



TOEFL® Teacher and Advisor Quarterly Newsletter

October 2019

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Welcome

Did you know the *TOEFL*® test is changing? That's right! In this edition of the Teacher and Advisor Quarterly Newsletter, we'll share some details about the changes that will create a better test experience for students, as well as some other interesting articles.

If you have colleagues who need to be in the know, share this email and encourage them to [join the TOEFL mailing list](#).

TOEFL Program, ETS

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The *TOEFL*® Test Is Changing — Introducing a Better Test Experience



Students can now benefit from an improved *TOEFL iBT*® test experience with a shorter test, enhanced score reporting, easier registration and more.

A Shorter Test

TOEFL iBT test time will be shortened by 30 minutes, to just 3

hours, with no changes to the overall test format or question types. In other words, it's the same fair, reliable, preferred test, just with fewer questions in the Reading, Listening and Speaking sections. You can still finish the test in half a day with no need to return for a second day.

Here is a summary of the test changes:

Test Section	Before August 1, 2019	After August 1, 2019
Reading	3–4 reading passages 12–14 questions each 60–80 minutes	3–4 reading passages 10 questions each 54–72 minutes
Listening	4–6 lectures, 6 questions each 2–3 conversations, 5 questions each 60–90 minutes	3–4 lectures, 6 questions each 2–3 conversations, 5 questions each 41–57 minutes

Speaking 6 tasks

- 2 independent
- 4 integrated

20 minutes

4 tasks

- 1 independent
- 3 integrated

17 minutes

Test Sections

Reading

Before August 1, 2019

- 3–4 reading passages
- 12–14 questions each
- 60–80 minutes

After August 1, 2019

- 3–4 reading passages
- 10 questions each
- 54–72 minutes

Listening

Before August 1, 2019

- 4–6 lectures, 6 questions each
- 2–3 conversations, 5 questions each
- 60–90 minutes

After August 1, 2019

- 3–4 lectures, 6 questions each
- 2–3 conversations, 5 questions each
- 41–57 minutes

Speaking

Before August 1, 2019

- 6 tasks
 - 2 independent
 - 4 integrated
- 20 minutes

After August 1, 2019

- 4 tasks
 - 1 independent
 - 3 integrated
- 17 minutes

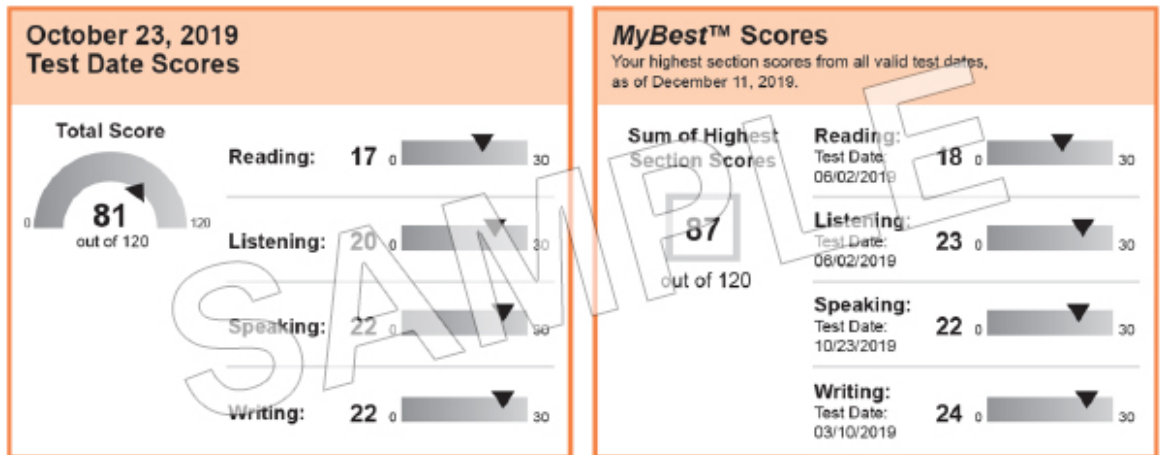
The Writing section will remain the same, with 2 tasks taking a total of 50 minutes. The test will still be scored on a 0–30 scale for each section, and 0–120 for the total score.

