

## The process of practising IELTS Academic Writing Task One

### Instructions for teachers

*Cut up one pack of cards per group of two or three students, without the left-hand column, to be used as described in Instructions for Students below. "X" means something that shouldn't be done, and "?" means a stage that is optional, but you can do a shorter activity by throwing away those cards. The same number means two or more things that should be done at the same time and so students should put them next to each other in their flowchart. Also photocopy one un-cut-up copy per student for them to check their answers with and keep for reference.*

### Instructions for students

*Without help, describe all the steps which you should go through to practise IELTS Academic Writing Task One exam tasks at home, using phrases for describing processes such as "Firstly,...", "The second step is...", "After that...", and "The final stage is..."*

*Go through all the cards that your teacher gives you and put all the ones which you think that you should not do to one side.*

*Split the cards that you are given into things to do near the beginning of the process, stages that are near the middle of the process, and steps near the end of the process, e.g. before, during and after timed exam practice. If you find more stages which you think you shouldn't do, put them to one side with the other cards that you rejected.*

*Put all of the cards into order (step one, step two, etc), with things that should be done at the same time next to each other.*

*Compare your ideas with the text below. Then double-check the order of the cards as a class or with an un-cut-up copy of the worksheet, asking about and moving any cards that you put in the wrong place. Steps with the same number happen at the same time and so should be next to each other. Steps with "X" shouldn't be done.*

*Ask about anything that you don't understand in the text, then do the language tasks below.*

*Use the cards to describe the stages again. Don't write anything, but make your speaking as similar to an answer to an IELTS Writing Task One flowchart task as you can, by splitting the information into two parts, including an introduction, using as much language like that you just practised as possible for describing the steps, etc.*

*Use similar language to describe some processes shown in IELTS Writing Task One flowcharts. There is no need to write anything, but make sure that you plan what you will say before you start speaking (like planning before writing).*

## The process of doing an IELTS Academic Writing Task One exam task at home

The flowchart given shows how to practise IELTS Academic Writing Task One at home. This consists of both timed exam practice and other work that you can do on your essay in order to make sure that you learn from the process. I will explain the planning process, then look at the writing part, move onto the editing stage next, and finish with a description of other things that you can do before you hand your essay into your teacher to be checked.

At the start of the process, the IELTS examinee starts their stopwatch and then proceeds to read through the question. While checking what is written there, the writer underlines key information in the question, including important words in the instructions. After having marked everything that is important, the next step is to plan the essay. This means deciding how to split the information into two parts, often just by drawing a line across the question sheet.

The writing stage starts with the introduction, which usually consists of two parts. Firstly, the writer paraphrases the question to explain what visual information is given. That is followed by a description of how the essay is organized. Before writing the explanation of the structure of your essay, a one-sentence summary of the process could be added. As soon as the introduction is finished, the IELTS candidate starts the body, selecting, summarizing and usually comparing/ contrasting as they go along, making sure that there are at least two sentences in each paragraph. When that stage is completed, they check if they have reached the word limit by counting the number of words in one or two lines. The number of lines is then counted. This leads to an approximate number of words written, after which the person writing may have to add words or sentences to the body of the essay in order to reach the word limit.

The timed exam writing process concludes with editing. During this stage, someone taking the IELTS exam concurrently corrects their mistakes, makes sure that what is there can be understood without the need for rereading, gets rid of repetitions, and adds higher level language such as more academic terms. The candidate should then stop after exactly twenty minutes.

After finishing timed practice at home, the final stage is to do extra work. This further work includes steps such as looking in a dictionary, looking in an IELTS textbook for useful language, and looking back at the feedback on previous written work. An eraser shouldn't be used at all at this stage.

**Cards to cut up/ Suggested answers**

1	Start your stopwatch
2	Read through the question
2	Underline important words in the question
3	Plan
3	Split into two main paragraphs, maybe just by drawing a line across the page
4	Start writing the introduction
4	Paraphrase the description of the diagram etc, rephrasing as much as you can
4.5 ?	Summarise the whole table, trend etc in one sentence
5	Describe how your essay is organised (= the structure of your essay)
6	Write the body of the essay
6	Select and summarise the information which is likely to be most important
6	Compare and contrast
7	Make sure that your paragraphs have at least two sentences each
8	Count the number of words in one or two lines
9	Count the number of lines
10	Calculate the approximate number of words written
11	Add words or sentences to the body of the essay to reach the word limit
12	Edit, crossing out things instead of using an eraser too much
12	Correct any mistakes
12	Make sure that the essay can be understood without rereading

