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
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.