See [FAQs About the Shorter TOEFL iBT® Test \(PDF\)](#).

MyBest™ Scores

This new feature combines students' best scores for each section from all of their valid TOEFL iBT scores in the last 2 years. All TOEFL iBT score reports sent after

August 1, 2019, regardless of the test administration date, will automatically include *MyBest™* scores along with the traditional scores from the students' selected test date, like this:



Easier Registration and Account Management

Now when students log in to their account to register for the TOEFL iBT test, they'll enjoy greater functionality, an improved registration experience, easy access to test prep and more. Students can [create an account or log in](#) to explore the new registration system.

Learn about all of the additional enhancements to the [TOEFL iBT test experience](#), including a full free practice test, afternoon test times, reduced retest waiting period and the official app.

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The Positive Effect of the *TOEFL iBT*® Test on Teaching and Learning

It's a well-known fact that achieving the required score on the TOEFL® test can help put students on the path to pursuing their academic interests in the country of their choosing. More than 35 million test takers have used the TOEFL test to open doors to their academic and professional futures. But did you know that the TOEFL test actually helps prepare students for the classroom? Because the TOEFL test is designed to measure real communication skills — how well students can read, write, listen and speak in English to communicate — and not just their rote memory of vocabulary or grammar skills like some other English-language tests, students actually improve proficiency and grow skills by preparing for the test. It's called the “washback effect.”

Read the full article in which ETS Research scientists and Assessment Development experts discuss [how the TOEFL test positively impacts student learning and progress](#) through the washback effect.

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The *TOEFL*® Test: Fact or Fiction?



If your students are planning to study at an English-language institution, you've probably already heard that the *TOEFL iBT*® test is the best English-language assessment to take. But do you think you know *everything* about the test? Quiz yourself to find out how

accurately you can determine fact from fiction.

1. Fact or fiction: TOEFL scores are accepted by schools in the United Kingdom, United States, India and Australia.

Answer: Fact. More than 10,000 universities and institutions in over 130 countries accept TOEFL scores, including 271 institutions and programs in the United Kingdom, thousands in the United States, 195 in India, 173 in Australia, 263 in Germany and 412 in Canada. Does this list not include your students' desired country? [Enter the country of interest to view a list of participating institutions.](#)

2. Fact or fiction: The TOEFL test is easier than IELTS.

Answer: Fiction, because difficulty is subjective; what one person considers easy may not seem easy to someone else. In reality, neither test has been shown to be more difficult than the other. Both tests assess a person's English-language proficiency, and both assessments measure all 4 skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

So perhaps a smarter question is: **Which test is better?** The TOEFL test offers several advantages:

- a. The entire TOEFL test is given in a half day, unlike IELTS®, which typically takes place over multiple days.
- b. TOEFL speaking responses are spoken into a microphone and sent via the internet for scoring by multiple raters who don't know the test taker and cannot see the test taker. This process is fairer than being scored by only 1 interviewer at the test center, which is what IELTS does.
- c. Did you know that 90 percent of TOEFL test takers surveyed got into their first- or second-choice university? It's true!

d. For those looking to study in the United States, 4 out of 5 admissions officers prefer the TOEFL test over any other English-language proficiency test. [Learn more about the TOEFL test advantage.](#)

3. Fact or fiction: Only people who don't communicate well in English should prepare for the TOEFL test.

Answer: Fiction. Regardless of skill level, all test takers have something to gain from proper preparation. There are many [free resources](#) that will help students learn how to navigate the 4 sections of the test and what to expect on test day. Plus, there's so much more that can help them feel prepared to show their best skills. Access [free test prep, tips and planning materials](#) to share with your students. And be sure to check out this free course: [TOEFL® Test Preparation: The Insider's Guide](#). Over half a million students have taken the self-paced course, which has received an average rating of 4.5 stars. It's a great opportunity to help your students prepare for the test or to guide students in self-study.

How did you do?

Hopefully you learned at least 1 new thing by playing The TOEFL Test: Fact or Fiction. Visit www.toeflgoanywhere.org to learn more about the test, participate in test prep games (such as The Great Grammar Challenge), and encourage students to sign up to receive tips and advice on how to do their best on test day.

