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New language testing arrangements for UK visas: IELTS to continue to play leading role

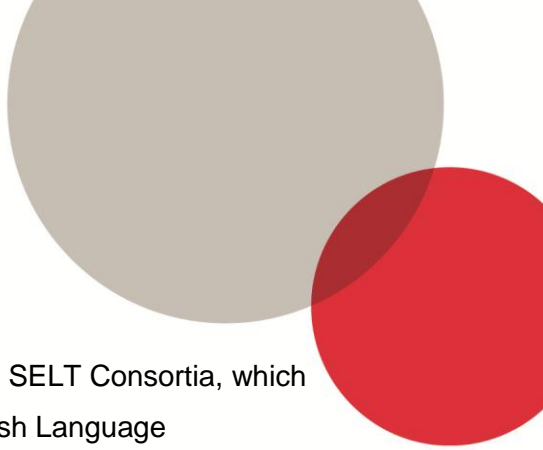
- **The UK government has announced important changes to Secure English Language Tests (SELT) for visa purposes;**
- **IELTS and IELTS Life Skills have been approved for UK visas that require proof of English language level;**
- **The new test – IELTS Life Skills – will be introduced for people who need to prove their speaking and listening skills at level A1 or B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference.**

The UK government has announced important changes to language testing for visa applications, reducing the number of tests accepted for visa purposes and bringing in new requirements for the way the tests will be administered.

IELTS – the world’s most popular test of English for higher education and global migration – has been approved for all UK visas that require applicants to provide proof of their level of English. This continues the important role which IELTS has long played in language testing for immigration in the UK and other countries, including Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Under the new arrangements, IELTS tests for UK visa applications will be offered throughout the year in more than 100 key locations throughout the world, and a new test – IELTS Life Skills – will be introduced for people who need to prove their speaking and listening skills at level A1 or B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

IELTS tests for visa purposes can only be taken at authorised centres and the centre must follow procedures specified by the UK government. When a test is booked, the customer must specify what the test is for and ensure that the centre is authorised to run tests for this purpose. A list of the authorised IELTS test centres can be found on www.ielts.org.



IELTS tests for UK Visas and Immigration are managed by the IELTS SELT Consortia, which comprises British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and Cambridge English Language Assessment.

IELTS, which is jointly owned by the British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and Cambridge English Language Assessment, has played a key role in language testing for immigration purposes throughout its 25 year history and is recognised by more than 9,000 organisations around the world including universities and employers in many countries, as well as by professional bodies, immigration authorities and other government agencies. More than 2.5 million IELTS tests were taken in 2014 in more than 140 countries.

For further information on the UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) announcement, please visit: www.gov.uk

ENDS

International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

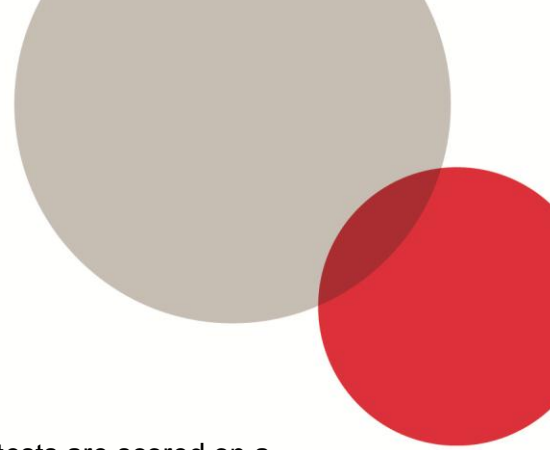
IELTS is the International English Language Testing System, the world's most popular English language proficiency test for higher education and global migration with over 2.5 million tests taken in the last year. Over 9,000 organisations trust and accept IELTS as a secure, valid and reliable indicator of true to life ability to communicate in English for education, immigration and professional accreditation. IELTS is jointly owned by British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and Cambridge English Language Assessment.

British Council is the UK's international organisation for education and cultural relations. Dedicated to building trust through the exchange of knowledge between people worldwide, the British Council is represented in over 100 countries.

IDP: IELTS Australia, a subsidiary of IDP Education, is one of the world's leading international education organisations, offering student placement with universities and colleges in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the USA. IDP Education has 45 years' experience in international higher education, placing more than 400,000 students.

Cambridge English Language Assessment is the world's leading provider of exams for learners of English. Each year the exams are taken by more than 5 million people, in 130 countries.

IELTS USA is the American division of IELTS located in Los Angeles, CA, responsible for U.S. stakeholder relations, as well as the management and delivery of the IELTS test center network throughout the USA.



About the test

Candidates are tested in listening, reading, writing and speaking. All tests are scored on a banded system from 1 (the lowest) through to 9 (the highest band).

IELTS offers a choice of two versions, to serve both academic and non-academic purposes. **IELTS Academic** measures English language proficiency needed for an academic, higher learning environment. The tasks and texts are accessible to all test-takers, irrespective of their subject focus. **IELTS General Training** measures English language proficiency in a practical, everyday context. The tasks and texts reflect both workplace and social situations. General Training is suitable for immigration purposes to Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

A sample of government and professional associations who recognise or require applicants to hold an IELTS test result include:

- Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)
- Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP)
- UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)
- Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools and National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), USA
- International Monetary Fund

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