following in your answer:

Academic Task 1 Requirements
1. Introduce the subject
2. Explain the main features with data
3. Show trends with data
4. Make a conclusion

To show how this works in practise we will use an example of a task 1 style question:

### Example Question 1

The bar chart below shows the number of students in three different courses from 2001-2004. Identify the main trends and summarize the data.



#### 1. Introduce the subject

The bar chart shows students attending three different courses over four years from 2001 to 2004.

Explanation: The main topic and reference points are introduced without copying question title. So the words will count towards the final word count for task 1.

2. Explain the main features with data

In 2001, 4.3 million students took course A. In 2002, 2.5 million people attended course A. Moving onto the year 2003, 3.5 million people took course A. Finally in 2004 the number of students taking course A had increased to 4.5 million students.

In 2001, 2.4 million students took course B. In 2002, 4.4 million people attended course B. Moving onto the year 2003, 1.8 million people took course B. Finally in 2004 the number of students taking course B had decreased to 2.8 million students.

In 2001, 2 million students took course C. In 2002, 2 million people attended course C. Moving onto the year 2003, 3 million people took course C. Finally in 2004 the numbers of students taking course A had increased to 5 million students.

Explanation: All the data is presented clearly and without copying the task question, so allowing all the words to count towards the final word count. However, to make the answer read more effectively and so increase the band score we need to change some of the language and the phrases used.

For example:

1. Explain the main features with data

In 2001, 4.3 million students took course A. In 2002, 2.5 million people attended course A. Moving onto the year 2003, 3.5 million people took course A. Finally in 2004 the number of students taking course A had increased to 4.5 million students.

*Moving onto Course B, in 2001, 2.4 million students took the course.* In 2002, 4.4 million people attended course B. In 2003, 1.8 million people took course B. By 2004, the number of students taking course B had decreased to 2.8 million students.

Taking a look at the course C we can see that in 2001, 2 million students took the course. In 2002, 2 million people attended course C. In the year 2003, 3 million people took course C. By 2004, the number of students taking course A had increased to 5 million students.

Explanation: As there are different words used, and the sentence order changes, the writing becomes easier to read.

## 2. Show trends with the data

If we analyze the data we can see several trends emerging. Firstly, the number of candidates taking course A has stayed almost the same over the four years, despite declining in 2003. The number of candidates taking course B has gradually declined over the four years from 4.4 million in 2001 to 2.8 million in 2004. However the number of candidates taking course C has grown from 2 million to 5 million over the four years.

Explanation: The key aim of explaining the overall (over the four years) change in numbers for each of the 3 categories is included here, avoiding repeating the same sentence forms.

## 4. Make a conclusion

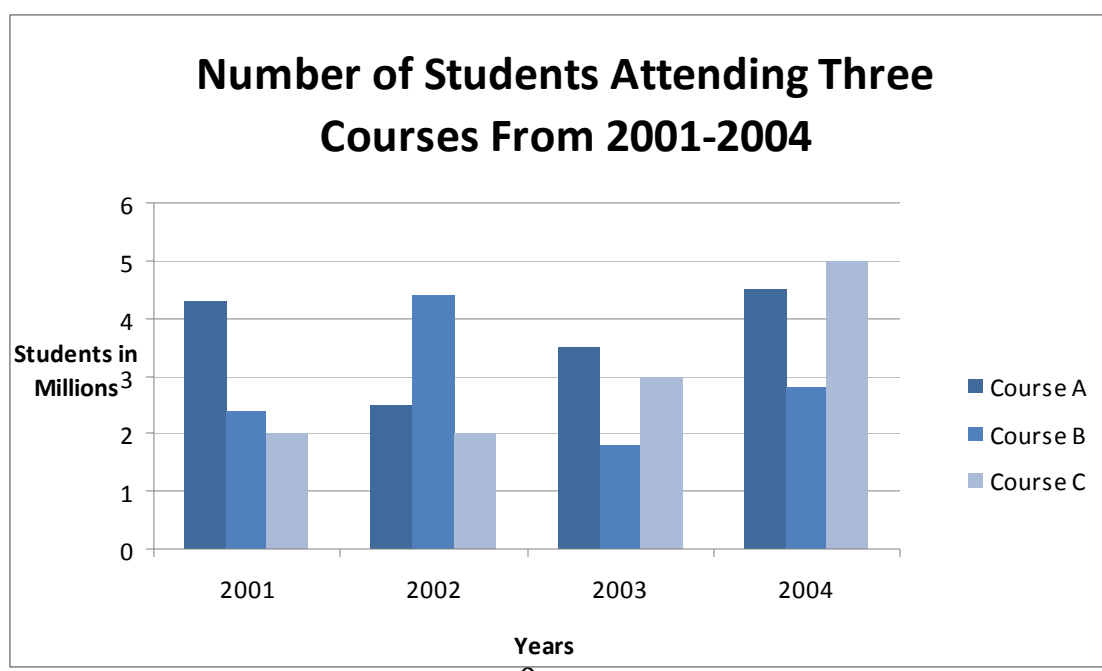
In conclusion then, one can say that over the four year period from 2001 to 2004, there has been an increase in overall numbers of students attending all three courses.

Explanation: The aim of the conclusion is to explain one key trend identified from all the different data trends.

So putting all the different parts together we can see what would get an IELTS band score answer of 8 for this question:

### Example question 2.

**The bar chart below shows the number of students in three different courses from 2001-2004. Identify the main trends and summarize the data.**





### Sample Answer 1 (Band Score 8).

The bar chart shows students attending three different courses over four years from 2001 to 2004.

In 2001, 4.3 million students took course A. In 2002, 2.5 million people attended course A. Moving onto the year 2003, 3.5 million people took course A. Finally in 2004 the number of students taking course A had increased to 4.5 million students.