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**Test Choice Matters: For Study in the United States,
the Choice Is the *TOEFL®* Test**



While students are exploring many new study-abroad destinations, and in many cases choosing to stay closer to home and attending a school in their geographical region of the world, the United States remains the leading study-abroad destination for students around the world. According to the IIE Open Doors® report, over 1 million international students studied in the United States in the 2017–18 academic year, an increase of 1.5 percent over the previous year. That’s more than twice the international

students attracted by the second most popular destination, the United Kingdom.

In the United States, many universities and colleges are ramping up efforts to ensure that international students have access to the information they need to pursue their desired course of study, and to ensure they know they are welcome in the United States. Some of those efforts include increasing outreach and recruitment to international students, using social media and digital channels to share messages of welcome, and engaging policymakers to urge support for international students.

Students need to be sure that the test they choose will get them into their desired program in their desired country. When it comes to the United States as a study-abroad destination, there is no contest. The *TOEFL*® test offers:

- **Broader acceptance** — The TOEFL test is accepted everywhere in the United States (while the IELTS are not).
- **Greater popularity** — More TOEFL scores are sent to U.S. universities than all other English-language tests combined.¹
- **Preference** — 90 percent of U.S. universities prefer the TOEFL test over other English-language tests.²

In fact, in a recent study, **7 times more of the graduate programs** surveyed agreed that they formally recommend the TOEFL test vs. recommending IELTS.

And **5 times more undergraduate programs** of those surveyed also indicated they **formally recommend the TOEFL test vs. recommending IELTS**.³

And they prefer the TOEFL test for good reason. The TOEFL test helps universities accurately assess the ability of international applicants to communicate in English where it matters — in the classroom and other academic environments.

Key ways the TOEFL test helps universities:

- The TOEFL test uses integrated tasks that draw upon all four language skills to simulate the English language that is actually used in real academic environments.
- The TOEFL test content is drawn primarily from academic sources and reflects the demands of real-world academic environments.
- The *TOEFL*® Online Speech Sample Service, through which universities can listen to an audio clip of one of the applicant's actual speaking responses, provides further reassurance of student quality and ability to communicate effectively.

The TOEFL test stands out as the best choice for students who are studying in the United States. View the [TOEFL Test Student Destination flyer \(PDF\)](#).

Sources:

1 Survey of 329 admissions officers at U.S. universities

2 Survey of 94 admissions officers at U.S. universities who accept both TOEFL and IELTS scores and who expressed a preference

3 Survey of 200 admissions professionals in the United States

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The *TOEFL*® Program Funds a Teacher Scholarship to Present at the International IATEFL Conference

The *TOEFL*® Program is excited to announce a new and unique opportunity for ESL/EFL teachers. Starting with IATEFL's 2020 Conference, the TOEFL Program will support the winner of the scholarship in their journey to this renowned ELT event.

The International IATEFL Conference and Exhibition, held each spring in the United Kingdom, is a highlight of many ELT professionals' year. It is attended by almost 3,000 professionals from more than 100 countries and involves a 4-day program of around 500 talks, workshops and forums, as well as a large exhibition.

"Attending this conference and being one of the speakers is many teachers' professional dream, but it's often not possible to achieve, mainly for financial reasons," says Joanna Wrzesinska, Academic Relations & ELT Manager, ETS Global. "I am grateful to the TOEFL Program, which generously decided to support the winner of the scholarship."

The scholarship winner will not only receive financial support to cover travel expenses and conference-related fees, but also will be able to present their work to a larger international audience. Because the scholarship has been established to encourage and support English-language teachers working in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) setting, the winning presentation should discuss the grantee's classroom research results or should share practical tips and ideas for classroom activities that can help build necessary language skills crucial for effective use of English in an academic setting. [Learn more about the scholarship.](#) (**Note:** Applications for the 2020 scholarship are closed.)

During the upcoming conference, which will be held April 18–21, 2020, in the city of Manchester, the TOEFL Program will have an exhibition booth with several presentations in the program. If you will be attending, please drop by the booth. We look forward to seeing you!

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