

# IELTS GENERAL WRITING TASK 1

## 1. Writing a letter of request

Before the task

- Read the question below and identify the situation and the task. Underline the keywords in the task.
- Spend five minutes brainstorming details to include in your response. Decide which of these you will include in your letter.
- Decide how you will structure your letter and what you will include in each paragraph.

Follow up

- Read through your letter to check spelling and grammar. Make sure you have written at least 150 words.

**You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.**

You are currently taking a course at a college but you will need to have a week off during this course.

**Write a letter to the college Principal. In the letter**

- give details of your course
- explain why you need a week off
- say what you want the Principal to do.

Write at least 150 words.

## 2. IELTS Tip

- You do not need to put your address in the letter for the test.
- You will be told in the instructions who you are writing to.
- Task achievement means how appropriate, accurate and relevant your response is to the task using a minimum of 150 words.
- You will be told how to start the letter.

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

**You are renting a flat from an agency. Your contract was for one year but you need to leave the flat two months early.**

**Write a letter to the agency. In your letter**

- introduce yourself
- ask to leave the flat before the contract finishes
- explain why you need to break the contract.

Write at least 150 words.

## 3. Polite expressions for letter writing

There are many standard phrases used in polite letters.

**making requests**

*I'm writing to request ...*

*Would you mind ... ing?*

*Would it be possible to ...?*

*I would be extremely grateful if you could ...*

*I was wondering if you could ...*

### **apologising and asking for understanding**

*I'm afraid that ...*

*Unfortunately, ...*

*I hope you can understand (my situation).*

*I'm sorry for any inconvenience caused.*

### **showing understanding**

*I understand/realise that ...*

*I'm aware that ...*

### **introducing information**

*As you know, ...*

*As I'm sure you are aware, ...*

### **closing**

*Yours sincerely/Yours faithfully*

*I look forward to hearing from you soon.*

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

You paid a refundable deposit when you rented an apartment. You left the apartment in good condition but the Landlord won't return your deposit.

Write a letter to the landlord. In your letter

- explain why you are writing
- ask for the return of your deposit
- inform the landlord of possible legal action

Write at least 150 words.

## **4. Understanding the GT Writing Task 1**

For General Training Writing Task 1, you will be asked to write a letter. The letter must be written in the correct style:

- **informal** (if you are writing to family or friends)
- **semi-formal** (if you are writing to a work colleague you know well)

- **formal** (if you are writing to a business or a local newspaper)

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

***There is a public park near where you live. You have heard that the local council wants to sell this park.***

***Write a letter to a local newspaper. In your letter:***

- *introduce yourself*
- *describe the importance of the park*
- *say what action you will take if the council continues with its plan*

Write at least 150 words.

## **5. You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.**

**You arranged to visit a friend in Canada but an important event at home now means that you must change the dates of the visit.**

**Write a letter to your friend. In your letter**

- **explain the important event**
- **apologise for the situation**
- **suggest a new arrangement**

Write at least 150 words.

### **Plan Your Answer**

#### **Step 1) Analyse the task**

Who will receive the letter?

*Organization or private individual*

Relationship

*Someone you... know well, ...a little or ...don't know*

Style and tone

*Formal or Personal - Friendly or Neutral*

#### **Step 2) Generate ideas**

Explain the important event

*tennis competition / great honour to play*

Apologise

*and give justification for cancellation (need to practise)*

Suggest alternatives

*can take time off later / can use same airline ticket*

### **Step 3) Think it through**

Language needed?

*for apologising / explaining / suggesting new arrangements*

Verb tenses

*present / past / present perfect / future*

Use of modals

*Can / Could you...? / Would it be possible...?*

Checking possibility

*Is it possible for you to...*

How to start?

*(informal) How are you?*

How to finish?

*Best wishes. / All the best.*

**Remember to indicate the need for a response (I'm looking forward to hearing from you)**

## **6. Useful language**

### **Purpose of letter**

**I am writing to...**

- suggest that...
- complain about...
- explain...
- invite you to...
- thank you for...
- apologise for...
- ask for your help with...
- apply for...
- give advice about...
- say how sorry I am about/that...

### **Polite requests**

I would appreciate it if you would/could...

I would be grateful if you would/could...

### **Saying 'No' politely**

I'm afraid that...

I'm sorry that...

### **Ending**

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

I hope to hear from you in the near future.

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

You are a student at a language school in New Zealand studying Business English. Part of the course is a summer work placement programme. Unfortunately, you have just learnt from the school that this programme has now been cancelled.

Write a letter to the School Principal. In your letter:

- state your reason for writing
- describe the problem and your concerns
- explain what you would like the Principal to do.

Write at least 150 words.

You do **NOT** need to write any addresses.