

English as an Additional Language

IELTS - INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TESTING SYSTEM

What are the aims of the course?

English as an Additional Language lessons are provided for international students on A Level courses who are non-native speakers of English and who have not yet reached a level of proficiency equivalent to IELTS 7.0. Below are the key areas that you will focus on in the Sixth Form:

- General English – to help you communicate confidently in formal and informal social situations, and to participate fully in all areas of life at school and beyond
- English for Academic Purposes – to help you develop the language skills you need to succeed in your different A Level subjects, and help you prepare for university study
- Preparation and training for the IELTS examination required for university entry
- Academic Word List – this is a list of 570 headwords which **ALL** students intending to study in English should be familiar with
- Becoming a reflective and independent learner so you can identify your strengths and weaknesses and how to manage them
- Applying to university: writing a personal statement (from second half of Summer Term in Lower Sixth)

What does it involve?

Most students will have 4 hours of tuition a week in Lower Sixth, and 3 hours a week in Upper Sixth. Teaching takes place in relatively small groups. The focus will be on developing confidence and fluency in all 4 skills areas of Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking. Students will also work on improving grammatical accuracy and their range of vocabulary. There will be a focus on the use of appropriate register and style, and developing a greater understanding of more formal, academic language. Students will cover a range of topics relevant to the IELTS examination and will be encouraged to participate actively in lessons. They will also be asked to keep reading and writing journals to facilitate their independent learning

Although students will be prepared and entered for the IELTS examination, the EAL course will aim to develop a wider range of language and study skills to support students' learning and preparation for university.

How is it assessed?

The examination involves four separate components:

Reading

A 1 hour paper with 40 questions based on 3 reading passages. There is a variety of question types which test different reading skills.

Writing

A 1 hour paper with 2 tasks. For Task 1, students will be presented with a graph, table, chart or diagram and asked to describe, summarise or explain the information in their own words. Students may be asked to describe and explain data, describe the stages of a process, how something works or describe an object or event. For Task 2, students will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. Responses to both tasks must be in a formal style.

Listening

Students will listen to four recorded texts, monologues and conversations by a range of native speakers, and write their answers to a series of questions. These include questions which test your ability to:

- Understand main ideas and detailed factual information
- Understand the opinions and attitudes of speakers
- Understand the purpose of an utterance
- Follow the development of ideas.

A variety of voices and native-speaker accents are used and each section is heard only once.

Speaking

The Speaking component assesses students' use of spoken English, and takes between 11 and 14 minutes to complete. Every test is recorded. In Part 1, the Examiner will ask the student general questions about themselves and a range of familiar topics, such as home, family, work, studies and interests. In Part 2, students will be given a card which asks them to talk about a particular topic. Students will have one minute to prepare before speaking for up to two minutes. The examiner will then ask one or two questions on the same topic to finish this part of the test.

In Part 3, students will be asked further questions connected to the topic in Part 2. These questions will give students the opportunity to discuss more abstract ideas and issues.

Please note that in order to sit the examination, students have to travel to an approved test centre at the University of Manchester. This will be arranged through school and students will be accompanied by a teacher.

Are there any specific entry requirements?

All students entering Rossall Sixth Form must have an English language qualification at level B1 or higher. However, we strongly recommend that students aim to reach level B2 before starting a Sixth Form course.

Why is it a useful qualification?

IELTS is the most widely accepted English language qualification at universities in the UK and other countries. Most good universities will ask for an overall level of 6.5 or higher, with a minimum of 5.5 in each component. Some of the top universities will ask for an overall score of 7.0, with a minimum of 6.0 in each component. It is a challenging examination and demonstrates to higher education institutions that students have developed the necessary language skills to cope with study at this level.