

OXFORD

INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL GCSE

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (9280)

Exemplar student responses with commentary

For teaching from September 2017 onwards

For International GCSE exams in May/June 2018 onwards

This guide includes some exemplar student responses and commentary.

It is intended to provide some examples of the kind of responses that might be submitted with some exemplification of the mark scheme connected to that response.

QUESTION

0 1

Look closely at this photograph from a holiday brochure.



© Chris Jackson/Getty Images

Describe what you see in the photograph.

Your description should be between 30 and 50 words.

EXTRACT FROM MARK SCHEME

For this question, students are required to describe what they see in a photograph. The response is assessed for Content and communication (6 marks) and for Language (3 marks) as specified in the criteria below. The maximum mark is 9. The student is expected to produce 30 to 50 words. The number of words is approximate and you must mark and credit all work produced by the student.

Content and Communication	Marks	Response
Band 3	5–6	The description is relevant and detailed; communication is clear.
Band 2	3–4	The description is mostly relevant; there is some delay in communication.
Band 1	1–2	The description contains some relevant words and/or phrases.
Below band 1	0	Content is below the required standard for band 1.

Language	Marks	Response
Band 3	3	Spelling and punctuation are accurate.
Band 2	2	Some complex words are spelt correctly; sentence demarcation is usually accurate.
Band 1	1	Simple words are usually spelt correctly; there is some appropriate use of punctuation.
Below band 1	0	Content is below the required standard for band 1.

STUDENT A

The glare of the boat reflected the deck of the white, luxurious cruise ship as it was waiting for passengers to board. The clear, blue sky reflected in the ocean, the picture moving with each little wave. The man worked hard scrubbing at each and every corner of the boat.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

Content and communication – 6 marks

The description is clearly relevant and detailed. The student uses a range of adjectives to describe the photograph. The communication is clear and there is no ambiguity in the response.

Language – 3 marks

There is clear evidence of use of complex language including the gerund accurately used. Spelling and punctuation is accurate including the use of commas and sentence demarcation is accurate.

Total – 9 marks

STUDENT B

In the time of daylight with azure filled the sight. The stores lining up near by the deep marine. The sound from afar catch their attention. The pearly coloured cruise which holds new journey has arrived.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

Content and communication – 1 mark

There are some relevant words and the student has tried to describe the scene. However, the word order and missing words hinder the communication greatly.

Language – 1 mark

Words are spelt correctly and there is some appropriate use of punctuation in that sentences are used correctly.

Total – 2 marks

QUESTION

0 2

Your school or college is holding a swimming gala. Write a letter to parents inviting them to attend.

You must mention:

- the day and date
- the place
- the time it will start.

Your letter should be between 50 and 70 words. Do **not** write an address.

EXTRACT FROM MARK SCHEME

For this question there are three compulsory key points which are assessed for Content and Communication (6 marks). The letter is also assessed for Language (6 marks) as specified in the criteria below. The maximum mark is 12. The student is expected to produce approximately 50 to 70 words over the whole question. The number of words is approximate and you must mark and credit all work produced by the student.

Content and communication	Marks	Response
Band 3	5–6	A full coverage of the key points. Communication is clear.
Band 2	3–4	A partial coverage of the key points. Communication is mostly clear but there are instances where message is not conveyed.
Band 1	1–2	A minimal coverage of the key points. Frequent instances where messages are not conveyed.
Below band 1	0	Content is below the required standard for band 1.

Language	Marks	Response
Band 3	5–6	Uses a good/wide variety of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures. Spelling and punctuation are generally accurate.
Band 2	3–4	Some success in variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures. Spelling and punctuation are more accurate than not.
Band 1	1–2	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are limited, repetitive or inappropriate. Spelling and punctuation: frequent errors are likely.
Below band 1	0	Language is below the required standard for band 1.

STUDENT A

Dear parent/guardian,

We would like to inform you that the school will be holding a swimming gala on Friday 30th of June 2017 from 15.00 to 18.00. All the events will be held at ANS. The purpose of holding this swimming gala is to create good sportsmanship between the students. There will be awards for outstanding effort which will be announced at the awards ceremony.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

Content and communication – 6 marks

There is full coverage of the key points and the student has enhanced the letter by adding information which is appropriate to the context. Communication is clear, and the message is conveyed in its entirety.

Language – 6 marks

The student uses a wide variety of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures. There is evidence of a variety of tenses and use of active and passive voices. The spelling and punctuation is accurate, with only 1 error.

Total – 12 marks

STUDENT B

Dear parents! On the 13th july 2017 on the Thursday. Will the biggest a swimming gala in the Oxford. You will can see the best swimming gala. The swimming gala will start on the at 15.30 and will be voted about at 21.30. This will amazing a lot of attraction for you and for your children you just have to be there! The swimming gala will in the Oxfor City. I hope you will on the swimming gala. See you!

