



In the spirit of reconciliation, IELTS Education acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.



# Aims of this session

- 01 Understanding assessment
- 02 IELTS research (and outcomes)
- 03 Teacher training
- 04 Support for teachers & students

**Yes,  
you can use  
your phone.**





**More than a number:**

**Understanding IELTS assessment scales for  
improved teacher performance and student  
success**

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**IDP IELTS AUSTRALIA**



# What is IELTS?



IELTS is the  
International  
English Language  
Testing System



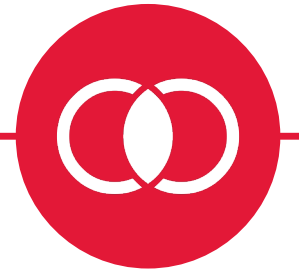
A test of all four  
language skills  
(Listening, Reading,  
Writing and  
Speaking)



A test of  
international  
English



High stakes English  
language assessment  
for people who intend  
to study or work  
where English is the  
language of  
communication



Jointly owned by  
IDP: IELTS Australia,  
British Council  
and Cambridge  
Assessment English

# Test Format

## Academic



### Listening

30 minutes | 4 sections | 40 questions

### Reading

60 minutes | 3 sections | 40 questions

### Writing

60 minutes | 2 tasks

### Speaking

11 - 14 minutes | 3 parts

## General Training



### Listening

30 minutes | 4 sections | 40 questions

### Reading

60 minutes | 3 sections | 40 questions

### Writing

60 minutes | 2 tasks

### Speaking

11 - 14 minutes | 3 parts

## Total test time



**2 hours 44 minutes**

# Speaking construct:

## What is assessed in IELTS

### Speaking

- IELTS views speaking as situated social practice which involves interaction with others.
- Not only a cognitive but also a socio-cognitive activity.
- The use of a multi part Speaking test format allows for different patterns of spoken interaction, i.e., question and answer uninterrupted monologue and two-way discussion



### Speaking Test Format

11-14 minutes | 3 parts

#### Part 1:

Questions about you (4 - 5 mins)

#### Part 2:

Talking about a topic for up to 2 minutes (3 – 4 mins)

#### Part 3:

General discussion, linked to Part 2 (4 – 5 mins)

# Writing construct:

## What is assessed in IELTS

- a contextualised phenomenon and fundamentally a communicative act.
- the writer-reader roles, the purpose and task type

### Higher order Skills assessed in the Writing Tasks:

- The ability to transfer information in a logical way.
- The ability to put forth a stance and elaborate on ideas.
- The ability to operationalize textual competence and organise and link ideas logically.
- The ability to use language flexibly and accurately.



### Writing Test Format

60 minutes| 2 Tasks

**Task one** (minimum 150 words, 20 minutes)

Report (AC), or

Letter/email (GT)

**Task two** (minimum 250 words, 40 minutes)

Essay



# What are rating scales

## Simple definition

- a measurement tool developed to assess performance/ behavior, or relevant **characteristics of performance**.
- a **structured framework** for assigning scores to different attributes based on predefined criteria

## What lies in scales

- **Construct:**  
Key indicators of behaviour/performance
- **Scaling/grading**

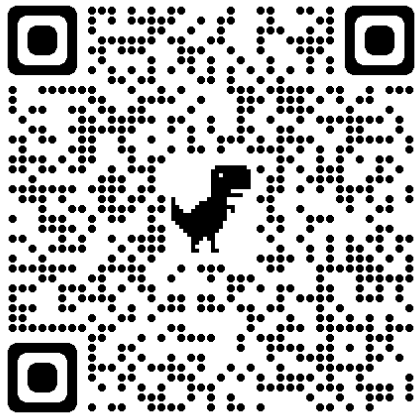
## Use cases

- Assessment tool: consistency and systematic analytical rating
- Support for teaching
- Support for course/curriculum design
- Support in designing small scale targeted tests by teachers

