

IELTS General Reading Practice Test 31

SECTION 1: Questions 1 - 14

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-14, which are based on Reading Passages below.

Write answers to questions in boxes 1-14 on your answer sheet.

Lost, Damaged or Delayed Inland Mail Claim Form

Before completing this claim form for lost, damaged or delayed mail you should visit www.royalmail.com to find out all you need to know about our policies. Alternatively you can get the details from our "Mail Made easy" booklet, available at any local post office branch. When you fill in the form, make sure you complete it in full, using the checklist that we have provided to help you. If you find that you do not have the evidence required to make a claim but would like us to investigate an issue with your mail service, the easiest way to do this is by visiting our website.

Lost items

If you wish to claim compensation for lost items, you should send us original proof of posting, e.g. a Post Office receipt. If claiming for the contents of a package, you also need to provide proof of value, e.g. till item reference number, receipt, bank statement etc.

Damaged items

When claiming compensation for lost items that have been damaged, you should send us the items themselves, if possible. However, if these are very large or unsafe to post, you may instead provide photographs as evidence of the damage. Please retain the original packaging (and damaged items, if not sent to us) as we may need to inspect them.

Time restrictions

We allow up to 15 working days for items to arrive, so cannot accept a claim for loss unless 15 working days or more have passed since the items was posted.

Claims for lost or damaged items must be made within 12 months of the postal date.

Claims for delayed item must be submitted within 3 months of the date they were posted if the claim is made by the sender, or within 1 month of receipt if the claim is made by the recipient of the item.

Questions 1-7

Complete the notes below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND /OR A NUMBER** from the text for each answer.

Write your answer in boxes 1-7 on your answer sheet

Claiming compensation from the Royal Mail for lost, damaged or delayed mail

Before filling the form

- go online to learn about their policies or get the 1 that contains the relevant information.

When filling in the form

- refer to the 2 to ensure all the relevant sections are completed.

(you can use their 3to request action if you don't have enough proof to make a claim).

When claiming compensation for a lost item

- include proof that you have posted the item.
- in the case of a package include something (e.g. bank statement) to prove its 4
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When claiming for the cost of a damaged item, include

- either the actual item or 5 showing the damage to the item.

(you should keep the 6 that was used when the item was originally sent.)

When to claim

- Lost or damaged items: within 12 months of posting the claim.

- **Delayed items:** if you are the 7, you must claim within three months of posting the package.

Read the text below and answer Questions 8-14.

Days out for the family

A. Carrickfergus Castle

Considered to be Northern Ireland's oldest castle, Carrickfergus has seen more than 800 years of military occupation since its foundations were laid. During summer, traditional feasts are served, and fairs and craft markets provide an extra attraction. The history of the castle is explained and brought to life with exhibits and guided tours.

B. Glamis Castle

Shakespeare used Glamis as the background when he wrote one of his best-known plays, *Macbeth* and the Queen Mother Grew up here. It is also rumoured to have a secret chamber in the walls of the castle. There are many ghost tales associated with this castle, which will capture the imagination of younger visitors.

C. Tintagel Castle

High up on the cliff tops, Tintagel Castle is the legendary home of king Arthur. The visitor's guide on sale at the reception is well worth of the money, as it can help you to visualise what it would have been like hundreds of years ago. you can park in the village car park and walk the half mile to the castle, or take the shuttle bus.

D. Pickering Castle

Built by William the conqueror, this is a great castle for children to run around in. There are lots of special events too, including a chance to come along and see some plays which are put on during the summer months. Nearby Helmsley Castle is also worth a visit.

E. Stokesay Castle

A range of workshops, including music and combat, are held here during the summer, children of all ages will enjoy learning at these and there is a guided tour which has been especially designed with younger visitors in mind. Some of them may find the dungeon quite scary though.

F. Warwick Castle

This castle is over 1,000 years old and has towers and a moat, and is just as you might imagine a castle to be. Children can even get to try on armour to see how heavy it is. At Christmas, a special market is held here – a great opportunity to look for presents and Christmas treats.

Questions 8-14

Look at the description of six castles, A-F.

For which castle are the following statements true?

Write the correct letter A-F, in boxes 8-14 on your answer sheet.

NB you may use any letter more than once.

8. At certain times of the year you can eat special meals here.

9. Children can get dressed up here.

10. There is another castle in the same area.

11. A lot of stories are told about this place.

12. Parts of the castle may be frightening for some children.

13. Plays are performed here during part of the year.

14. A guided tour is offered which is particularly suitable for children.

SECTION 2: Questions 15 - 27

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 15-27, which are based on Reading Passages below.