Moving onto Course B, in 2001, 2.4 million students took the course. In 2002, 4.4 million people attended course B. In 2003, 1.8 million people took course B. By 2004, the number of students taking course B had decreased to 2.8 million students.

Taking a look at the course C we can see that in 2001, 2 million students took the course. In 2002, 2 million people attended course C. In the year 2003, 3 million people took course C. By 2004, the number of students taking course A had increased to 5 million students.

If we analyze the data we can see several trends emerging. Firstly, the number of candidates taking course A has stayed almost the same over the four years, despite declining in 2003. The number of candidates taking course B has gradually declined over the four years from 4.4 million in 2001 to 2.8 million in 2004. However the number of candidates taking course C has grown from 2 million to 5 million over the four years.

In conclusion then, one can say that over the four year period from 2001 to 2004, there has been an increase in overall numbers of students attending all three courses.

Word count: 258

So why would the above answer get an IELTS Band 8 score? Because of the following:

1. All the requirements of the task are achieved.
2. There are no spelling or grammatical errors.
3. The answer is over the minimum word count and the answer can be followed effortlessly.
4. A wide range of grammar and vocabulary is used.

It is important to note that only an answer with practically no errors can get an IELTS band 8.

For it to become a 9, the writing would have to show an improvement in the style, and evidence that the essay writer could use the most advanced grammatical structures and vocabulary. And there would have to be no errors in the answer. The answer above uses grammar and vocabulary appropriate for answering the question. An example of a band 9 answer would be the following:

### **Sample Answer 2 (Band Score 9).**

The bar chart featured in Task 1 shows students attending three different courses over a four year time span from 2001 to 2004.

First of all, let's take a look at the data provided in the bar chart over the duration of the four year period. In 2001, 4.3 million students had presumably enrolled onto course A. In 2002, this figure had increased by nearly 20 percent to 2.5 million. The numbers continued to increase so that by 2003, 3.5 million people were at that time taking the course. A. Finally in 2004 the number of students taking course A had increased by another whole million to 4.5 million students.

Moving onto course B, in 2001, 2.4 million students had decided to take the course. In 2002, the number s nearly doubled to 4.4 million people attending the course. In 2003, 1.8 million people took course B. However in 2004 the situation markedly changed- the numbers of students taking course B had decreased significantly to 2.8 million students.

Turning to the data for course C one can discern that in 2001, 2 million students took the course. This figure stayed the same for 2002. Then in 2003, there was a notable rise to 3 million people taking course C. By 2004, the numbers of students taking course A had increased dramatically to 5 million students.

If we analyze the data we can see several trends clearly emerging. Firstly, the numbers of candidates taking course A has stayed virtually the same over the four years. This was despite a decline and then gradual rebound in 2003 to 2004. The number of candidates taking course B has gradually declined over the four years from 4.4 million in 2001 to 2.8 million in 2004. However the numbers of candidates taking course had more than double from 2 million to 5 million over the four year period.

To conclude then, one can say that over the four year period from 2001 to 2004, there has been an overall increase in the numbers of students attending all three courses.

Word count: 342

Explanation: The IELTS band 9 answer therefore does the following;

1. It answers the question fully and in detail.
2. It uses a full range of advanced grammatical structures and vocabulary.
3. The style is faultless.

Now you may have noticed something obvious about both Sample Answer 1 and 2. Both have word counts which are much longer than required. In the real exam you will not have enough time to write such detailed answers so let's look at an answer of the recommended length (150 words) which would be good enough to get a band 6 score in IELTS:

**Sample Answer 3 (Band Score 6).**

The bar chart shows students attending three different courses over four years from 2001 to 2004.

Firstly, let us look at the data. In 2001, 4.3 million students took course A. In 2002, 2.5 million people attended course A. By 2004 this had increased to 4.5 million. In 2001, 2.4 million students took course B. This declined to 2.8 million students by 2004. In 2001, 2 million students attended course C. By 2004, the number of students taking course A had increased dramatically to 5 million students.

If we analyze the data we can see that the number of candidates taking course A has stayed almost the same over the four years, even with a decline in 2003. The number of candidates taking course B has gradually declined over the four years from 4.4 million in 2001 to 2.8 million in 2004. However the number of candidates taking course C has grown from 2 million to 5 million from 2001 to 2004.

In conclusion then, one can say that from 2001 to 2004, there has been an increase in overall numbers of students attending all three courses.

Word count 185.

Explanation 3: Sample Answer 3 answers all the requirements of the question and shows a controlled range of grammatical structures and vocabulary.

For Sample Answer 3 to be able to get a 7, we would have to add a wider range of grammatical structures and vocabulary:

**Sample Answer 4 (Band Score 7):**

The bar chart **provides an overview of** students attending three different courses in four years from 2001 to 2004.

Firstly, let us look at the data. In 2001, 4.3 million students took course A. **This had shrunk** in 2002 to 2.5 million people and then **rebounded** in 2004 to 4.5 million, **slightly ahead of the 2001 figures**. In 2001, 2.4 million students took course B. This low number **had increased slightly** to 2.8 million students by 2004. In 2001, 2 million students attended course C. By 2004, the numbers of students taking course C had increased dramatically to 5 million students, **a massive increase on the 2001 figures**.

If we analyze the data we can see that numbers of candidates taking course A has stayed almost the same over the four years, **taking into account a decline** in 2003. The number of candidates taking course B has gradually declined over the four years from 4.4 million in 2001 to 2.8 million in 2004. However the numbers of candidates taking the course C had leapt from 2 million in 2001 to 5 million in 2004.

In conclusion then, one can say that from 2001 to 2004, there has been a **notable** increase in overall numbers of students attending all three courses.

Word count 185.