# IELTS Rating Scales

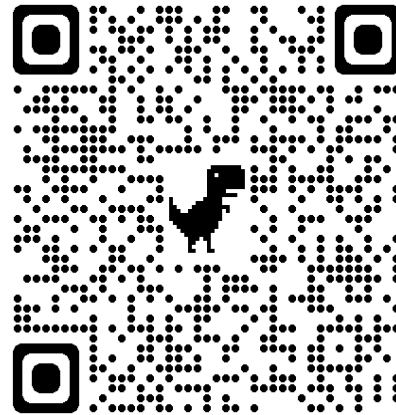
## Speaking

- Overview



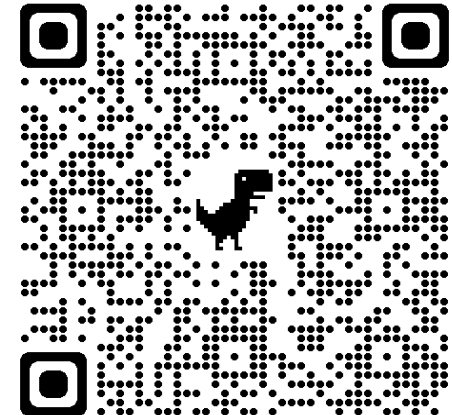
## Writing

- Overview



## Review of the band descriptors

- Review details

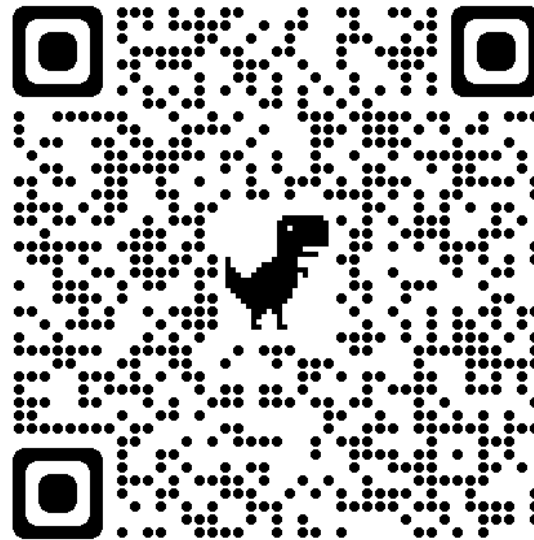


# IELTS Speaking Band descriptors

## Criteria

- Fluency and Coherence
- Lexical Resource
- Grammatical Range and Accuracy
- Pronunciation

## Speaking Band Descriptors



## Key Indicators- an example

### Key indicators of **fluency**

- speech rate: ideally, not too slow (hard to keep links between words/propositions in mind)
- speech continuity: ideally, flow of speech will not be excessively interrupted by

false starts, backtracking, functionless repetitions of words and phrases, and/or pausing during which the test taker searches for words.

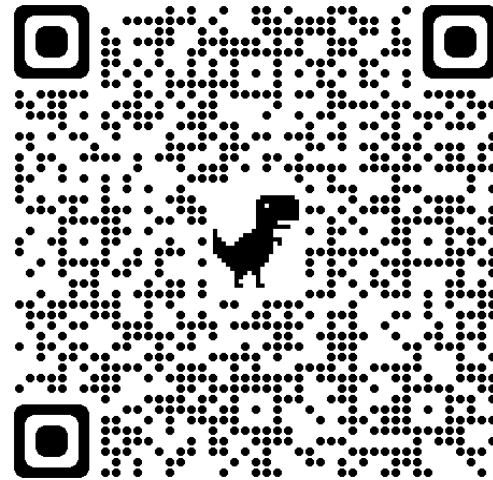
\*the full list and explanation of key indicators are included in the **Key Assessment Criteria** document

# IELTS Writing Band Descriptors

## Criteria

- Task Achievement (for Task 1), Task Response (for Task 2)
- Coherence and Cohesion
- Lexical Resource
- Grammatical Range and Accuracy

## Key Assessment Criteria/key indicators



## Key indicators-an example

The **Task Response (TR)** criterion assesses:

- how fully the candidate responds to the task.
- how adequately the main ideas are extended and supported.
- how relevant the candidate's ideas are to the task.
- how clearly the candidate opens the discourse, establishes their position and formulates conclusions.
- how appropriate the format of the response is to the task

\*the full list and explanation of key indicators are included in the **Key Assessment Criteria** document

# Reliability and Transparency

## Reliability

making sure that we're being fair and consistent, and that each mark or grade is accurate and realistic.

