

**Got questions  
about living,  
working and  
studying  
in the UK?**

**The  
answer  
is IELTS**

**IELTS™**

## **UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) has announced important changes to Secure English Language Tests (SELT) for visa purposes.**

**If you are applying for a UK visa, you need to be aware of changes made by UKVI.**

### **Please note**

If you are studying at degree level or higher at a Higher Education Institution (HEI), these changes will not affect you. UKVI has confirmed that HEIs currently choose their own method of testing students' English language ability and this will not change.

All British universities and colleges accept IELTS results. This means you can apply with an IELTS result from any of the 1,000 IELTS test locations worldwide unless your institution has additional requirements\*.

See [www.takeielts.org](http://www.takeielts.org) for a list of test locations.

Official list of British universities and colleges with Higher Education Institution (HEI)/Tier 4 Register of Sponsors:  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-licensed-sponsors-students](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-licensed-sponsors-students)

\*To find out more, visit <http://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa>

**Want to learn more?** Find the answers at [www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/choose-ielts/why-british-council](http://www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/choose-ielts/why-british-council)



**IELTS for  
UK Visas and  
Immigration**

**Which IELTS test do I need if I am applying for a UK visa?**

If you are applying for a UK visa in the UK, there is an IELTS test for you. For visa applications to the UK, you may need to have an English language qualification. In particular, for many categories of visa, you must submit an English language qualification which is included on the UK Home Office's list of Secure English Language Tests (often referred to as SELT tests). IELTS and IELTS Life Skills are on this list.

To find out whether you need to take an approved SELT test, what level you need to achieve, and which test you can use, you should visit [www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa](http://www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa).

There is also a wealth of information on UKVI's website [www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests).

**Can I use any IELTS test result for a UK visa application?**

If you wish to use an IELTS test result as part of your application to UKVI – apart from some types of student visa – you may need to take an IELTS for UKVI or IELTS Life Skills test. Please refer to the table on page 4 to find out which IELTS test you should take for each type of UK visa.

Both the UKVI and Life Skills tests must be taken at an IELTS test location specifically authorised by UKVI, and must be taken under specified conditions. You will receive an IELTS or IELTS Life Skills Test Report Form to show that your test met these requirements.

**Where can I take an IELTS or IELTS Life Skills test for a UK visa application?**

The tests are available throughout the world, in locations specified by UKVI. These IELTS test centres will be announced shortly on [www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa](http://www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa).

**When can I take an IELTS or IELTS Life Skills test for a UK visa application?**

We will be announcing dates for registration and testing shortly on [www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa](http://www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa).

| Visa description  | CEFR level required | Skills                                   | IELTS test and score required                                     |
|---|---------------------|--|---|
| <b>Tier 1</b><br>General visa   | C1                  | Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening | IELTS – 7.0 overall, and for each of the four skills              |
| <b>Tier 1</b><br>Exceptional Talent visa  | B1                  | Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening | IELTS – 4.0 overall, and for each of the four skills              |
| <b>Tier 1</b><br>Entrepreneur visa  | B1                  | Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening | IELTS – 4.0 overall, and for each of the four skills              |
| <b>Tier 1</b><br>Graduate Entrepreneur visa                                       | B1                  | Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening | IELTS – 4.0 overall, and for each of the four skills              |
| <b>Tier 2</b><br>General visa   | B1                  | Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening | IELTS – 4.0 overall, and for each of the four skills              |
| <b>Tier 2</b><br>Sportsperson visa  | A1                  | Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening | IELTS – 4.0 <sup>1</sup> overall, and for each of the four skills |
| <b>Tier 2</b><br>Minister of Religion visa  | B2                  | Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening | IELTS – 5.5 overall, and for each of the four skills              |
| <b>Tier 4</b><br>General student visa – below degree level only when required     | B1                  | Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening | IELTS – 4.0 <sup>3</sup> overall, and for each of the four skills |
| <b>Tier 4</b><br>General student visa – degree level and above only when required | B2                  | Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening | IELTS – 5.5 <sup>3</sup> overall, and for each of the four skills |
| Family of a settled person visa   | A1                  | Speaking and Listening                   | IELTS Life Skills at A1 – Pass                                    |
| Indefinite leave to remain (to settle) or citizenship <sup>2</sup>                | B1                  | Speaking and Listening                   | IELTS Life Skills at B1 – Pass                                    |

<sup>1</sup> IELTS is accepted by UKVI at band scores 4.0 and above, equivalent to CEFR level B1.