**Band 7 features:**

1. **provides an overview of**
2. **This had shrunk**
3. **Rebounded**
4. **slightly ahead of the 2001 figures**
5. **had increased slightly**
6. **a massive increase on the 2001 figures**
7. **taking into account a decline**
8. **notable**

Here is a breakdown of the four areas that decide what band score candidates are awarded to for part 1.

**Tip.** Unless the question is fully answered according to the explanation provided below, then the candidate cannot get more than a **Band 5** for their answer.

Marking Criteria	
Marking Criteria	Explanation
Answering the Question	Were all the parts of the question answered? These are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• So was there an introduction of the data presented</li> <li>• examples of the data provided</li> <li>• an analysis of data given</li> <li>• and a summary of the main trends in the data</li> </ul>
Style	How easy was it to read the essay? Was it logical and did it have the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An introduction and a conclusion</li> <li>• Paragraphing</li> <li>• Good use of language connecting the different paragraphs</li> <li>• A logical progression towards the conclusion - did the essay develop towards a conclusion?</li> </ul>
Vocabulary used	How varied and accurate was the vocabulary?
Grammar used	How wide was the range of grammatical structures uses, and how accurately and appropriately were they used?

Detailed analysis of the different marking criteria;

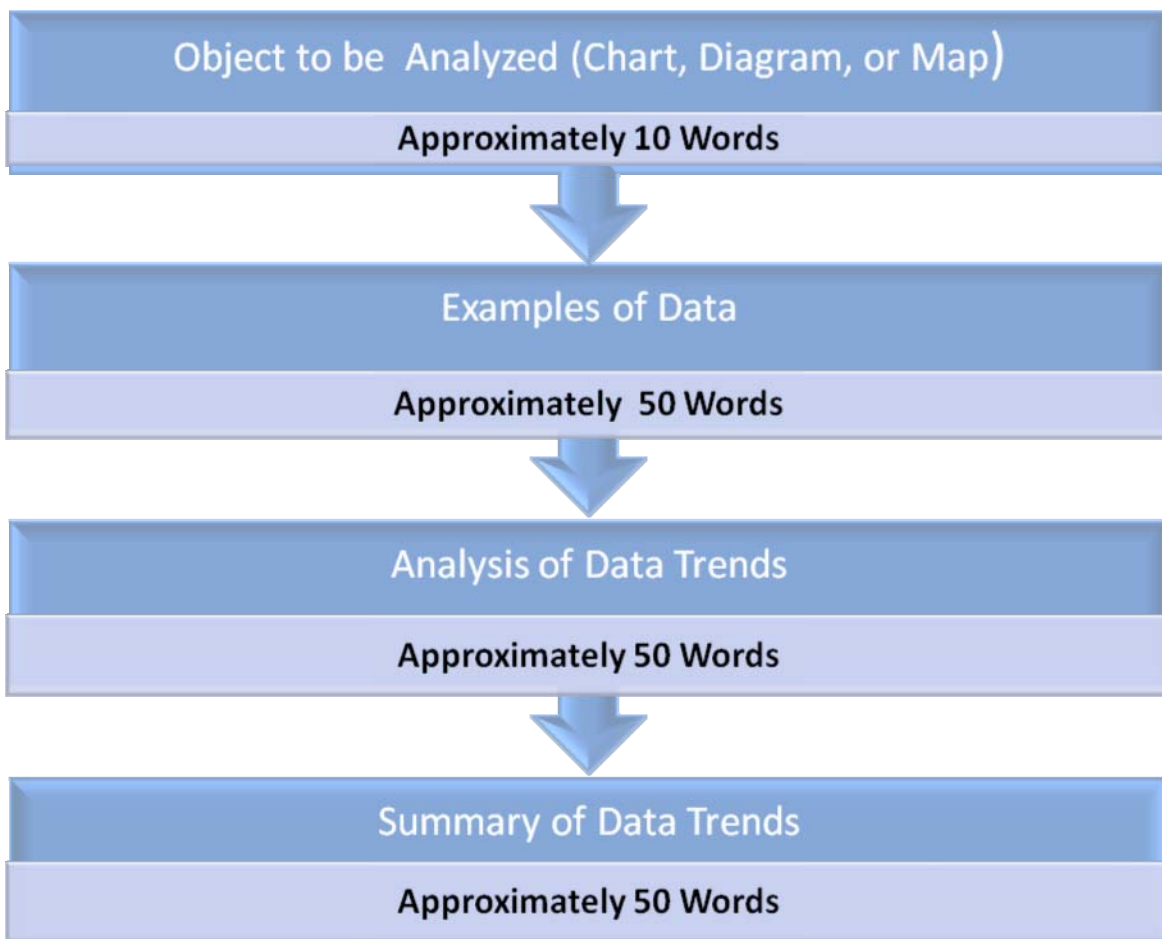
Marking Criteria
Answering the Question
The Task 1 academic answer should include the following subsections in order to get a band 6 or higher score
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Overview of the topic.</li><li>2. Examples of the data.</li><li>3. Analysis of the data.</li><li>4. Summary of identified trends in the data.</li></ol>

Marking Criteria
Style
The Task 1 academic answer should include the following subsections in order to get a band 6 or higher score
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. An introduction and a conclusion.</li><li>2. A clear logical progression from the introduction to the conclusion.</li><li>3. Effective use of paragraphing.</li><li>4. Appropriate use of cohesive devices (language that links the different paragraphs together).</li></ol>

Marking Criteria
Vocabulary Used
The Task 1 academic answer should include effective and accurate use of vocabulary. This language has to be in addition to the language provided by the Question. The wider the range of vocabulary, <u>so long as it is accurately used</u> , the higher the bands score.

Marking Criteria
Grammar Used
The Task 1 academic answer should include effective and accurate use of grammatical structures. This language has to be in addition to the language provided by the Question. The wider the range of grammatical structures, <u>so long as it is accurately used</u> , the higher the bands score.

