

IELTS Writing Structure Checklist

This checklist is designed for you to identify problems in your IELTS part two writing. It is here to help you understand what you are doing well and what you are doing less well with your structure. Getting a full score on this checklist doesn't guarantee a good writing score. However, if you aren't scoring well on this checklist, you will find it hard to get a good score in the real test. You can apply this checklist to any part two essay you have written.

- Are there four clear paragraphs with gaps between?**
Typically an IELTS essay should have an introduction, two body paragraphs and a conclusion. Check to see if there are four clear paragraphs. It is better to leave a line between paragraphs than use indentation (a small space on the first line of a paragraph).
- Does the introduction give background by paraphrasing the question?**
IELTS writing questions give you a little background information about the current situation. However, you shouldn't just copy this word for word. Does the introduction to this essay give some of this background information without using the same language?
- Is there a clear thesis statement?**
The thesis statement is usually the second sentence of the introduction. This sentence should give an appropriate answer to the question. It will often take the form 'In this essay I will...' or 'This essay will...' Check to see if this essential sentence is there.
- Does the introduction tell you what the body paragraphs will do?**
While you don't have to give a summary of what your essay will do in the introduction, it shows that your essay is well planned and adds coherence and cohesion to your essay. Check to see if you can tell what the body paragraphs will do based on the introduction.
- Do the body paragraphs have topic sentences?**
The first sentence of each of your body paragraphs should be a topic sentence. This sentence should describe what the main point of that paragraph should be. Check the box if each body paragraph has a clear topic sentence.

Are there at least three supporting sentences in each body paragraph?

Supporting sentences are everything in a body paragraph that comes after the topic sentence. Their purpose is to convince the reader that the topic sentence is true. Almost all supporting sentences will be either explanations, arguments or examples.

Does the conclusion refer specifically to arguments made in the body paragraphs?

In your conclusion, you should be reminding the examiner what your main arguments were and linking them to your conclusion. These should be the same ideas that are mentioned in the topic sentences at the start of each body paragraph. Check your essay to see if the conclusion tells you what the body paragraphs did.

Does the conclusion answer the question?

Your conclusion should also contain an answer to the question. This should be the same answer as you gave in your thesis statement. Check to see if there is an answer to the question in the conclusion.

Are the topic sentences linked to the essay title?

For this step, we are going to check how you've answered the question. To do this, we will look at your topic sentences because they are a good measure of how well you answered the question. Check the topic sentences against the approach you should have taken.

Both sides: One topic sentence gives a reason for one side, the other topic sentence gives a reason for the other side.

Agree or disagree: One topic sentence gives one reason for your opinion, the other gives another reason for your opinion.

Problem and solution: One topic sentence outlines a problem. The other topic sentence outlines another problem. Make sure you have offered a solution for each in the supporting sentences.

Advantage and disadvantage: One topic sentence gives an advantage, the other gives a disadvantage.

Two part question: One topic sentence answers the first part of the question. The other topic sentence answers the other question.

In each body paragraph, are the supporting sentences linked to the topic sentences?

Take a look at your body paragraphs. Each of the supporting sentences should be linked to the topic sentence. Usually this means they are giving explanations, arguments or examples related to the topic sentence.