

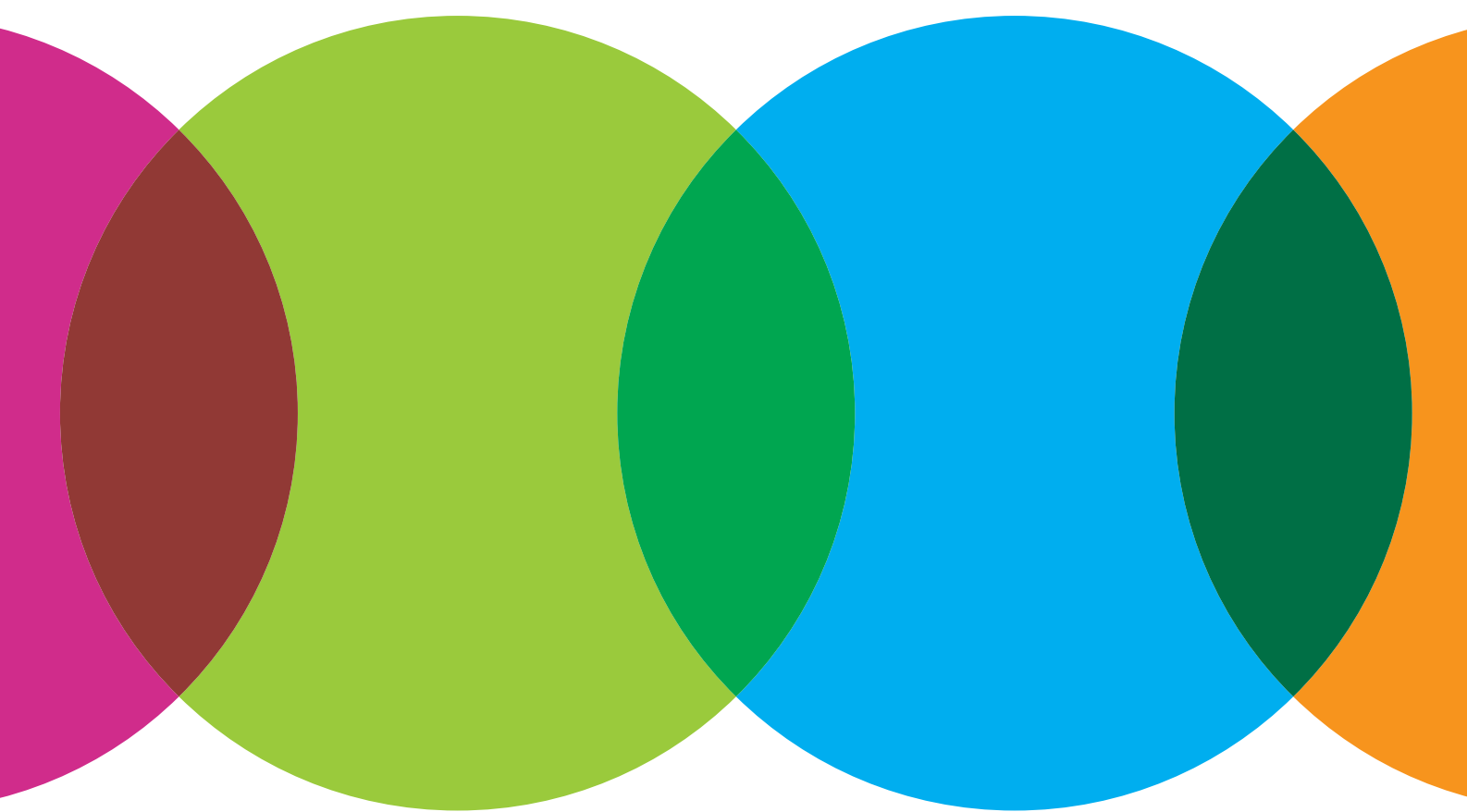
Annual Review 2007



**The world
speaks IELTS**

Contents

Introduction	2
Highlights for 2007	3
IELTS research	9
Band score information	12



Introduction

2007 was another year of huge success for IELTS with over 940,000 candidates taking the test. With similar dramatic increases over the last few years, entry levels are now nearly twice what they were three years ago. University entrance requirements, immigration policies and increased recognition for IELTS throughout the English-speaking world are largely responsible for this phenomenal growth.