## Template for Answering Academic Task 1



### Connective devices

As mentioned in the style marking requirement, an important part of how highly graded the Task 1 answer is in the use of what are known as connective devices. These are the linking word and phrase used to connect paragraphs together developing from the introduction to the conclusion of an essay. Demonstrating a good use and control of these features can significantly improve band scores. What follows is a template with suggested connective devices and when to use them:

## Introduction

- The diagram / bar chart/ pie chart shows.....

## Data Examples

- Firstly...
- First of all....
- Let us take a closer look at...
- From the bar chart/diagram/ graph we can see...

## Data Analysis

- Secondly
- Turning to...
- Let us take a look now at ..
- Looking more closely at.....

## Conclusion

- In conclusion
- To conclude
- In summary
- To summarize



### 3. How to Answer Part 1 of the General Training Test

Part 1 of the IELTS writing test is an easily passed part of the test if you follow the answering system explained below. Although the question tasks presented in the questions for part 1 are always different, they all follow a very similar pattern, and so long as you actually read the question and the information provided, it should be easy to provide an impressive, higher band score answer.

**Tip 1:** It is important to remember that you only have 1 hour for the writing test, so you must make sure that you do not spend more than 20 minutes completing Part 1 as it is only worth 33% of the marks available for the writing.

**Tip 2:** You will lose marks if you do not write the minimum number of words required for each answer. The words counted do not include any words of the question title and are:

Task 1: 141 words (To be safe you should do at least 150 words)

Task 2: 241 Words (To be safe you should do at least 250 words)

#### Writing Task 1

In the general training module, Task 1 asks the candidate to write a letter for a specific purpose. The question provides the reason why the candidate is writing the letter, the person to address the letter to, and three specific points that have to be mentioned in the letter. To answer Part 1 question effectively and gain maximum possible marks on achieving the task requirements you should make sure that you do the following in your answer:

General Training Task 1 Requirements
1. Use the correct tone and letter format
2. Mention all three points.
3. Write at least 150 words, (less than 141 words will cost marks.) This does not include the salutations (the beginning and closing phrases of the letter.

To show how this works in practise we will use an example of a Task 1 style question:

General Training Sample Question 1

You are planning to stay in a hotel in an English speaking country. You are writing to the hotel manager to find out some additional information. In your letter ask the following questions:

- What the daily rate for one standard room is
- What the facilities in the hotel are
- Whether the hotel offers excursions to the nearby tourist sites

There is no need to include names and addresses.

The letter is a formal one as you are writing to a person who you do not know so you need to write in a formal tone. An informal letter is a letter that you write to a person who you do know (a friend, a colleague, an acquaintance). Below is a comparison between formal and informal language in letter-writing:

Formal Writing	Informal Writing
Dear Sir/Madam,	Hi,
I am writing to you to request details about	I want to know
I trust	I hope
I would appreciate	I want
I would be grateful	It would be great
I would like to	I'd like to
Confirm	Check
Yours sincerely	Bye
Additionally	Also
Provide me with	Give me
Establishment	Business
I look forward to receiving your reply	Hope to hear from you soon

So now that we know that it is a formal letter, we can then write the answer after identifying what information goes into the answer (see highlighted below):

### General Training Sample Question 1

You are **planning to stay in a hotel** in an English speaking country. You are writing to the hotel manager to find out some additional information. In your letter ask the following questions:

- **What the daily rate for one standard room is**
- **What are the facilities in the hotel**
- **Whether the hotel offers excursions to the nearby tourist sites**

There is no need to include names and addresses.

Here is how the answer might look:

#### General Training Task 1, Sample Question 1

Answer (Band Score 8):

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am writing to you to request details about your hotel and its services. I plan to stay at your establishment in one month's time and there are a number of points which I would be grateful if you could clarify for me. This will allow me to plan my holiday in your country more effectively and thereby give me the opportunity to maximise my vacation time.

First of all, could you please inform me as to what the current daily rate is for one standard room. If the quoted price is satisfactory then I would like to proceed to reserve the room for one week from the first of March to the eighth of March.

Secondly, I would appreciate it if you could additionally provide me with details of what the hotel facilities are at your establishment. Could you please confirm for me that you have a gym and a swimming pool for the use of the hotel guests.

Finally, I am interested in visiting the local tourist sites and so would greatly appreciate it if you could provide me with details of any excursions which your hotel may run to these destinations.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Best regards,

Word count: 198

The above answer is made up of three parts:

Dear  
Sir/Madam

1. Introduce yourself: who you are and why you are writing

I am writing to you request details about your hotel and its services. I plan to stay at your establishment in one month's time and there are a number of points which I would be grateful if you could clarify for me. This will allow me to plan my holiday in your country more effectively and thereby give me the opportunity to maximise my vacation time.

2. Talk about the three key points in the exam question

First of all, could you please inform me as to what the current daily rate is for one standard room. If the quoted price is satisfactory then I would like to proceed to reserve the room for one week from the first of March to the eighth of March.

Secondly, I would appreciate it if you could additionally provide me with details of what the hotel facilities are at your establishment. Could you please confirm for me that you have a gym and a swimming pool for the use of the hotel guests.

Finally, I am interested in visiting the local tourist sites and so would greatly appreciate it if you could provide me with details of any excursions which your hotel may run to these destinations.

3. Finish the letter in an appropriate manner

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours  
Sincerely,

Here is a breakdown of the four areas that decide what band score candidates are awarded to for part 1.

**Tip.** Unless the question is fully answered according to the explanation provided below, then the candidate cannot get more than a **Band 5** for their answer.