## Transparency

to make sure that TTs know how assessment works. They need to know what we're looking for

## Transparency

help Teachers and TTs to see that what is being assessed is their evidence of achievement of intended attributes



## Scaling/grading of key indicators

### An example from Speaking BDs

*\*The green highlights show the indicator and blue the finer details on how an indicator scales up or down*

Band Score	Fluency and coherence
9	<p>Fluent with only very occasional repetition or self-correction.</p> <p>Any <b>hesitation</b> that occurs is used <b>only to prepare the content</b> of the next utterance and not to find words or grammar.</p> <p>Speech is situationally appropriate and cohesive features are fully acceptable.</p> <p>Topic development is fully coherent and appropriately extended.</p>
8	<p>Fluent with only very occasional repetition or self-correction.</p> <p><b>Hesitation</b> may occasionally be used to find words or grammar, but <b>most</b> will be <b>content related</b>.</p> <p>Topic development is coherent, appropriate and relevant.</p>
7	<p>Able to keep going and readily produce long turns without noticeable effort.</p> <p>Some <b>hesitation</b>, repetition and/or self-correction may occur, <b>often mid-sentence</b> and indicate problems with accessing appropriate language. However, these <b>will not affect coherence</b>.</p> <p>Flexible use of spoken discourse markers, connectives and cohesive features.</p>

### An example from Writing BDs

*\*The green highlights show the indicator and blue the finer details on how an indicator scales up or down*

Band Score	Task Response
6	<p>The main parts of the prompt are addressed (though some may be more fully covered than others). An appropriate format is used.</p> <p>A <b>position</b> is <b>presented</b> that is <b>directly relevant to the prompt</b>, although the <b>conclusions drawn</b> may be unclear, unjustified or repetitive.</p> <p>Main ideas are relevant, but some may be insufficiently developed or may lack clarity, while some supporting arguments and evidence may be less relevant or inadequate.</p>
5	<p>The main parts of the prompt are <b>incompletely addressed</b>. The format may be inappropriate in places.</p> <p>The writer <b>expresses a position</b>, but the <b>development is not always clear</b>.</p> <p>Some main ideas are put forward, but they are limited and are not sufficiently developed and/or there may be irrelevant detail.</p> <p>There may be some repetition.</p>

# Steps to take to use band descriptors



## Know what is being asked

- ✓ Construct
- ✓ Higher Order Skills



## Go through the band descriptors

- ✓ Start with Criteria
- ✓ Go one level down to the key indicators outlined in the *Key Assessment Criteria* document
- ✓ Check out how the indicators are scaled
- ✓ Refer to official standard ratings and work how they relate back to the criteria

[Link to key assessment criteria](#)

# IELTS Writing Criteria

**TA/TR**

## Task Achievement

assesses how fully, appropriately, accurately and relevantly the response fulfils the requirements set out in the task

## Task Response

assesses ability to formulate and develop a position in relation to a given prompt in the form of a question or statement, using a minimum of 250 words. Ideas should be supported by evidence, and examples may be drawn from a candidate's own experience.

**CC**

## Coherence and Cohesion

This criterion is concerned with the overall organisation and logical development of

the message: how the response organises and links information, ideas and language.

Coherence refers to the linking of ideas through logical sequencing, while cohesion

refers to the varied and appropriate use of cohesive devices (e.g. logical connectors,

conjunctions and pronouns) to assist in making clear the relationships between and within sentences.

**LR**

## Lexical Resource

This criterion refers to the range of vocabulary the candidate has used and the

accuracy and appropriacy of that use in terms of the specific task.

**GRA**

## Grammatical Range and Accuracy

This criterion refers to the range and accurate use of the candidate's grammatical

resource via the candidate's writing at sentence level.

# Academic Writing Task 1

- An information-transfer task, which relates to the factual content of a diagram, graph, table, chart, map or other visual input, not to speculative explanations that lie outside the given data.

## Key Indicators of Task Achievement:

The TA criterion assesses the ability to **summarise** the information provided in the diagram by:

- **selecting key features** of the information.
- providing sufficient detail to **illustrate** these features.
- **reporting** the information, figures and trends **accurately**.
- **comparing or contrasting** the information by adequately highlighting trends, principal changes or differences (rather than mechanical description).
- presenting the response in an appropriate format.