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

Content and communication – 2 marks

There is partial coverage of the key points but much of what is written is quite ambiguous and the message is often not conveyed successfully. It should be noted that all the work is marked and the material that has been added to key points has affected the mark awarded.

Language – 2 marks

The correct use of grammatical structures is limited and there are many errors in the sentence structure with either words missing or extraneous articles. Spelling is generally accurate and there is an attempt to use correct punctuation.

Total – 4 marks

QUESTION

0 3

Write a diary or blog entry about how you celebrated your last birthday
You must refer to:

- your age
- where you were
- what you did
- the people who were with you.

Your diary or blog entry should be between 70 and 90 words.

EXTRACT FROM MARK SCHEME

For this question there are four compulsory bullet points, which are assessed for Content and communication (8 marks) and Language (8 marks), as specified in the criteria below. The maximum mark is 16. The student is expected to produce between 70 and 90 words over the whole question. The number of words is approximate and you must mark and credit all work produced by the student.

Content and Communication	Marks	Response
Band 4	7–8	A full coverage of the required information with appropriate development of detail. Communication is clear.
Band 3	5–6	A reasonable coverage of the required information; likely to develop some detail. Communication is mostly clear with occasional lapses.
Band 2	3–4	A partial coverage of the required information. Communication is sometimes clear but there are instances where messages are not conveyed.
Band 1	1–2	A minimal coverage of the required information. Frequent instances where messages are not conveyed.
Below band 1	0	Content is below the required standard for band 1.

Language	Marks	Response
Band 4	7–8	Uses a wide variety of effective vocabulary and grammatical structures. High level of accuracy.
Band 3	5–6	Uses a variety of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures. Generally accurate.
Band 2	3–4	Some success in variation of vocabulary and grammatical structures. More accurate than inaccurate.
Band 1	1–2	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are limited, repetitive or inappropriate. Frequent errors are likely.
Below band 1	0	Language is below the required standard for band 1.

STUDENT A

16th May 2017

Dear diary,

Guess what day it is, it's my birthday! Today I'm finally turning 14. I can't help but feel old since this is the oldest I've ever been. Today everyone in my family pretended that they totally forgot it was my birthday and I felt so sad I didn't even try to correct them in the morning before they dropped me off at school.

After the school finished my parents came to pick me up and they still didn't give a sign that they'd remember today's my special day. However, in the evening, as I walked in to their room, I found the lights turned off and my parents and sister standing in the middle of the room. They were holding a cake with brightly lit candles and there were balloons everywhere in all shapes and colours.

I ran to the cake, make a wish, and blew the candles out with so much joy and my body still shaking from the surprise. That night, I had a great time with my beloved family as we stuffed ourselves with cake and opened the hidden presents that they secretly brought for me.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

Content and communication – 7 marks

Although the passage starts in the present tense this is quite acceptable as the student is relaying the day as it happened, writing the diary. There is full coverage of the required information and the student has developed the thoughts and what happened appropriately. Communication was clear and effective but there was an occasion when an incorrect tense formation affected communication immediately.

Language – 6 marks

The diary entry was generally accurate, and the student used a variety of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures. There was an insufficient variety to reach the top band nor was there a sufficient level of accuracy.

Total – 13 marks

STUDENT B

I was born in India. And my age is 15. All of my friend gave me a gift and they gave me the birthday beats and the people who were with me took me to a restaurant at afternoon. We ate a lot of thing like pizza and a lot of thing and at night we went to the ice cream shop and we went to Indian Restaurant we ate a Indian dishes and then we went home went to sleep.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

Content and communication – 2 marks

The student does manage to communicate all of the bullet points successfully. There are frequent instances where the messages are not conveyed as intended resulting in delays in communication.

Language – 1 mark

The vocabulary used is quite limited and the student is unable to use sentence structures successfully and the last sentence demonstrates the inability to punctuate the passage or use sentences successfully. In terms of language the piece is clearly more inaccurate than accurate.

Total – 3 marks

QUESTION

0 4

Choose a person who has played an important part in your life.

Explain:

- who this person is
- why this person has been important to you.

Your explanation should be between 100 and 150 words.

EXTRACT FROM MARK SCHEME

For this question there are two bullet points. These are designed to help students to structure their own detail and ideas; they are **not** compulsory elements of the response. The response is assessed for Communication and content (8 marks) and Language (15 marks). The maximum mark is 23.

Content and communication	Marks	Response
Band 4	7–8	An excellent response which is fully relevant and detailed, conveying a wide range of ideas. Communication is clear and coherent.
Band 3	5–6	A good response which is almost always relevant, and which conveys a range of detail and/or ideas. Communication is generally clear and coherent with occasional ambiguity.
Band 2	3–4	A satisfactory response which is generally relevant with some variety in detail and ideas. Communication is sometimes clear but there may be instances where messages break down.
Band 1	1–2	A limited response which attempts to address the task with some relevant information. Communication lacks clarity with frequent instances where messages break down.
Below band 1	0	Content is below the required standard for band 1.

