



IELTS Essay

How to Write an IELTS Essay

In this introductory lesson you will find some guidance on how you should write an **IELTS essay**.

There are then more lessons on the following pages for different types of essay and different questions, with lots of tips and strategies for achieving a high score.

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It is important to learn about IELTS essays because there are different essay types, and these will require different ways to answer them.

However, as you will see from the guidance on this page, they can all follow the same basic structure.

These are some of the types of IELTS essays you can get in the test:

- **Agree / disagree**
- **Discuss two opinions**
- **Advantages & disadvantages**
- **Causes (reasons) & solutions**
- **Causes (reasons) & effects**
- **Problems & solutions**

Not every essay will fit one of these patterns, but many do.

You may get some of these tasks mixed up. For example, you could be asked to give your opinion on an issue, and then discuss the advantages or disadvantages of it.

The golden rule is to **ALWAYS read the question very carefully** to see exactly what you are being asked to do.

The second lesson explains more about analysing essay questions.



How do I Write an IELTS Essay?

In order to answer this, let's first look at a sample question:

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

In the last 20 years there have been significant developments in the field of information technology (IT), for example the World Wide Web and communication by email. However, these developments in IT are likely to have more negative effects than positive in the future.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own experience or knowledge.

Write at least 250 words.

An IELTS essay is structured like any other essay; you just need to make it shorter. There are three key elements:

1. **Introduction**
2. **Body Paragraphs**
3. **Conclusion**

We will look at each of these in turn, using the essay question above as an example.

1) Introduction

You should keep your introduction for the IELTS essay short. Remember you only have 40 minutes to write the essay, and some of this time needs to be spent planning. Therefore, you need to be able to write your introduction fairly quickly so you can start writing your body paragraphs.



You should do just two things:

- State the topic of the essay, using some basic facts (that you may be able to take from the question)
- Say what you are going to write about

Here is an example introduction for the above essay question about IT:

The last two decades have seen enormous changes in the way people's lives are affected by **IT**, with many advances in this field. However, while these technological advances have brought many benefits to the world, I strongly believe that **these developments in IT will result in more negative impacts than positive.**

As you can see, the first sentence makes sure it refers to the topic (IT) and uses facts about IT taken from the question. Note that these are paraphrased – you must not copy from the rubric!

The second part then clearly sets out the what the essay will be about and confirms the writers opinion (some questions may not ask for your opinion, but this one does). The writer clearly agrees as he/she thinks there will be more negative impacts.

View this lesson for more advice on [writing IELTS essay introductions.](#)

2) Body Paragraphs

For an IELTS essay, you should have 2 or 3 body paragraphs – no more, and no less.

For your body paragraph, each paragraph should contain one controlling idea, and have sentences to support this.

Lets look at the first paragraph for the essay about IT. The essay is about the benefits and drawbacks of IT, so these will need to be discussed in separate paragraphs.

Here is the first body paragraph:

On the positive side, email has made communication, especially abroad, much simpler and faster. This has resulted in numerous benefits for commerce and business as there is no need to wait weeks for letters or take time sending faxes,

which was the case in the past. Furthermore, the World Wide Web means that information on every conceivable subject is now available to us. For example, people can access news, medical advice, online education courses and much more via the internet. These developments have made life far easier and more convenient for many.

The **controlling idea** in this first paragraph is the '**benefits of IT**', and there are two supporting ideas, which are underlined. No drawbacks are discussed as the paragraph would then lose coherence.

Most of the essay will focus on the negative aspects of IT, as the writer says there are more negative effects in the introduction. So the next two paragraphs are about these.

The topic sentence in the next paragraph therefore tells us we are changing the focus to the negative points:

Nevertheless, the effects of this new technology have not all been beneficial. For example, many people feel that the widespread use of email is destroying traditional forms of communication such as letter writing, telephone and face-to-face conversation. This could result in a decline in people's basic ability to socialize and interact with each other on a day-to-day basis.

The final body paragraph gives the last negative effect:

In addition, the large size of the Web has meant that it is nearly impossible to regulate and control. This has led to many concerns regarding children accessing unsuitable websites and the spread of computer viruses. Unfortunately, this kind of problem might even get worse in the future at least until more regulated systems are set up.

3) Conclusion

The conclusion only needs to be one or two sentences, and you can do the following:

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- Re-state what the essay is about (re-write the last sentence of your introduction in different words)
 - Give some thoughts about the future

Here is an example:

In conclusion, developments in IT have brought many benefits, yet I believe that these are outweighed by the drawbacks. In the future these will need to be addressed if we are to avoid damaging impacts on individuals and society.

The full IELTS Essay:

The last two decades have seen enormous changes in the way people's lives are affected by IT, with many advances in this field. However, while these technological advances have brought many benefits to the world, I strongly believe that these developments in IT will result in more negative impacts than positive.

On the positive side, email has made communication, especially abroad, much simpler and faster. This has resulted in numerous benefits for commerce and business as there is no need to wait weeks for letters or take time sending faxes, which was the case in the past. Furthermore, the World Wide Web means that information on every conceivable subject is now available to us. For example, people can access news, medical advice, online education courses and much more via the internet. These developments have made life far easier and more convenient for many.

Nevertheless, the effects of this new technology have not all been beneficial. For example, many people feel that the widespread use of email is destroying traditional forms of communication such as letter writing, telephone and face-to-face conversation. This could result in a decline in people's basic ability to socialize and interact with each other on a day-to-day basis.

In addition, the large size of the Web has meant that it is nearly impossible to regulate and control. This has led to many concerns regarding children accessing unsuitable websites and the spread of computer viruses. Unfortunately, this kind of problem might even get worse in the future at least until more regulated systems are set up.

In conclusion, developments in IT have brought many benefits, yet I believe that these are outweighed by the drawbacks. In the future these will need to be addressed if we are to avoid damaging impacts on individuals and society.



(290 Words)

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