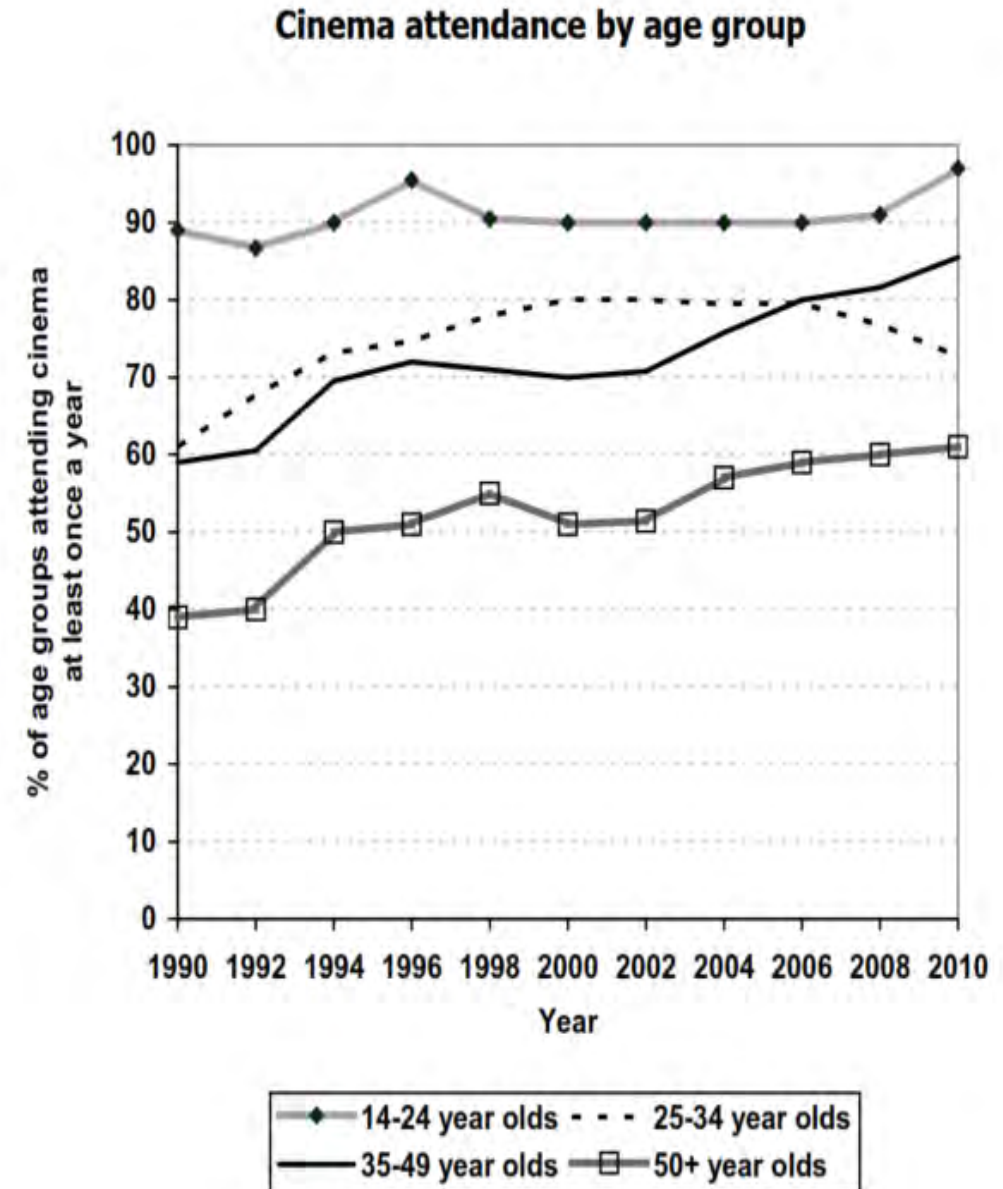
# Prompt for Script 2 (and 3)

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

*The graph below gives information about cinema attendance in Australia between 1990 and the present, with projections to 2010.*

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

Write at least 150 words.





IELTS<sup>™</sup>  
English for International Opportunity

Academic Writing Task 1 (General Training & Academic)

The test  
that sets the  
standard

### Task 1 Cinema Attendance Script B

The graph shows percentages of cinema attendance at least once a year in Australia between 1990 to 2010 with projections for the future. The graph is described by 4 groups of different ages which are 14 to 24, 25 to 34, 35 to 49 and over 50 year olds.

The youngest age group people have been going to cinema more than any other age groups and the percentage has been keeping very high at approximately 95% since 1990. It is predicted to keep the high and to increase more from 2006.

