

Macquarie University IELTS Test Centre AU108
Employment as an IELTS Invigilator/Test Day Staff Member – FAQs

What is IELTS?

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is a high-stakes test of English language proficiency which assesses a person's level of skill in listening, reading, writing and speaking. It is internationally recognised and administered in over 210 centres world-wide. The test is used as an indicator of English language proficiency for entry into universities, TAFE (Technical and Further Education) colleges, secondary schools and colleges in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Canada and English language medium universities in Asia (eg. in Singapore). The test IP is jointly owned by three large global organisations: Cambridge University, the British Council, and IDP-IELTS Australia. For more information on the IELTS test, visit: www.ielts.org.

Where are our Test Venues?

Macquarie University Test Centre AU108 is licensed to administer tests by IDP-IELTS Australia, and operates testing at THREE venues: 1) the MQ North Ryde Campus, our main venue; 2) the University of Sydney Centre for English Teaching (Wentworth Building, cnr City Road and Butlin Ave, Darlington) and 3) The University of Sydney Health Science campus at 75 East St. Lidcombe.

What are the main duties and qualities required?

Invigilators work under the supervision and leadership of a Room Convenor and a Test Day Supervisor. They distribute and collect test papers, observe and assist candidates, check IDs, and prevent cheating. Examples of cheating are copying others' work, talking, or taking in papers or electronic devices. Invigilators must be active, accurate, observant, polite, well-presented, meticulous, and committed to the integrity and high standards of the global IELTS organization. On a typical test day (all Saturday mornings), they are on their feet more or less constantly from 7:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., so they need to be fit and well, and alert, and able to communicate clearly in English to candidates from many language backgrounds.

What different roles are there on Test Days?

Candidates arrive at the venue between 8:00 and 8:45 a.m., their ID is checked, and they are instructed where to go for the test which begins at 9:00 a.m. All test day staff take part in this process. After Registration, the most common role is Invigilator. They distribute and collect test papers, observe and assist candidates, check IDs, and prevent cheating. One Invigilator staffs the bag-drop room until the test starts. Each test room has a Convenor, who checks candidates into the room, supervises the Invigilators throughout the test, and reads out the instructions to candidates for each part of the test.

After the morning section of the test is finished (the Writing, Reading and Listening), candidates are given their Speaking Test appointment letters, and leave the test rooms at about 12:45 pm. Then a small select team of the morning staff set up for Speaking Test Registration. Each candidate returns in the afternoon for an individual scheduled 20-minute appointment with a trained Speaking Examiner (an English teaching professional). Their ID is re-checked by Speaking Registration Invigilators, and they are supervised while they wait for the Examiner to accept them into the test room.

Where is training conducted? Where is the work conducted?

The 2-hour training session will usually be conducted at the MQ North Ryde location, but sometimes at the other venues. If you are employed by us, you may become part of our

staff cohort working at MQ North Ryde campus or USYD-CET or USYD-Lidcombe. It is a requirement that you should be willing to work in *any* location occasionally if asked, though of course we fully expect that after training you will be part of one venue cohort.

What ID Check is conducted?

If you are selected for training, please bring 100 pts of ID. To make 100 pts of ID the best combination is a passport and driver licence. For Australian citizens, we will need to sight and your passport only. For non-Australians, we need to sight and copy your passport and Australian visa (if applicable), for a check on visa working rights. For Australian passport holders this is a mere formality of course (we just need to sight your passport only) but for others we do need to apply to check your working visa conditions.

How are reference checks conducted?

If selected for training, we will send you two email attachments, which are identical Referee forms. You forward the blank form to your nominated referees, who must complete them and send them to the email contact indicated in the form (the Test Centre Manager and/or the Test Centre Administrator). The references must not come to us from your own email address. Referees must not be family members or friends, and should be employers or people who have known you in a supervisory role.

Who is my contract with?

If successful, you will receive a casual contract and employment documents from Access MQ HR Dept. You must complete, sign and return them to AMQ before you can work. You will be offered a casual contract with Access Macquarie Pty Ltd, at a (2014) rate of \$23.70 per hour for Invigilation duties. Room Convenor roles attract higher rates.