Marking Criteria	
Marking Criteria	Explanation
Answering the Question	Were all three parts of the question answered?
Style	How easy was it to read the letter? Was it logical and did it have the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate tone (formal or informal)</li> <li>• Appropriate style ( a letter style)</li> <li>• A beginning and an ending</li> <li>• Paragraphing</li> <li>• Good use of language connecting the different paragraphs (cohesive connectors)</li> </ul>
Vocabulary used	How varied and accurate was the vocabulary?
Grammar used	How wide the range of grammatical structures uses was, and how accurately and appropriately were they used?

Detailed analysis of the different marking criteria:

Marking Criteria
<p style="text-align: center;">Answering the Question</p> <p>The Task 1 general training answer should include the following subsections in order to get a <b>Band 6 or higher score</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The reason for the letter is made clear</li> <li>2. All three points in the question are mentioned in the answer</li> </ol>

Marking Criteria
Style
<p>The Task 1 academic answer should include the following subsections in order to get a <b>Band 6 or higher score</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An appropriate introduction and an ending.</li> <li>2. Effective use of paragraphing.</li> <li>3. Appropriate use of cohesive devices (language that link the different paragraphs together).</li> <li>4. An appropriate tone (formal or informal) is used.</li> <li>5. Appropriate style ( a letter style).</li> </ol>

Marking Criteria
Vocabulary Used
<p>The Task 1 academic answer should include effective and accurate use of vocabulary. This language has to be in addition to the language provided by the Question. The wider the range of vocabulary, <u>so long as it is accurately used</u>, the higher the bands score.</p>

Marking Criteria
Grammar Used
<p>The Task 1 academic answer should include effective and accurate use of grammatical structures. This language has to be in addition to the language provided by the Question. The wider the range of grammatical structures, <u>so long as it is accurately used</u>, the higher the bands score.</p>

General training Task 1 also has informal styles of letter to write. Here is an example question followed by an example answer:

General Training Sample Question 2
<p>You are planning to stay with a friend in an English speaking country. You are writing to your friend to find out some additional information. In your letter ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long should you plan to stay for</li> <li>• What you should bring with you</li> <li>• What you would like to do there</li> </ul> <p>There is no need to include names and addresses.</p>

### General Training Sample Question 2

Answer (Band Score 8):

Hi \_\_\_\_,

I hope you are well. I am writing to you to check a few details about my planned trip to come and stay with you next month.

First of all, how long do you think that I should plan to stay with you? When we last spoke it was a little bit unclear and I would like to confirm this in advance of booking my flights over to your country. I know that you said two weeks was fine, but are you sure that it would be ok for me to stay for that long at your home?

Secondly, do you have any recommendations about the types of things that I should bring with me? I am planning on bringing the usual travel items that I take on holiday with me, but it occurred to me, that it might be a little bit cold in your country at the moment. Do you think that I should bring warm clothes with me?

Finally, I know that we have talked generally about doing things when I arrive, but I have read about a tourist attraction near your home. I am very interested in going to see this sight, and after I find the magazine again I will send you another letter with the name of the attraction on it.

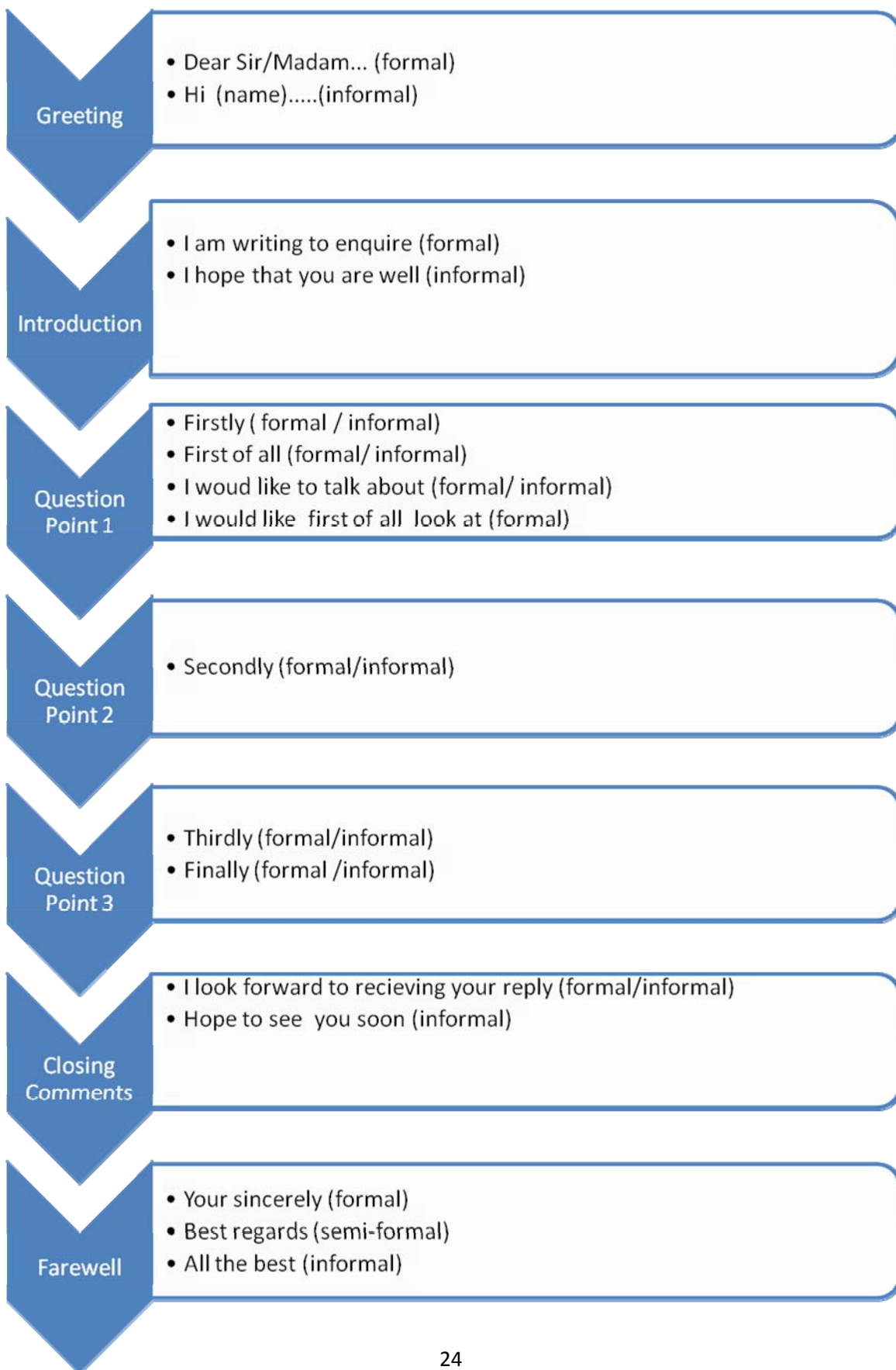
Well, I really look forward to seeing you soon.