<sup>2</sup> UKVI will accept a test on the SELT list or an Ofqual regulated test for this immigration category. The test must cover Speaking and Listening at B1 level.

<sup>3</sup> Scores mentioned above for Tier 4 categories are the requirement of UKVI. Universities and colleges may require a higher band score for the course that you are applying for. Please check with them on the band score requirement for your course.

Please note that these changes do not affect the use of IELTS by people from the European Union, European Economic Area, Switzerland and 'majority English speaking countries' as defined by the UK Home Office [www.gov.uk/english-language](http://www.gov.uk/english-language).

**How often is an IELTS or IELTS Life Skills test available?**

For IELTS and IELTS Life Skills, test dates will be available within 28 days of booking your test.

**How often can I re-take IELTS or IELTS Life Skills?**

There are no restrictions on retaking IELTS. You can register for a test as soon as you feel you are ready to do so.

Candidates who have previously taken the IELTS Life Skills test and have passed are not allowed to re-take the test at the same level within two years, e.g. a candidate who has taken an IELTS Life Skills A1 test and has passed cannot take another Life Skills A1 test within two years. Similarly a candidate who has taken an IELTS Life Skills B1 test and has passed cannot take another Life Skills B1 test within two years.

**How is my IELTS test different if I take it for UK visa purposes?**

The IELTS test for UK visa purposes is designed to meet certain administrative requirements that are only specified by UK Visas and Immigration. Test Report Forms will be slightly different, to show that test takers have taken the test at an IELTS UK visa session. The actual test taken is the same – same content, examiners, format, level of difficulty, scoring and so on.

**If I take an IELTS test for UK visa purposes, can I use my result in other countries / for other purposes?**

Yes. IELTS test results are accepted by more than 9,000 organisations worldwide, including universities, colleges, governments and employers.

**I've already taken IELTS, can I still use my result to apply to UK Visas and Immigration?**

If you take IELTS on or before 5 April 2015 you should be able to use it for your application up to 5 November 2015, but you must confirm this with UKVI. From 6 April 2015 you must take the test at an IELTS test centre authorised to run IELTS tests for UK Visa and Immigration purposes.



**IELTS  
Life Skills**

**What is IELTS Life Skills and what is it for?**

IELTS Life Skills is a test of Speaking and Listening, available at CEFR Level A1 and CEFR Level B1. It is designed to meet the requirements of UK Visas and Immigration for certain visa categories.

**When and where can I take an IELTS Life Skills test?**

We will be announcing dates for registration and testing shortly on [www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa](http://www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa). IELTS Life Skills tests are available throughout the world, in locations specified by UK Visas and Immigration. The IELTS Life Skills test centres will also be announced here shortly. To find out whether you need to take an approved test, and what level you need to achieve, please visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) for more information.

**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.

**Is there any break between Speaking and Listening?**

No. You will be assessed on your Speaking and Listening skills at the same time.

### How is IELTS Life Skills assessed?

A certificated IELTS Examiner will assess your performance throughout the Listening and Speaking test based on the following criteria:

- obtaining information
- conveying information
- speaking to communicate
- engaging in discussion

### How can I prepare for the IELTS Life Skills test?

Free test samples will be available shortly on [www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa](http://www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa).

### How many copies of the IELTS Life Skills Test Report Form will I get?

You will receive one copy of the IELTS Life Skills Test Report Form.

### How soon will I get my IELTS Life Skills results?

Test results are normally available within 7 days of your test.

### How often is an IELTS or IELTS Life Skills test available?

For IELTS and IELTS Life Skills, test dates will be available within 28 days of booking your test.

### How often can I re-take IELTS or IELTS Life Skills?

There are no restrictions on retaking IELTS. You can register for a test as soon as you feel you are ready to do so.

Candidates who have previously taken the IELTS Life Skills test and have passed are not allowed to re-take the test at the same level within two years, e.g. a candidate who has taken an IELTS Life Skills A1 test and has passed cannot take another Life Skills A1 test within two years. Similarly a candidate who has taken an IELTS Life Skills B1 test and has passed cannot take another Life Skills B1 test within two years.

**Want to learn more?**

Find the answers at

[www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/  
ielts-uk-immigration-visa](http://www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-uk-immigration-visa)