The middle age groups people have enjoyed going cinema between 60% to 80%. The percentage of age 25 to 34 group has been higher than the one of age 35 to 49 group but from 2006 the percentage of 25 to 34 year olds people will decrease while the one of 35 to 49 year olds people will increase and get higher than the other one.

The oldest people seem to go cinema less than the other groups but the percentage of the attendance has been slightly going up by 15% from 40% to 55% between 1990 to 2004 and it will keep increasing to 60% by 2010.

Overall it seems the younger age people, the more going to cinema.

## Task 1 Cinema Attendance Script Two

The graph shows percentages of cinema attendance at least once a year in Australia between 1990 to 2010 with projections for the future. The graph is described by 4 groups of different ages which are 14 to 24, 25 to 34, 35 to 49 and over 50 year olds.

The youngest age group people have been going to cinema more than any other age groups and the percentage has been keeping very high at approximately 90% since 1990. It is predicted to keep the high and to increase more from 2006.

The middle age groups people have enjoyed going cinema between 60% to 80%. The percentage of age 25 to 34 group has been higher than the one of age 35 to 49 group but from 2006 the percentage of 25 to 34 year olds people will decrease while the one of 35 to 49 year olds people will increase and get higher than the other one.

The oldest people seem to go cinema less than the other groups but the percentage of the attendance has been slightly going up by 15% from 40% to 55% between 1990 to 2004 and it will keep increasing to 60% by 2010.

Overall it seems the younger age people, the more going to cinema.

# Test Taker Profile : Examiner Comments

Page 1 of 1



Comments on Script B



## Examiner Comments on Academic Writing Task 1 Cinema Attendance Script B

### Band 6

This response addresses the requirements of the task and selects relevant material to describe. Key features and an overview are presented, although clearer highlighting, more support and a more comprehensive overview would be needed to reach a higher band. Information is well-organised and there is a clear overall progression in the response. There is some effective use of cohesive devices, but only limited use of reference and substitution. The range of vocabulary is not wide, but it is adequate for the task. Control of word form and spelling is consistently good, although there are some clumsy noun phrases that indicate limited flexibility. The candidate attempts to use a mix of simple and complex sentences, but control is variable and grammatical errors or omissions are quite intrusive at times. Figures are poorly integrated into sentences and indicate evident limitations.



# How does transparency help



communicate expectations to Teachers and TTs



positively affect TT performance optimise learning outcomes



reduce TT anxiety and boost teacher confidence



support self-regulated learning strategies and customising teaching materials



Help teaching professionalism



# Steps to take to use band descriptors



## Know what is being asked

- ✓ Construct
- ✓ Higher Order Skills



## Go through the band descriptors

- ✓ Start with Criteria
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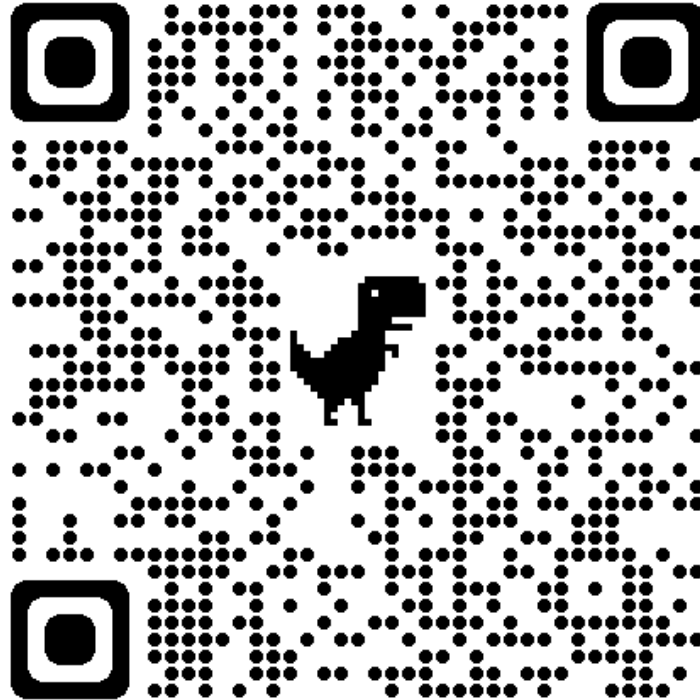


## Refer to exemplar and supporting material

- ✓ IELTS Guide for Teachers
- ✓ IELTS Teacher Training Program
- ✓ IELTS.org website



