



TOP TIPS FOR IELTS

Academic Writing



Top Tips for IELTS Academic Writing

Official Cambridge IELTS Preparation

We provide you with the tools and resources you need to learn and show your skills to the world. Whether you're studying in a classroom, or at home, you can rely on us to help you get ready for test day.

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2025

Acknowledgements

The authors and publishers acknowledge the following sources of copyright material and are grateful for the permissions granted. While every effort has been made, it has not always been possible to identify the sources of all the material used, or to trace all copyright holders. If any omissions are brought to our notice, we will be happy to include the appropriate acknowledgements on reprinting and in the next update to the digital edition, as applicable.

The publishers would also like to thank the following for their contributions to this project: Margaret Matthews, Felicity O'Dell, Lucy Gubbin and Carole Allsop.

Illustration

Sandra Lockwood, Artworks Design.

Typeset

Q2A Media Services Pvt. Ltd.

Contents

Introduction	4
How to revise for IELTS Academic Writing	5
Top Tips for IELTS Academic Writing	6
IELTS Academic Writing test	19
Sample answers and examiner comments	21
What to do on the day	23

Introduction

Top Tips for IELTS Academic Writing is an essential part of your revision for the IELTS test.

The tips are based on advice which IELTS materials writers have collected from many years' experience of involvement in the production of IELTS tests. Each section starts with a tip which is followed by an example taken from IELTS material.

How to use *Top Tips for IELTS Academic Writing*

Top Tips for IELTS Academic Writing is flexible. You can look at a different tip from a different section every day, or you can start at the beginning and work through until you get to the end of the tips. Whichever method you prefer, read the example and the explanation carefully to make sure that you understand each tip. When you have understood all the tips try the test on page 19.

Guide to symbols



This symbol introduces the tip which is usually at the top of the page. Each tip shows you how to write a better answer.



This is an extra piece of advice which is important for a particular part of the test.

How to revise for IELTS Academic Writing

In the Academic Writing test you will have to describe and explain a graph or other visual material (Task 1) and write an essay giving your opinion on a topic (Task 2).

Practise writing answers to exam tasks on a regular basis – if possible, ask a teacher or other good English speaker to correct your work. Pay attention to the comments they make and try to improve in the next piece of writing you do for them.

- Always think about the structure of what you are going to write – make a plan first.
- In your writing make a point of using new words and expressions that you have recently learned – if necessary use a good learner’s dictionary for examples of how words are used in practice.
- Practise checking your writing carefully so that it is as accurate as possible – look particularly for the kinds of mistakes that you know you often make (mistakes with verb agreement, prepositions or articles, for example).

We hope these ideas will help you to make the most of your revision time. Above all, we hope that you enjoy your studies and wish you all the best for your exam.

Book your IELTS test at ielts.org/book-a-test



Top Tips for IELTS Academic Writing

What's in the Academic Writing test?

Task 1  You have to describe some information contained in a graph/table/chart/diagram and present the description in your own words. The information may be data, the stages of a process or how something works or you may have to describe an object or an event.

You have to write at least 150 words.

Task 2  You have to write a short essay in response to a topic which is presented as a point of view, an argument or a problem.

You have to write at least 250 words.



Task 2 contributes twice as much as Task 1 to the Writing score.



1 hour
(*about 20 minutes for Task 1 and 40 minutes for Task 2*)

Task 1



TIP: Whether you have to describe a graph, table or chart, think carefully about what you need to include in your description. Don't describe every detail of the information. Choose the most important and interesting features to write about.

Example

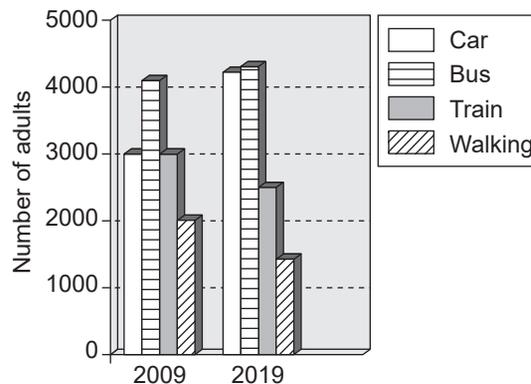
Here is an example of a Task 1 question using a bar chart.



The bar chart below shows different methods of transport to work in 2009 and 2019.

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

Different transport to work – 1999 and 2009



Here are some notes which a student made for this task.

Bus – the highest number of people using it / a slight increase

Car – the second most popular / a large rise

Train – as popular as the car in 2009 / a fall

Walking – the least popular / a fall

Explanation: These notes are part of the plan for writing. They illustrate the most important features you could write about.