Feedback from universities and government agencies around the world confirms that IELTS is a particularly good test of how well a person knows English. It gives them a thorough picture of skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing, in a way that is relevant to how the language is actually used for work and study. This means they can rely on IELTS scores when selecting candidates for courses or ensuring potential immigrants have the necessary language skills they need to succeed.

IELTS is already recognised by educational institutions, employers, organisations and government agencies in over 68 countries, and recognition has grown significantly through 2007. IELTS is now used by over 6,000 organisations worldwide, with recognition in the US now reaching 1,300 institutions and rising monthly.

With continued growth expected in the years to come, IELTS is set to remain the test of choice for people from all walks of life looking to prove their English language skills.

Highlights for 2007

Surge in US recognition

The number of organisations recognising IELTS in the USA continues to exceed all expectations, where more than 1,300 institutions now rely on IELTS as a high quality test of English language competence. This brings the total number of organisations recognising IELTS worldwide to over 6,000.

More than 220 US institutions chose to recognise IELTS last year including 159 graduate faculties/departments/schools and 129 undergraduate institutions, including Ivy League and top liberal arts schools in the country. Highlights include:

Major universities (public and private):

- Yale College
- Johns Hopkins University
- Tulane University
- University of Arizona
- University of Florida
- Villanova University

Top liberal arts colleges:

- Williams College
- Bowdoin College
- Smith College
- Vassar College

Graduate schools of business:

- Duke University Fuqua School of Business
- Yale School of Management
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sloan School

Law schools:

- University of Virginia School of Law
- University of Pennsylvania School of Law
- University of California Berkeley Boalt School of Law
- University of Chicago Law School
- University of Washington School of Law

Professional organisations:

- Association of Schools of Public Health "SOPHAS".

Opening doors in China

In 2007 China became the fastest growing and single biggest market for IELTS in the world reflecting the sustained and overwhelming demand for overseas higher education as well as growing recognition of the multi-purpose utility of a premium brand English language test. China has opened three new off-site test centre venues in 2007.

The huge domestic market in China is also increasingly opening its doors to IELTS. The Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications has become the first university in the People's Republic of China to officially recognise IELTS. This is a key university in China, affiliated to the postal and telecommunications industry.

Creating opportunities in India

IELTS is also enjoying particularly rapid growth in India, where it is used by postgraduate students and highly qualified specialists going to work in English-speaking countries, as well as large numbers of nursing professionals going to work in the UK and USA.

Recognising the growing importance of the Indian market, senior staff from the three IELTS partners visited India in November 2007 to meet with centres, officials and key stakeholders. The visit provided an opportunity to explore how IELTS can best serve those needing to prove their competence in English and to encourage debate on the growth, opportunities and changing future of testing.

Expanding the centre network

IELTS has been extending its network and finding new ways of working to cope with the unprecedented increase in demand for both Academic and General Training Modules. New centres were opened in Australia (six centres), Canada, India (five centres), Kazakhstan, Korea, Mexico, Pakistan, Russia, the UAE and USA (four centres).

Many centres across the world have been actively involved in the launch of an online results service to bring provisional IELTS results to receiving organisations. This improves the process by replacing paper-based Test Report Forms, (TRFs). An online service has also been launched for candidates in many countries, allowing them to see their results online while waiting for the TRF to arrive in the post.

IELTS has also formally established a number of off-site testing locations, run by centres to make the test accessible in areas where IELTS does not currently have centres. In Europe more off-site test venues were opened in France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Greece and Belgium. New IELTS distributors based in independent organisations were appointed for Finland, Denmark and Latvia. IELTS has also achieved increasing local recognition for educational programmes delivered in English at European institutions, such as Turin Polytechnic and recognition by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO).

There are now over 500 IELTS test locations in 121 countries and territories. These centres work closely with institutions and organisations recognising IELTS to engage them in seminars and international conferences to update them on changes and improved services, as well as encouraging them to join the IELTS global recognition system.



More meaningful band scores

A welcome development in 2007 was a change to IELTS band scores to make scoring more informative. Scores for each part of the test are still reported on the scale from one to nine, but now the Writing and Speaking tests are reported in whole or half bands in the same way as the Reading and Listening tests.