# IELTS Band Descriptors, and Key assessment Criteria



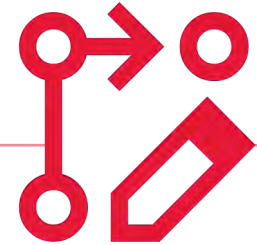
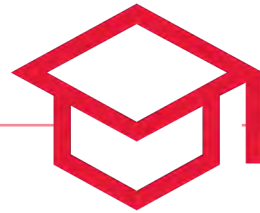
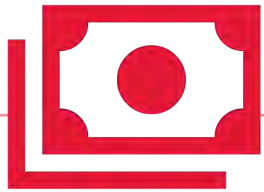
An aerial view of a city skyline at dusk, with a large red rectangular overlay in the center. The city lights are visible, and the sky is filled with dramatic, dark clouds. The red overlay contains the text 'IELTS Research' in white.

# IELTS Research



# IELTS Joint Funded Research Program

- Funded by IDP Education and British Council
- 110+ studies and 240+ researchers
- Practical application



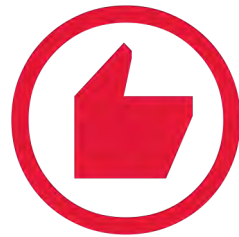
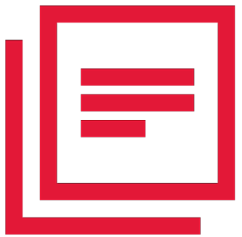
# IELTS Joint Funded Research Program

IELTS research by:

- Phil Chappell *et. al.*
- Kang, Ahn, Yaw & Chung

■ Recommendations

■ What's next?



# Research leading to practical application







“...professional learning and development activities should be aimed at supporting teachers to develop a range of appropriate strategies for presenting IELTS content...”

Chappell, Bodis & Jackson (2014)

# IELTS Teacher Training



## What is available for your teachers?

1. Online training
2. Teacher webinars
3. In-person events



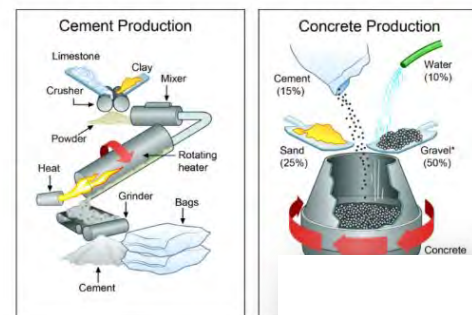


# Online training

## CONTENT

- ✓ How to complete each unit
- ✓ UNIT 1 - INTRODUCTION TO THE IELTS SPEAKING TEST
- ✓ UNIT 2 - FOCUS ON ASSESSMENT
- UNIT 3 - ASSESSMENT STANDARDS
- UNIT 4 - MATCHING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA TO PERFORMANCE

### Writing Task 1 - Academic



IELTS Academic Practice Test 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The diagrams show the stages and equipment used in the cement-making process, and how cement is used to produce concrete for building purposes.

Summarise the information by selecting and

### Task 1 knowledge checks

Academic Writing Task 1 can contain more than one visual.