After training, is there a probation period?

After training and contract return, you will be on probation for two tests. You will be asked to book in to work on two test dates. Further offers of work after the first two tests will depend on your performance during those tests, based on:

- ability to communicate easily in English with the staff, the Administrators and the candidates,
- ability to follow the Test Room Convenor's instructions,
- attention to correct procedure and accuracy while handing out and collecting papers,
- activity, efficiency and vigilance during the test,
- politeness and helpfulness towards candidates,
- teamwork,
- and professional appearance and presentation (casual business wear).

What happens at your first test day?

Staff are required to be on site by 7:30 a.m. At your first test experience you need to bear in mind that the Lead Invigilator (Convenor) of each test room needs to know you are a NEW staff member. Information about where to go, and names and contact details for the venue are sent out in a Roster by email in the week before the test. You need to introduce yourself to your Convenor and ask to be given a row of candidates next to an experienced Invigilator who can mentor you. You need to bring your briefing notes (given at training) with you and any important documents given during training. There is too much to remember all at one session and it will take a few tests before all procedures and timings are fully understood.

How is my performance reviewed?

Your Room Convenor will write a brief report on a pro-forma after each test and rate your performance on a 3 point scale in the main areas mentioned above. The Test Centre Administrators will use these ratings as the basis for feedback to you and in some cases decisions on whether to offer you further employment. You can request to see these evaluations if necessary.

Do I work at the same venue every time?

Usually, yes, but we may from time to time ask you to work at any of three venues: Macquarie University North Ryde, or our Sydney University Darlington location or our Sydney University Lidcombe location. However, we understand that you will probably have a preference for one of the locations due to your residential address. But please understand we may need to ask you to work at any location from time to time, depending on our needs.

How do I advise you that I want to work on a certain date?

This is casual, weekend work. The Centre runs about 23 test days per year, on Saturdays only. Invigilators may request work, in advance, on any or all of these dates. A typical shift is about 5 hours, but see the next point. Invigilators express their interest in working on each test date, well in advance, by logging into special websites we have created ("Invigilator Consoles"). There is one for each Venue, but there are no links to them on our Test Centre web pages, to keep them private. Therefore you must keep the URLs in your Favourites AND write the web addresses and your login somewhere safe. You can only log in once you have been given login details, after we have entered you in the database underlying each site. If you do not log in to select work-dates, you will not be rostered on.

What happens after I have entered my name in the Console for a test date?

Once you have logged in and selected a date(s), and saved changes, you have then entered your name in the list of expressions of interest for a particular date. We can see the list of names for each date, in our admin back-end to the Consoles. As each test date approaches, about 7 – 10 days before the test, the Administrators draw up rosters for the venues and allocate staff to various roles and testing rooms. It is expected that you have *diarised* your dates and will not double book yourself. However, this is not a *guarantee* that you will be able to work on that day. Sometimes, depending on candidate numbers, we have more staff in the list than we can use (although this is less likely now that we have the three locations), and we have to "rest" staff for one test. We are generally able to confirm the final roster for each test, by email, about four days before the Saturday of the test.

What if I want to withdraw my name for a particular date?

We understand that people's plans change, but remember that once you have entered your name for a test date, you have made a commitment and we expect you to keep it. We cannot function with staff who withdraw without good reason, especially close to the test. Once you receive that roster, you are expected to work on that date, so if you have a very good reason why you cannot work (e.g. medical), you **MUST** email or call the Test Centre Administrator or the Test Centre Manager. For us, your reliability is a very close second to your competence. Withdrawals after the roster has gone out are severely frowned upon, as they compromise the integrity of the test delivery and cause much wasted time finding replacements.

Extra Test Day Afternoon Work

The most reliable and regular staff can be asked to work for a full day (up to 10 hours) if they are willing and able. A smaller group stays on after the morning shift (5 hours,

Listening, Reading and Writing sections) to supervise the individual Speaking tests and various admin duties, until up to 6.00 pm.

Contact

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