Write answers to questions in boxes 15-27 on your answer sheet.

Marketing advice for new businesses

If you're setting up your own business, here's some advice on getting customers.

Know where your customers look

Your customers aren't necessarily where you think they are. So if you're advertising where they're just not looking, it's wasted money. That's why it pays to do a bit of research. Every time someone contacts your company, ask them where they found out about you. And act on this information so you're advertising in the right places.

Always think like a customer

What makes your customers tick? Find out, and you're halfway to saying the right things in your advertising. So take the time to ask them. A simple phone or email survey of your own customers, politely asking why they use you, what they really like and what they don't, is invaluable.

Make sure customers know you're there

If a customer can't see you, they can't buy from you. There are loads of opportunities to promote your business — print, press, direct mail, telemarketing, email and the internet — and using a mix of these increases your chances of being seen (and remembered).

Ignore your customers and they'll go away

It sounds obvious, but companies who talk to their customers have much better retention rates than those that don't, so it's worth staying in touch. Capture your customers' email addresses upfront. Follow up a transaction to check they're happy with the service and, if possible, send them updates that are helpful, informative and relevant.

Know what works (and what doesn't)

Do what the professionals do, and measure all your advertising. That'll tell you what you're doing right - and where there's room for improvement. You never know, it might just throw up some information that could change your business for the better.

Remember word-of-mouth: the best advertising there is

A recent survey found that consumers are 50% more likely to be influenced by word-of-mouth recommendations than by TV or radio ads. So your reputation is your greatest asset. If your current customers are impressed with your company, they'll be

more inclined to recommend you to others. On the flip side, if they experience bad service they probably won't complain to you - but you can be sure they will to their friends.

Questions 15-20

Complete the sentences below.

Choose ONE WORD ONLY from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 15-20 on your answer sheet.

15. Some will help you to discover the most effective places to advertise.

16. A of your customers will show you how they feel about your company.

17. A of forms of advertising will make it more likely that potential customers will find out about you.

18. If you can, provide customers with useful about your business.

19. Measuring the effects of your advertising can give you that will improve your business.

20. Success in finding new customers largely depends on your

Read the text below and answer Questions 21-27.

Working Time Regulations for Mobile Workers

These rules apply to drivers and crew of heavy goods vehicles or public service vehicles. The rules limit the amount of time that can be worked.

Those defined in the Regulations as being self-employed are currently not covered by the Regulations.

What are the limits?

- **An average of 48 hours' work per week.**
- **In any single week up to 60 hours can be worked so long as the 48-hour average is maintained.**
- **Night work is limited to 10 hours per night, unless there is a workforce agreement to work longer.**
- **Statutory annual leave and any sick leave and/or maternity/paternity leave counts as working time.**

What counts as work?

In general, any activities performed in connection with the transport operation count as work, for example, driving, loading/unloading and those checks that are the responsibility of drivers, such as checking lights, brakes, etc. There are a number of periods of time that do not count as work, for example, travelling between home and your normal place of work, lunch or other breaks and periods of availability.

Periods of availability are periods of time during which the mobile worker is not required to remain at their workstation but is required to be available for work, the foreseeable duration of which is known about in advance, for example:

- **Delays at a distribution centre.**
- **Reporting for work then being informed that no duties are to be undertaken for a specified period.**
- **Accompanying a vehicle being transported, for example by train.**

A period of availability can be taken at the workstation. Providing the worker has a reasonable amount of freedom (e.g. they can read and relax) for a known duration, this could satisfy the requirements of a period of availability.

Situations when a period of time should not be recorded as a period of availability:

- **Hold-ups due to congestion, because the driver would be stopping and starting the vehicle.**

- Frequently moving up within a queue (e.g. waiting within a queue to load or unload) every other minute.

Questions 21-27

Complete the notes below.

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 21-27 on your answer sheet.

Working Time Regulations for Mobile Workers

These apply to people working on lorries, buses, etc.

They don't apply to 21 workers.

Maximum working hours: 60 hours a week, provided the 22 is no more than 48 hours.

Night work can be more than 10 hours with the 23 of the workers.

Work includes driving, loading and unloading, and carrying out various 24 of the vehicle.

Periods of availability include:

going on a 25 or other form of transport with a vehicle

a period at the workstation when the driver has some 26 might count as a period of availability

Periods of availability exclude:

time spent stopping and starting the vehicle when 27 causes delays being in a queue, e.g. in order to load or unload.