INTERNATIONAL GCSE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (9280)
EXEMPLAR STUDENT RESPONSES WITH COMMENTARY

Language	Marks	Response
Band 5	13–15	Sophisticated vocabulary and grammatical structures for effect; more complex structures handled with confidence; writing is fluent and effective. High level of accuracy in spelling and punctuation; occasional minor errors may occur.
Band 4	10–12	Varied vocabulary with some success in use of grammatical structures or effect; more complex sentences are generally secure; writing is mostly effective. Good level of accuracy in spelling and punctuation.
Band 3	7–9	Some success in variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures for effect; more complex sentences are attempted and sometimes successful; writing is coherent and relevant. General accuracy in spelling and punctuation.
Band 2	4–6	Some clear attempt at variety of vocabulary; simple sentence structures are generally secure and linking words are used appropriately; writing conveys some clear meaning. More accuracy than inaccuracy in spelling and punctuation.
Band 1	1–3	Little range of vocabulary; sentence structures lack security and/or are likely to be short; meaning is sometimes evident. Frequent errors in spelling and pronunciation.
Below band 1	0	Language is below the required standard for band 1.

STUDENT A

My life was never like a fairy tale. No happy endings, no miracle or magic to help me solve my problems. I was always independent, maybe because I was raised this way, isolated from all the love and care a child would ever need. The only person I looked up to and wondered how did she surpass her life with a smile on her face was my young naïve self.

When I was younger, I was a lot more cheerful and confident with who I am. I was positive despite being bullied at a young age. When I was 7 I was isolated by students at school, they considered me as a new kid that no ones wants to talk to. However I still smile like nothing ever happened.

What I saw in the mirror two years ago wasn't that cheerful girl anymore. I saw a girl with artificial feelings who lost hope in her eyes. My eyes were vague, distant and filled with despair.

I wanted to love myself again like I used too. I tried so hard to be happy again but nothing turns out right until last year.

Last year I was finally capable of understanding myself. Every little piece of me makes me stronger. What I did wasn't forcing myself to understand but only accepting who I truly am.

I was growing, I still am. I was helped by the vague image of my young self. She makes me finally who I truly am.

I aren't naïve or stupid but I overlooked details that are unnecessary, that's what I thought my young self think. That is the main philosophy that made me overcome hatred over myself.

Lastly I would like to say thank you to my younger self for being through all one self conflict I had. Thank you for making me smile again.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

Content and communication – 7 marks

It should be noted that the bullet points are designed as prompts to help students structure their own details and ideas; they are not compulsory elements of the response.

The student provides an excellent response which is fully relevant and detailed with a wide range of detail and ideas. Communication is generally clear, and the performance is at the bottom of the 7-8 band.

Language – 11 marks

Although there are errors there is varied vocabulary with success in the use of grammatical structures for effect. There are more complex sentences that are secure in their use and the writing is effective. Occasionally there are errors in tense which make the reader stop but there is a good level of spelling and punctuation is used effectively.

It should be noted that the student writes over 300 words which is double the total recommended for this question. The accuracy of the piece diminishes towards the end and centres are reminded that students can gain full marks within the specified word count.

Total – 18 marks

STUDENT B

1 person named Erenst still and played an important part of my life. he helped in year 7-8 and made me be less childish then I used to but he left school and went on to collage he helps me when I'm mad and calms me down I play some games with him and his brother on the PS4 and helps me on there too I know carut for about 7 years now since I moved to oxford. We used to be natives and I used to go to his every day now I go like tanze a week even though I live 1 street behind him. he also is really funny and makes alot of joke with his girlfor he had for 2 ears he is a nice Person And when I first met him I asked he play foot ball with him and he said yeah and thats how he helped me in my life liveing in Oxford he also pushes to focer more on school work but I dont listen to that that much.

EXAMINER COMMENTARY

Content and communication – 3 marks

Although the piece is written with little punctuation and as a continuous passage with few full stops there is some communication which is clear and there is sufficient information that just lifts it into the 3-4 band as there are elements of this box. The message does not break down enough to be in band 1.

Language – 3 marks

The student is clearly in band 1 as there is little evidence of secure sentence structures and there are frequent errors in spelling and punctuation. However, the meaning is evident for much of the piece and there is some clear meaning putting it at the top of the band.

Total – 6 marks

GET HELP AND SUPPORT

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at oxfordaqaexams.org.uk

You can contact the English subject team directly at english@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk



OXFORD INTERNATIONAL AQA EXAMINATIONS
LINACRE HOUSE, JORDAN HILL, OXFORD, OX2 8TA
UNITED KINGDOM
enquiries@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk
oxfordaqaexams.org.uk