All the best,

Word count: 223

### Connective devices

As mentioned in the style marking requirement, an important part of how highly graded the Task 1 answer is in the use of what are known as connective devices. These are the linking words and phrases used to connect paragraphs together developing from the introduction to the conclusion of an essay. Demonstrating a good use and control of these features can significantly improve band scores. On the next page is a template with suggested connective devices for answering General Training Task 1. All the devices should be used at the beginning of the respective paragraphs.





## 4. Writing Task 2

For both Academic and General Training Modules, the Writing Task 2 is the same. The answer is worth 66% of the available marks for writing, so you should allow 40 minutes to complete Task 2. You are presented with a discussion topic and asked to discuss it and present your own opinion on it. The questions may vary, but the task requirements always remain the same, which are:

Academic and General Training Task 2 Requirements
1. Use the correct tone and essay format (an introduction to the topic, an analysis of both sides of the argument and a conclusion where the writer gives their own opinion.
2. Always use paragraphing.
3. Write at least 250 words, (less than 241 words will cost marks.) This does not include the essay title. So do not copy the essay title to gain extra word length.

**Tip:** Every essay question will have at least two possible views – for and against the discussion topic. To gain top marks you need to present both views before providing your own view point in the conclusion.

Examples of essay questions and answers:

Allow for 40 minutes to complete this task.

Write about the following topic:

**It is more important to invest in further education rather than to gain work experience after finishing university in order to find a good job.**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree?**

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

Write 250 words or more.

To answer this question we need to identify the key points as follows:

**Key points:**

- *Opinion 1: Important to invest in further education.*
- *Opinion 2: Gain work experience after finishing university.*
- *To what extent do you agree or disagree?*

A sample answer could look like this:

Answer (Band Score 8)

As the numbers of university graduates continues to increase, it can seem that there is no alternative but to continue one's studies in order to be more attractive in the job market, rather than to seek to gain practical work experience. To see how valid this argument is, we have to look at both sides of the debate.

First of all, let's take a look at the first traditional route for university graduates. The main reason why people undertake an undergraduate degree is to give them a competitive edge in the job market, as gaining a degree is seen a guarantee of a certain level of mental ability. It is then seen as necessary to combine this intellectual training with practical, real world work experience in order to become a viable and strong contender in the job market.

The alternative view however argues that it is no longer enough merely to possess a standard university degree and practical work experience. The sheer numbers of graduates entering the labour market each year means that it is vital to gain an additional competitive edge when applying for the more sought after positions with selective employers.

So where does the truth lie? On the one hand there is the time honoured view that has long been the conventional and practical route to career success for young ambitious individuals. On the other hand, the view that the job market has never been more competitive and it is essential to aspire to much higher levels of competitive excellence. With current lack of jobs available in the labour market it seems inevitable that one has to gain additional qualifications which will prove to a potential employer that one is the right candidate for that very job.

Word count 291

Here is another sample task 2 question:

Allow for 40 minutes to complete this task.

Compose an essay on the following:

**Some people believe that television is a powerful educational tool. Other people believe that television is nothing more than mindless entertainment and should be discouraged.**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?**

Discuss both views and give your own opinion. Provide examples and supporting evidence to back up your opinion on this subject.

Write 250 words or more.

To answer this question we need to identify the key points as follows:

**Key points:**

- ***Opinion 1: Television as a powerful educational tool.***
- ***Opinion 2: Television as mindless entertainment to be discouraged.***
- ***Discuss both views and give your own opinion.***

A sample answer could look like this:

It seems that television is ever present in our society. Perhaps because of its popularity, there are widely differing views as to whether the medium of television is a positive force or a negative force in society.

On the plus side, there is a commonly heard view that television is of great importance to society as it acts as an educational tool for the general public. Television, it is argued, makes the boring exciting through its ability to engage us with both sound and visual stimulation. People respond well to the visual story-telling power of fast-paced television programmes and are better able to retain the knowledge learned through the experience. The use of television programmes to teach children how to read and write is a good example of this.

Alternatively, some people believe that television is nothing more than mindless entertainment. It is argued by such people that television acts as a substitute for actual learning. That instead of absorbing information at one's own speed through the medium of reading for example, one is force-fed the briefest of information at a fast-pace, making in-depth analysis difficult. An example of this would be the comparison between television news and a newspaper. A newspaper can be read and absorbed at one's own pace and has the ability to go into much greater depth than television.

In conclusion then, one can see that the rapid superficiality of television is in fact no substitute for in-depth coverage provided by other media, such as the written form.

Word count: 252

Here is a breakdown of the four areas that decide what band score candidates are awarded to for part 2.

**Tip.** Unless the question is fully answered according to the explanation provided below, then the candidate cannot get more than a **Band 5** for their answer.