- ☐ True
- ☐ False

SUBMIT

# What does it mean for your teaching staff?

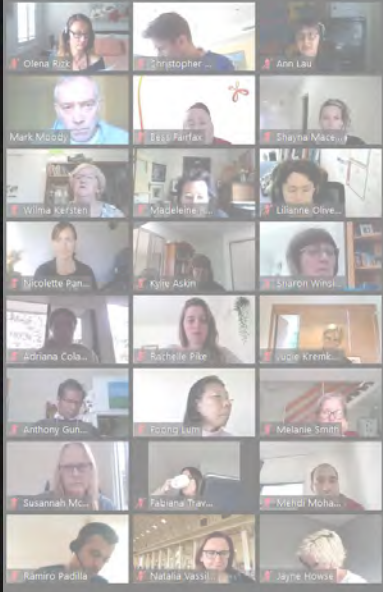


# Webinars



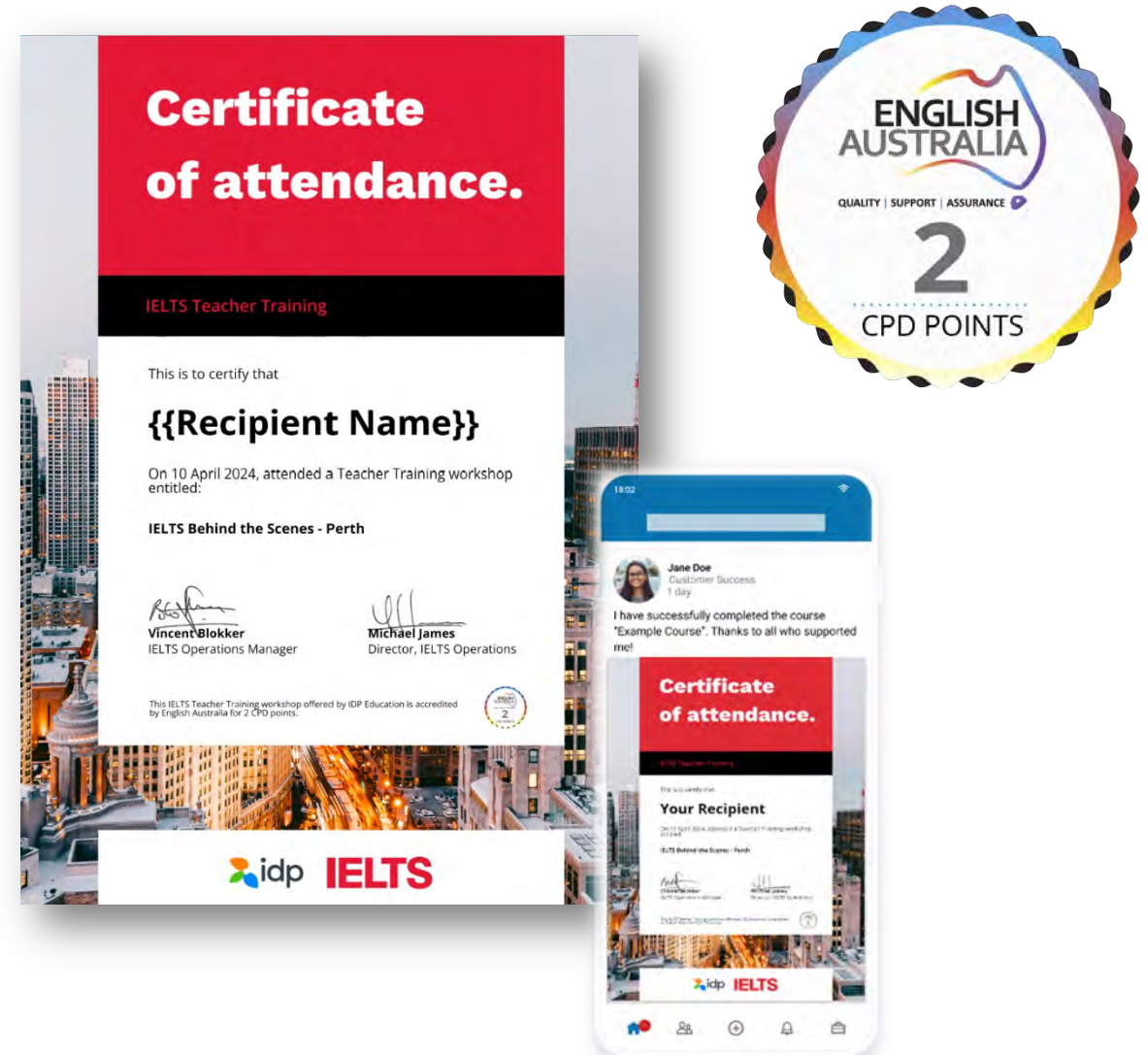
**How is the answer scored?**

Task achievement = 25%  
 Coherence and cohesion = 25%  
 Lexical resource = 25%  
 Grammatical range and accuracy = 25%





# What does it mean for your teaching staff?



# Our next event

Help me, please, and FAST!

Saturday, 18 May 2023

Virtual | 10 AM (AEST)



# In-person events



**What does it  
mean for your  
teaching staff?**



# They get drinks

And food. And network opportunities.  
And a certificate of attendance.





**So, what's  
next?**



# Supporting our sector



## Accredited Centre

- IELTS preparation programs are taught by trained teachers
- Use IELTS' global brand awareness to your advantage



## Advanced webinars

- Targeted support for specific skills.
- Connecting teachers with global assessment experts.



## New courses

We're developing new online teacher training courses, aimed at early-career teachers.

# Questions?





**IELTS**