12	Get rid of repetitions
12	Add higher level language like longer words to show how good your English is
13	Stop at exactly twenty minutes.
14	When doing it at home, do extra work (perhaps in pen) before handing it in
14	Look in a dictionary to help edit and add better language
14	Look for useful language in your textbook etc to add to the essay
14	Look at your past essays for ways of improving this one
X	Brainstorm your ideas
X	Think about a clever, original way of splitting the information into paragraphs
X	Think carefully about what you want to write
X	Explain the background to the topic (why it's interesting, topical, important, etc)
X	Describe all the information
X	Speculate on things like the reasons for the data being that way
X	Mention your own experience and knowledge of the topic
X	Give your opinions
X	End with a final conclusion
X	Give recommendations based on what you have written
X	Make sure that the two body paragraphs are more or less the same length
X	Make sure that the essay looks neat and tidy
X	Count every word

### Gapped text

*First of all without any help, write one word into each gap below. Other words not above may also be possible.*

\_\_\_\_\_ flowchart given shows \_\_\_\_\_ to practise IELTS Academic Writing Task One at home. This consists \_\_\_\_\_ both timed exam practice and other work that you can do on your essay in order \_\_\_\_\_ make sure that you learn from the process. I will explain the planning process, then look \_\_\_\_\_ the writing part, \_\_\_\_\_ onto the editing stage next, and finish \_\_\_\_\_ a description of other things that you can do before you hand your essay into your teacher to be checked.

\_\_\_\_\_ the start of the process, the IELTS examinee starts their stopwatch and then proceeds to read though the question. While checking what is written there, the writer underlines key information in the question, including important words in the instructions. After \_\_\_\_\_ marked everything that is important, the next step is \_\_\_\_\_ plan the essay. This means deciding how to split the information into two parts, often just by drawing a line across the question sheet.

The writing stage starts with the introduction, which usually consists of two parts. \_\_\_\_\_, the writer paraphrases the question to explain what visual information is given. That is followed \_\_\_\_\_ a description of how the essay is organized. Before writing the explanation of the structure of your essay, a one-sentence summary of the process could \_\_\_\_\_ added. As soon \_\_\_\_\_ the introduction is finished, the IELTS candidate starts the body, selecting, summarizing and usually comparing/ contrasting as they go along, making sure that there are at least two sentences in each paragraph. When that stage is completed, they check if they have reached the word limit \_\_\_\_\_ counting the number of words in one or two lines. The number of lines \_\_\_\_\_ then counted. This leads \_\_\_\_\_ an approximate number of words written, after which the person writing may have to add words or sentences to the body of the essay in order to reach the word limit.

The timed exam writing process concludes with editing. During this stage, someone taking the IELTS exam concurrently corrects their mistakes, makes sure that what is there can be understood without the need for rereading, gets rid of repetitions, \_\_\_\_\_ adds higher level language such as more academic terms. The candidate should then stop after exactly twenty minutes.

\_\_\_\_\_ finishing timed practice at home, the final stage \_\_\_\_\_ to do extra work. This further work includes steps such \_\_\_\_\_ looking in a dictionary, looking in an IELTS textbook for useful language, and looking back at the feedback on previous written work. An eraser shouldn't be used at all at this stage.

*Use the words below to help with the gapfill task above. Some words can be used more than once.*

**Mixed answers**

Use these words to help with the gapfill task above. Some words can be used more than once.

after	and	as	at	be
by	firstly	having	how	is
move	of	the	to	with

Look at the completed text to check your answers. Other words might be possible, so check with your teacher if you wrote something different.

Test each other by reading out the same gapped sentences from the text.

Test each other by reading out sentences with different words blanked out for your partner to complete.

**Brainstorming stage**

First of all without any help, brainstorm suitable phrases for each of these functions:

**Introduction**

**Paraphrasing the question**

**Summary sentence**

**Explaining your paragraph plan**

**Body**

**First step**

**Next step**

**At the same time**

**Going back in time/ Going back to a previous stage**

**Giving more information/ Explaining another way**

**Last step**

*Look at the text for ideas, brainstorm more, then compare your extra phrases as a class.*

*Which things mentioned on the cards are okay or necessary in IELTS Academic Writing Task Two (including ones which are not good in IELTS Academic Writing Task One)?*

*Use similar language to describe the process of doing other parts of the exam at home, for example:*

- The process of doing IELTS Writing Task Two at home
- The process of doing a whole IELTS Writing paper at home
- The process of doing an IELTS Listening paper at home
- The process of doing an IELTS Reading paper at home