Marking Criteria	
Marking Criteria	Explanation
Answering the Question	Were all three parts of the question answered?
Style	How easy was it to read the essay? Was it logical and did it have the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate tone (formal or informal)</li> <li>• Appropriate style ( an essay style)</li> <li>• A beginning and an ending</li> <li>• Paragraphing</li> <li>• Good use of language connecting the different paragraphs (cohesive connectors)</li> </ul>
Vocabulary used	How varied and accurate was the vocabulary?
Grammar used	How wide the range of grammatical structures uses was, and how accurately and appropriately were they used?

Detailed analysis of the different marking criteria:

Marking Criteria
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Answering the Question</b></p> <p>The Task 2 answer should include the following subsections in order to get a <b>Band 6 or higher score</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Overview of the topic.</li> <li>2. Example and analysis of the first viewpoint.</li> <li>3. Example and analysis of the second viewpoint.</li> <li>4. Conclusion with the writer's own opinion based upon the two analysed viewpoints.</li> </ol>

Marking Criteria
Style
<p>The Task 2 answer should include the following subsections in order to get a <b>Band 6 or higher score</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An introduction and a conclusion.</li> <li>2. A clear logical progression from the introduction to the conclusion.</li> <li>3. Effective use of paragraphing.</li> <li>4. Appropriate use of cohesive devices (language that links the different paragraphs together).</li> </ol>

Marking Criteria
Vocabulary Used
<p>The Task 2 answer should include effective and accurate use of vocabulary. This language has to be in addition to the language provided by the Question. The wider the range of vocabulary, <u>so long as it is accurately used</u>, the higher the bands score.</p>

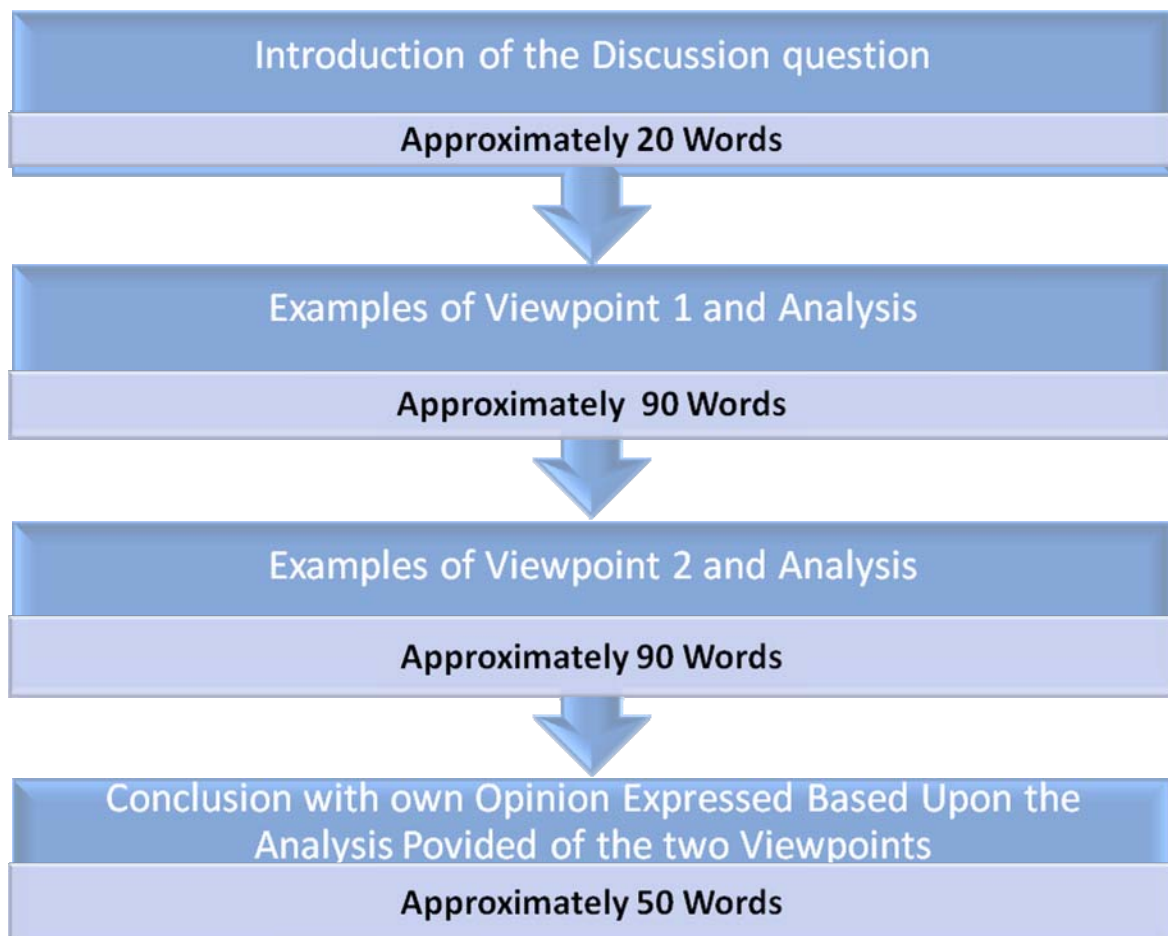
Marking Criteria
Grammar Used
<p>The Task 2 answer should include effective and accurate use of grammatical structures. This language has to be in addition to the language provided by the Question. The wider the range of grammatical structures, <u>so long as it is accurately used</u>, the higher the bands score.</p>

**Tip:** The key to successfully answering Task 2 is to use an essay style with an introduction, an analysis of both points of view and a conclusion based upon the evidence presented. To do this successfully it is essential to use the following:

- paragraphing
- a formal style
- an introduction and a conclusion
- presentation of both view points
- your own opinion
- to write over 241 words, not including the essay title

To get the higher marks it is again important use connective devices to link the paragraphs together. Below is a list of higher level connective devices and when to use them.