The new scoring means that:

- recognising organisations are able to set their requirements for admission and recruitment more precisely, based on more detailed information about the test taker's performance in each of the four skills
- the Test Report Form gives test takers more precise information on their strengths and weaknesses
- IELTS scores are now easier to understand because test taker performance in all skills is reported in the same way.

This is the latest in a series of enhancements to IELTS, based on continual consultation with test takers, teachers, recognising organisations and other stakeholders around the world. Many said they would like more detailed information on performance in each skill.



Boosting support in the USA

With IELTS fast gaining acceptance in the USA as one of the most reliable ways of measuring English language competence, a number of new organisational developments will help to provide an ever improved and local service to stakeholders and test takers in the region.

IELTS International is tasked with building and managing a much expanded test centre network and increasing recognition for the test in the USA. During the year, Richard Halstead joined the team, as US Regional Manager – US Test Center Network, to manage, promote and increase the network in the USA as the need for test centre facilities increases with demand. With Richard's work, four new centres joined the network, with others expected to follow in the near future.

To support heightened activity in the region, the head office of IELTS International moved from Pasadena to Los Angeles in 2007.

New marketing initiatives

Given the continued growth of IELTS, an IELTS Central Marketing Team has been appointed to provide a greater level of support to candidates, tutors, administrators and recognising organisations. Managers from each of the partner organisations are working closely together on a number of initiatives, such as enhancing the IELTS website, IELTS brand development and promotion and the range of publications available, improving training for centres and ensuring a greater profile for IELTS at educational events around the world.

IELTS accredited in the UK

A major endorsement this year was formal accreditation by the UK government's Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to various levels of IELTS as part of the National Qualifications Framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Accreditation will run until the end of 2010.

It was also announced that IELTS is a recognised test in the Home Office's new Points-based Immigration System introduced in February 2008 at Tier 1 level. The English language requirement for later Tiers of the programme will be announced during 2008, but it is expected that demand for the IELTS General Training paper will increase in the UK and UK feeder countries, as was the case in Australia following the introduction of a points-based system. The UK test centre network is under expansion to cope with the expected increase in demand.

Welcome to IELTS examiners

A number of qualified experienced English language specialists have been recruited and trained by various IELTS centres around the world. They are of the highest calibre and all:

- are fluent speakers of the English language
- have a degree
- have a relevant TEFL qualification, e.g. CELTA/DELTA
- have at least three years' relevant teaching experience.

As part of the rigorous recruitment process, their applications were approved by qualified examiner trainers and, after approval, they underwent face-to-face training, conducted by accredited IELTS trainers. The examiners were also required to do a certification assessment. Certified examiners assessing the Speaking and Writing Modules of the IELTS test have to re-certificate every two years and their performance is closely monitored to ensure global standards are maintained.

Success of the Professional Support Network

The Professional Support Network (PSN) to support IELTS examiners completed its second year in 2007. It is now well embedded in test centre practice and has undergone further refinement and development with usage. It has been very successful in achieving its aims of ensuring examiners are of a high standard and that they recognise the significance of complying with the high standards set out in the PSN manual.

Examiners appreciate the more structured support the system provides from their IELTS examiner trainers, and this has contributed positively to an increase in global quality standards and consistency.

During the year, four global training events for new examiner trainers were held in Prague, Cairo, Bangkok and London, training 20 new examiner trainers to work in the regions.

IELTS research

IELTS is backed by an extensive programme of research, validation and test development which underpins the quality of the test. This programme includes academic research by the three IELTS partners and sponsorship of external researchers.

The following projects were awarded grant funding in 2007:

