

On test day:



The IELTS test location staff will check your identity when you arrive.



Make sure you have the right ID with you. If you arrive without ID or the wrong ID, you will not be allowed to take the test.



Test locations will now also take a photograph of you on the test day – this photograph taken by the test centre will appear on your Test Report Form (TRF).



In some countries, test locations will collect a finger scan, to assist our test day staff to verify candidate identity and ensure secure access to all areas.

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IELTS Candidate Identity Verification

Your
questions
answered

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Your questions answered:

What is happening?

IELTS is enhancing its security systems in order to keep pace with evolving technology. IELTS is increasing its level of security and will capture a photograph of candidates on test day and this will be used on the Test Report Form (TRF). The new systems have been piloted successfully around the world, and all centres worldwide will be using them in 2012 in addition to the online Test Report Verification Service (TRFVS) used by educational institutions, governments, professional bodies and commercial organisations.

What is changing?

All IELTS candidates will have their photo taken by IELTS staff on test day before the test. In some countries IELTS will also require candidates to provide a finger scan. The photograph taken by test centre staff will appear on the IELTS Test Report Form (TRF).

What is a finger scan?

In some countries, the new identity verification process collects a finger scan, to assist our test day staff to verify candidate identity and ensure secure access to all areas. A finger scan is different to a finger-print, which IELTS does not collect.

Why is IELTS making this change?

IELTS is dedicated to protecting the genuine candidate, whilst at the same time ensuring the highest standard of customer care and the validity of test scores. These additional security arrangements will provide additional protection for genuine candidates against fraudsters and those who try to exploit test takers. They also provide receiving organisations the additional reassurance that the person whose photograph appears on the TRF is the person who took the test.

What will happen to my data?

Your digital photograph and all personal data will be used only for the purpose of the IELTS test.

Your finger scan will be stored as a binary reference and cannot be converted back into an image. An actual image of the finger-scan is never stored.

The British Council regards the lawful and correct treatment of personal information as important to our successful operations and to the maintenance of confidence of those with whom we deal. As such this statement will apply equally to all of our offices irrespective of where they are based.

We will ensure that our staff and those acting on our behalf obtain, use and disclose personal information lawfully and correctly. To this end we fully adhere to the principles of data protection, as set out in the UK Data Protection Act 1998 (the “Act”). We shall apply the Act globally, except where part or all of any local law is stronger.

How long will the new process take and will there be any impact on the test start time?

The IELTS partners have chosen the identity verification system after more than a year's market research, system development and intensive piloting. The system is performing to standard and candidates will continue to be processed quickly. You are advised to arrive for registration at the time indicated by your test centre and follow test day instructions.

Do I still need to submit photos to register given that my photo will be taken on test day?

Yes, you are still required to submit passport size colour photograph(s) along with your application form, whether offline or online. The photograph must be taken within the past 6 months and against a white background. Hard copy photos must be passport size, with the candidate's full name written on the back.

Is the IELTS identity verification procedure similar to that of other tests?

The system we are using is designed solely for the IELTS test, and is in line with the IELTS partners' commitment to customer care, test security, and with the many innovations we have introduced over the last 20 years. We do not comment on the security procedures of other test providers.

What can I expect on test day?

Your test day photograph and/or finger scan will be taken at the entrance to the testing room, ensuring secure access to all areas. The finger scan will be matched when you return to the testing room after every comfort break.

Can I refuse to take the test day photo?

The IELTS test day photograph is an integral part of IELTS' strategy of protecting the genuine candidate and providing security to receiving organisations. If you have any questions, or experience any inconvenience on the test day, please notify our staff immediately. Refusal to comply with IELTS identity verification will prevent you from taking the test, and you will not be eligible for any transfer, cancellation or refund.

Can I refuse to provide the finger scan?

IELTS finger scan is an integral part of IELTS' strategy of protecting the genuine candidate and assuring test day security in many locations. If you have any questions, or experience any inconvenience on the test day, please notify our staff immediately. Refusal to comply with IELTS identity verification will prevent you from taking the test, and you will not be eligible for any transfer, cancellation or refund.

Are there any special requirements for the photo taking process?

There is no formal dress code, but candidates should consider that the photo taken on test day will be the one that appears on their IELTS Test Report Form. Candidates wearing glasses will be asked to remove them before their photos are taken. Cultural sensitivities have been considered and special arrangements may be in place for female candidates in certain countries.

Does the test day photograph apply to minors?

As the test day photo is an integral part of the identity verification process, every candidate, including minors, must have the test day photo taken without exception. The IELTS test is not recommended for, and is not suitable for, anyone under 16.

What security measures does IELTS take with my finger scan to ensure my privacy?

Your finger scan will be used only for the purpose of the IELTS test. It will be stored as a binary reference and cannot be converted back into an image. An actual image of the finger scan is never stored. All test centres will take the necessary steps to comply with the Privacy legislation.

Does the IELTS identity verification system differ around the world?

IELTS tests are delivered in more than 130 countries worldwide, and the basic identity checks are the same everywhere. The order of the test day identity verification procedure may vary for cultural or operational reasons, and some countries may decide to implement additional security features for local reasons. In some countries a finger scan is also taken on registration – test centres in these countries will advise candidates before they register that finger scanning is in place.