An overview of a successful task 2 answer would look like this:



## Introduction

- The subject of \_\_\_\_\_ is a complex one.
- The topic/subject of \_\_\_\_\_ is a very important concern for society at the moment.
- Everybody has an opinion on \_\_\_\_\_.
- The topic/subject of \_\_\_\_\_ has been fiercely debated.

## First view point

- Firstly let us look at..
- First of all let us look at..
- we should start by taking a look at..
- I would like to start by taking a closer look at..
- There are two sides to this debate, and I would like to focus firstly on..
- This is a complex area, so we should start by looking at ...

## Second View point

- Turning to the second viewpoint
- Taking a look now at the second point of view...
- The other opinion is....
- The counterargument is
- Secondly,....

## Conclusion

- To conclude then...
- To try and form a conclusion then,..
- To come to my own opinion then,
- My own opinion based upon an analysis of the the two arguments is



**Tip:** Avoid using clichés where possible - a cliché is a set phrase to describe a situation.

Classic examples are the following:

Cliché	Explanation
Every coin has two sides.	Explaining that there are two sides to an argument
This is a hot button topic	Describing a contentious issue
Frankly speaking	To give an honest view point
To look for greener pastures	To improve one's chances in a new environment
To have a bright future	To improve one's future life
The rapid development of technology	The speed of technological change
The rapid development of the economy	The speed of economic change

Below is a list of clichés and the suitable high-level language that can be used instead to gain rather than lose marks.

Cliché	Explanation
Every coin has two sides.	Every argument has two sides
This is a hot button topic	This is a highly contentious issue
Frankly speaking	Honestly speaking
To look for greener pastures	To seek new better opportunities overseas
To have a bright future	To greatly improve one's future chances
The rapid development of technology	The speed of technological progress
The rapid development of the economy	The speed of economic progress

So if you bear the above in mind and practice answering the above questions (Task 1 and 2 both) within a 1 hour time limit, you will greatly improve your chances of passing the Writing module. Indeed, if you practice using the above techniques to answer the 20-40 individual practice writing tests on the IELTS-blog.com website (each with a separate Task 1 and Task 2 question), and the incorporate the [teachers' feedback](#) there is no reason why you should not get a high band score in the IELTS Writing module.

## 5. The 10 Key Mistakes Made by IELTS Candidates Taking the IELTS Writing Exam

IELTS candidates frequently fail to get the score they require because they make some basic mistakes. Unless you are a Foreign IELTS examiner you do not know what these basic mistakes are. IELTS preparatory courses teach you how to pass the IELTS writing exam from the student's perspective. Now for the first time you can learn how to pass the IELTS writing exam from the perspective of the person who gives out the scores-the IELTS examiner.

Let's take a look at the ten most common and easily solved problems made by IELTS candidates taking the IELTS writing Exam:

<b>10 Key mistakes Made By IELTS Candidates taking the IELTS writing Test</b>	
<b>Mistake</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
1. Writing down memorised answers	A memorised answer is written by a non-native speaker is easy to recognize and will stop you from passing the exam
2. Not writing enough	Failure to write the minimum amount of words means that the candidate will be marked down
3. Not writing like an individual	Although it is common to think as part of a group in many countries, most examiners come from Western countries where they expect people write personal or individual answers to questions.
4. Being inadvertently racist	Describing one ethnic/national group as unique and deserving special treatment is considered offensive by people from Western countries.
5. Using clichés	A cliché is a phrase used to describe a situation such as "every coin has two sides" which is over-used by many candidates. Choose your own way of describing something.
6. Writing inappropriately	Unless the question asks you to write to a friend, your answers should always be written formally.
7. Not using paragraphing	It is essential to use paragraphing in Task 2 of the Writing exam.
8. Not answering the question	Always answer try to answer the question, otherwise you will not pass the exam
9. Using vocabulary and phrases inappropriately	Do not use vocabulary and phrases unless you know how to use them in a written answer.
10. Not managing exam time well	If you take longer than the recommended amount of time on each task, you will run out of time to write a good answer.

And here are the way's to simply avoid these problems:

<b>10 Key mistakes Made By IELTS Candidates taking the IELTS Writing Test</b>	
<b>Mistake</b>	<b>Solution</b>
1. Writing down memorised answers	Repeatedly practise writing down your own answers - with the feedback from IELTS-Blog.com teachers you will learn to be able to write your own high-scoring answers
2. Not writing enough	Practise writing the minimum word amounts in the required time limits (Task 1-141 words in 20 minutes. Task 2 - 241 words in 40 minutes.)
3. Not writing like an individual	Avoid writing things such as "because I am (your own nationality) I think..."
4. Using clichés	Avoid using English sayings which you have not seen used by native English speaking writers.
5. Being inadvertently racist	Recognizing that there are many different types of people in the world and that there no one country or ethnic group can be the best at anything. So writing something such as the following would be acceptable: "The (your own nationality) have a reputation for being very hospitable..."
6. Writing inappropriately	Use formal speech always, unless specifically told otherwise in the Task question (this applies only to General Training candidates)
7. Not using paragraphing	Practise writing essays with paragraphing and using connective devices.
8. Not answering the question	Always try to answer the question.
9. Using vocabulary and phrases inappropriately	Practise using new vocabulary and phrases by identifying them in material written by native English speaking writers, such as newspapers and magazines.
10. Not managing exam time well	Practise writing your answers under timed conditions-remember it is 20 minutes for Task 1 and 40 minutes for Task 2.

## **Final word**

It is strongly recommended that you first of all memorize the information in this book and then practise using it through doing controlled 1 hour tests.

Remember, if you plan correctly, and repeatedly practice, then the writing test is one of the surest ways to achieve a high band score in the IELTS test.

Good luck!