Roger Hawkey, Anthony Green and Aylin Unaldi, University of Bedfordshire, UK	An investigation of the process of writing IELTS academic reading test items.
Gaynor Lloyd-Jones, Charles Neame and Simon Medaney, Cranfield University, UK	A multiple case study of the relationships between students' plural academic progress and IELTS scores at an international postgraduate university.
Guoxing Yu, Pauline Rea-Dickins and Richard Kiely, University of Bristol, UK	The cognitive processes of taking IELTS academic Writing Task 1.
Andrea Dlaska, Ewan Dow and Sarah Michelotti, University of Surrey, UK	From IELTS to graduation: An investigation into IELTS as a predictor of postgraduate academic success at the University of Surrey.
Catherine Doherty, Margaret Kettle and Allan Luke, Queensland University of Technology, Australia	Examining academic spoken genres in university classrooms and their implications for the IELTS speaking test.
Tim Moore, Janne Morton and Steve Price, University of Melbourne, Australia	Construct validity in the IELTS academic reading test: a comparison of reading requirements in IELTS test items and in university study.
Glenys Merrifield, GBM & Associates, Australia	An impact study into the use of IELTS by professional associations and registration entities: The United Kingdom, Ireland and Canada.
Michael Singh and Wayne Sawyer, University of Western Sydney, Australia	The efficacy of IELTS in choosing potentially successful students for teacher education courses: What is an appropriate score?

In addition to the above, two major IELTS research projects were undertaken by Cambridge ESOL in 2007:

- Revision of the IELTS pronunciation scale
- New certification procedures for half band rating.

Sharing findings

As well as submitting papers to refereed academic journals and making presentations at numerous conferences, seminars and symposia around the world, during the course of the year the IELTS partners shared latest research with the wider language assessment community through various publications, including:

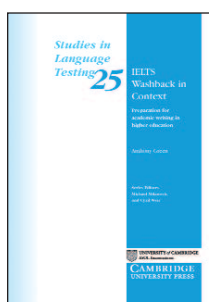


IELTS Research Reports Volume 7

A joint publication of IELTS Australia and the British Council, the seventh volume of this informative series looks at:

- Attitudes of tertiary key decision-makers towards English language tests in Aotearoa, New Zealand
- Student identity, learning and progression: The affective and academic impact of IELTS on 'successful' candidates
- IELTS as a predictor of academic language performance
- Documenting features of written language production typical of different IELTS band score levels
- Does the computer make a difference? The reaction of candidates to a computer-based versus a traditional hand-written form of the IELTS Writing component.

Information on how to order IELTS Research Reports is available from www.ielts.org



IELTS Washback in Context: Preparation for academic writing in higher education

by Anthony Green (2007)

Based upon a PhD dissertation completed in 2003, volume 25 in the respected *Studies in Language Testing* series reports an empirical study to investigate the washback of the IELTS writing subtest on English for Academic Purposes (EAP) provision.

The study examines dedicated IELTS preparation courses alongside broader programmes designed to develop the academic literacy skills required for university study. Using a variety of data collection methods and analytical techniques, the research explores the complex relationship that exists between teaching and learning processes and their outcomes. The role of IELTS in EAP provision is evaluated, particularly in relation to the length of time and amount of language support needed by learners to meet minimally acceptable standards for English-medium tertiary study.

This volume will be of direct interest to providers and users of general proficiency and EAP tests, as well as academic researchers and graduate students interested in investigating test washback and impact. It will also be relevant to teachers, lecturers and researchers concerned with the development of EAP writing skills.

Studies in Language Testing is published jointly by Cambridge ESOL and Cambridge University Press.

Computer-based and paper-based versions of IELTS

by Andy Blackhurst (2007)

This article was published as part of *New Approaches to Materials Development for Language Learning: Proceedings of the 2005 joint BALEAP/SATEFL conference*, (Alexander, O (Ed.) (1998), Bern: Peter Lang). It describes the development and distinctive features of CB IELTS and reports on research studies conducted into the comparability of the test in the two modes.

Winner of IELTS Masters Award 2007

The IELTS Research Committee, comprising the three IELTS partners: University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, the British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia met in November 2007 to review the shortlisted submissions for the IELTS Masters Award 2007. The winner was Talia Isaacs from McGill University in Montreal, Canada. Talia studied in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education and her supervisor was Dr Carolyn E Turner.

Talia's dissertation, entitled *Towards defining a valid assessment criterion of pronunciation proficiency in non-native English speaking graduate students* offers a valuable contribution to L2 pronunciation proficiency research. She was presented with her award and a cheque for £1,000 at the Language Testing Research Colloquium (LTRC) held in Hangzhou, China from 25–28 June 2008.



Band score information

IELTS is assessed on a 9-band scale and reports scores both overall and by individual skill. Overall Band Scores for Academic and General Training candidates in 2007 are shown here together with scores for the individual skills, according to a variety of classifications. These figures are in line with statistics for previous years.

N.B. for place of origin and first language, the tables show the top 20 places and languages, listed alphabetically, not in order of the size of the candidature.

Academic and General Training candidates

The following table shows the percentage split between the Academic and General Training candidature in 2007.

	2007
Academic	75.8%
General Training	24.2%

Gender

The following table shows the percentage of male and female candidates taking IELTS in 2007.

Overall	Female 46.1% Male 53.9%
Academic	Female 49.1% Male 50.9%
General Training	Female 37% Male 63%

Mean band scores for female candidates					
	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	OVERALL
Academic	6.03	5.99	5.56	5.92	5.94
General Training	5.93	5.63	5.71	6.05	5.89

Mean band scores for male candidates					
	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	OVERALL
Academic	5.84	5.77	5.38	5.70	5.74
General Training	5.86	5.57	5.59	6.01	5.82

Reason for taking IELTS

The following tables show how candidates performed according to the reason for taking the test, given on their registration forms.

Academic Training	Below 4	4	4.5	5	5.5	6	6.5	7	7.5	8	8.5	9
For higher education extended course	1	3	9	17	22	20	14	8	4	2	1	0
For training or work experience	2	3	9	17	21	20	14	8	4	2	0	0
For immigration	0	1	2	7	15	21	20	14	10	6	3	1
For registration as a nurse (including CGFNS)	0	0	2	6	16	27	24	14	7	3	1	0

General Training	Below 4	4	4.5	5	5.5	6	6.5	7	7.5	8	8.5	9
For immigration	2	3	7	13	17	19	16	11	7	4	2	0
For employment	6	7	12	17	17	15	11	7	4	2	1	0
For higher education extended course	5	9	16	21	18	14	8	5	2	1	0	0
For training or work experience	5	8	15	19	18	15	11	6	2	1	0	0
For personal reasons	3	4	8	15	19	19	14	9	5	3	1	0

Place of origin

These figures show the mean overall and individual band scores achieved by 2007 Academic and General Training candidates according to their place of origin.

Mean band score by most frequent countries or regions of origin (Academic).

	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Overall
Bangladesh	5.55	5.31	5.39	5.59	5.55
China	5.45	5.76	5.12	5.26	5.45
Germany	7.30	7.20	6.66	7.20	7.16
Hong Kong	6.73	6.74	5.90	5.99	6.40
India	6.19	5.72	5.62	5.93	5.97
Indonesia	6.15	6.24	5.47	5.82	5.99
Iran	5.97	5.89	5.73	6.21	6.03
Japan	5.78	5.86	5.35	5.76	5.75
Malaysia	6.96	6.87	6.13	6.43	6.65
Nepal	6.14	5.61	5.47	5.74	5.83
Pakistan	5.73	5.45	5.38	5.72	5.68
Philippines	6.75	6.36	6.17	6.76	6.58
Russia	6.46	6.53	5.94	6.69	6.48
Saudi Arabia	5.14	5.14	4.90	5.89	5.38
South Korea	5.86	5.88	5.24	5.61	5.71
Sri Lanka	6.27	5.92	5.81	6.31	6.14
Taiwan	5.58	5.79	5.18	5.64	5.59
Thailand	5.87	5.86	5.28	5.66	5.72
United Arab Emirates	4.88	4.96	4.81	5.42	5.10
Vietnam	5.53	5.94	5.55	5.64	5.70

Mean band score by most frequent countries or regions of origin (General Training).

	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Overall
Bangladesh	5.65	5.17	5.54	6.08	5.70
Brazil	6.30	6.37	6.13	6.63	6.43
China	5.84	5.85	5.53	5.74	5.77
Egypt	5.79	5.58	5.82	6.24	5.95
Hong Kong	6.14	6.06	5.69	6.00	6.00
India	6.06	5.45	5.69	6.07	5.91
Indonesia	6.47	6.27	5.86	6.26	6.26
Iran	5.51	5.37	5.61	5.97	5.67
Japan	5.56	5.46	5.17	5.70	5.52
Malaysia	7.02	6.76	6.51	6.99	6.90
Pakistan	5.96	5.49	5.87	6.35	6.00
Philippines	5.99	5.51	5.91	6.24	6.05
Russia	5.97	6.09	5.86	6.69	6.11
Singapore	7.21	6.79	6.61	7.26	7.01
South Africa	7.26	6.84	7.11	8.27	7.46
South Korea	5.28	5.20	4.95	5.21	5.21
Sri Lanka	5.90	5.53	5.73	6.22	5.90
Thailand	5.32	5.15	5.09	5.52	5.32
United Arab Emirates	4.44	4.02	4.24	5.06	4.53
Venezuela	5.01	5.21	5.34	5.47	5.30

First language

These figures show the mean overall and individual band scores achieved by 2007 Academic and General Training candidates from the top 20 first language backgrounds.

Mean band scores by most frequent first languages (Academic).

	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Overall
Arabic	5.32	5.31	5.08	5.80	5.46
Bengali	5.64	5.38	5.45	5.68	5.63
Chinese	5.63	5.89	5.24	5.39	5.60
Farsi	5.97	5.89	5.74	6.21	6.03
Gujarati	5.88	5.43	5.42	5.57	5.67
Hindi	6.46	5.96	5.80	6.20	6.21
Indonesian	6.15	6.24	5.47	5.82	5.99
Japanese	5.78	5.86	5.35	5.76	5.75
Korean	5.85	5.87	5.24	5.61	5.70
Malay	6.73	6.63	5.94	6.27	6.44
Malayalam	6.42	5.99	5.88	6.17	6.18
Nepali	6.14	5.62	5.48	5.74	5.83
Punjabi	5.72	5.35	5.18	5.41	5.51
Spanish	6.48	6.69	5.99	6.68	6.54
Tagalog	6.75	6.36	6.17	6.74	6.57
Tamil	6.47	6.01	5.81	6.26	6.21
Telugu	6.15	5.59	5.62	5.94	5.92
Thai	5.86	5.85	5.27	5.65	5.72
Urdu	5.82	5.49	5.41	5.77	5.74
Vietnamese	5.54	5.94	5.55	5.64	5.70

Mean band scores by most frequent first languages (General Training).

	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Overall
Afrikaans	7.08	6.73	6.92	7.98	7.28
Arabic	5.34	5.04	5.24	5.91	5.47
Bengali	5.75	5.27	5.61	6.16	5.78
Chinese	5.90	5.89	5.57	5.81	5.83
Farsi	5.51	5.37	5.61	5.97	5.67
Gujarati	5.85	5.25	5.47	5.77	5.66
Hindi	6.37	5.77	5.97	6.49	6.24
Indonesian	6.46	6.27	5.86	6.25	6.25
Japanese	5.56	5.46	5.17	5.70	5.52
Korean	5.28	5.20	4.95	5.21	5.21
Malayalam	6.17	5.72	5.92	6.15	6.06
Punjabi	5.70	5.05	5.36	5.65	5.53
Russian	5.97	6.07	5.85	6.27	6.09
Singhalese	5.87	5.49	5.69	6.18	5.86
Spanish	5.94	6.11	5.93	6.47	6.19
Tagalog	5.98	5.50	5.90	6.22	6.04
Tamil	5.87	5.43	5.58	5.95	5.79
Telugu	6.31	5.66	5.80	6.33	6.11
Thai	5.32	5.15	5.09	5.52	5.32
Urdu	6.03	5.53	5.88	6.39	6.04

University of Cambridge
ESOL Examinations
1 Hills Road
Cambridge, CB1 2EU
United Kingdom

Tel 44 1223 553355
Fax 44 1223 460278
email ielts@CambridgeESOL.org

British Council
Bridgewater House
58 Whitworth Street
Manchester, M1 6BB
United Kingdom

Tel 44 161 957 7755
Fax 44 161 957 7762
email ielts@britishcouncil.org

IDP: IELTS Australia
GPO Box 2006
Canberra
ACT 2601
Australia

Tel 61 2 6285 8222
Fax 61 2 6285 3233
email ielts@idp.com

IELTS International
825 Colorado Boulevard
Suite 112
Los Angeles
CA 90041
USA

Tel 1 323 255 2771
Fax 1 323 255 1261
email ielts@ieltsintl.org

www.ielts.org



EMC/5256/8Y06 © UCLES 2008



6336333645

© IELTS 2008