

GCSE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

9280

Teacher Guidance pack – WRITING

For teaching from September 2016 onwards

For GCSE exams in May/June 2018 onwards

INTRODUCTION

Writing

This document is designed to help you prepare students for the Writing paper of the OxfordAQA International GCSE English as a Second Language qualification.

It is broken down into four sections.

- **Teaching guidance**
Practical ideas for how you might approach teaching the Writing element of our ESL curriculum
- **Exam advice**
Guidance on preparing students for the Writing paper
- **Reading example responses**
Genuine student responses to past Writing exam questions, with commentaries written by a senior examiner, explaining the mark awarded
- **Assessment practice**
Some exam-style tasks you might want to try with your students to help them hone their exam technique

Hopefully this document will help you feel supported while preparing your students for the Writing paper, clear about how the mark scheme will be applied and confident in the accuracy of your own marking – as well as giving your students the opportunity to practise their skills.

You can find similar documents for the other three elements of the curriculum (Reading, Listening, Speaking) on the OxfordAQA website.

TEACHING GUIDANCE FOR THE WRITING PAPER

To learn English successfully, it is important to get students to write as much as possible. Preferably every lesson should contain some degree of written English – that could be note taking, dictation of a few sentences, planning a piece of speaking or writing a short paragraph about their weekend.

To make this as accessible as possible for students, you can look to build student writing around what they already know. The OxfordAQA ESL curriculum is based around themes that largely relate to personal experience, situations and future plans, so there is plenty of scope to use short personal stories as the start point for writing. Make sure students know the assessment themes – and the subtopics within them – so that they know the kind of subjects they will be expected to write about in the exam.

Many of you will teach classes with students from a diverse range of backgrounds. Not only does this make for a rich backdrop to your teaching, it also gives you the perfect opportunity to expand students' vocabulary, building writing tasks around a wide range of experiences and interests.

Visuals, such as pictures or short videos can also be effective to establish some writing task ideas, as it gives a start point for students to build from.

BUILDING VOCABULARY

It can be very effective to build writing exercises out of spoken language. Giving students the opportunity to discuss a writing task – with a partner, in small groups or as a class – allows them time to develop their ideas, but also to engage with the vocabulary they will need.

As a warm-up, you could present the theme of a writing task, or even the task itself, and ask students to call out related words they might use, listing them on the board to create a class vocabulary bank. Alternatively, you might give students a model to work from – an exemplar piece of similar writing, along with a word bank you have created – and ask them to develop their own writing from that start point.

DEVELOPING GRAMMAR

One way to keep grammar instruction varied and challenging is to vary the purpose for writing. For example, poetry assignments might require certain patterns of words, syllabication, or sounds. A lesson involving the writing of a narrative would be wholly relevant for the exam as it would enhance creativity and sophistication and might include a focus on how to write in the past tense or how to create and punctuate dialogue. In addition to this, an assignment to compose a brief nonfiction piece can incorporate academic terms and structures and would also prepare them for the non-fiction text they will encounter in the reading paper.

On completion of a task best practice could include students reading through their work alone, with a partner, in a small group, and/or with the teacher in order to learn ways to check, edit and revise their work. During the revision process, students can focus on smaller issues, such as writing complete sentences, varying sentence structure, or organising ideas into paragraphs. More advanced writers can do additional research or work with more complex ideas and sentence forms.

EXAMPLES OF EXERCISES

EXAM CORRESPONDANCE

Ask your students to write a letter explaining what they find difficult about exams – and about the Writing exam specifically. The students then swap their letters and everyone writes a reply offering advice. Not only is this an imaginative way of understanding your students' concerns and addressing exam preparation, it is also an effective writing task in its own right.

ADVERTISING AND COMMERCIALS

Creating advertisements and commercials are a great way to develop creative writing skills. You could bring familiar objects into class and tell the students to advertise them. They could work alone or in groups or pairs. They could also support their advertisements with images and they could also present them as pitches for an additional speaking activity.

EDITING AND IMPROVEMENT

Give students an imaginary piece of writing from someone who doesn't speak English well, such as a letter from an imaginary friend. Students then have to correct the original piece of writing, as well as writing a response piece of their own (eg a reply to that letter or a newspaper article that argues an alternative point of view, etc). This gives the students the opportunity to identify common language and grammatical errors and then immediately apply that knowledge in their own writing.

GROUP WRITING

Ask your students to write a story together, with each student writing a sentence and passing the sheet to the next student to add to the story. When the story is finished, one student can read the story aloud to get feedback.

WORD ASSOCIATION CHAINS

Give your students a word and ask them to create an association chain for it – each word forming an association with the one before. For example, an association chain could look like this:

Airport – Travel – Holidays – Fun – Party – Night – Moon – Space, etc.

When the association chain is long enough, ask your students to write a story using all of those words. This not only a fun exercise that builds vocabulary, it also helps develop students creativity and see connections between disparate ideas.

PICK THREE CARDS

Get a stack of cards with various images on them and ask your students to pick three at random. Firstly, students write a description of each image. They then go on to create a short story linking all three images.

DIFFERENTIATION

As a teacher you can make use of creative tasks that students to access at their own level. This could be as simple as the more able students being given a higher word count or it could involve providing scaffolding materials (word banks, sentence starters) for students that need them.

Feedback and marking, could also provide correction codes (identifying the mistake but not giving the correct English) to give students the opportunity to self-correct. This often helps to engrain correct language and grammar.

MODELLING

Model answers are a very powerful tool for students of all abilities. For weaker students, they provide an example to work from, including key vocabulary and grammatical forms, while they build their own skills. For more able students, it can showcase more creative, advanced writing styles and give them a start point for more ambitious writing.

You could even provide a flawed model, that requires correction, for students to work on in mixed-ability pairs. The stronger student identifies the mistake, then works together with the weaker student to identify how to correct/improve the text.

Engagement with a model response can also involve getting students to identify the role of different paragraphs by labelling them (introduction, establishing argument, further examples, etc), to help students to understand how

different pieces of writing are structured. This can be done with different coloured highlighters or images to create a visual association with different written elements, which many students, particularly those with dyslexia, find useful.

Your higher ability students who are ready for a challenge can gain practice by you teaching them transition sentences, moving from one-word transitions to phrases or dependent clauses. From there, they can begin to create entire sentences to transition between paragraphs. As a teacher you can model this exercise and provide examples.

TIERED ASSIGNMENTS

Teachers can use tiered assignments which are designed to instruct students on skills that are provided at different levels of complexity, abstractness, and open-endedness and reflect the demands of the exam. For example, students who have moderate writing skills can be asked to write a four-paragraph persuasive essay in which they provide a point of view and opinion and use their own ideas to support it. Students who have more advanced skills can be asked to research the topic in more depth and use substantive arguments to support their ideas.

SKILLS GROUPS

Replace whole-class teaching with smaller group work, based on the skills different students need to develop. This doesn't always have to be streamed by ability as there is substantial evidence to suggest that being labelled as 'struggling' or 'advanced' can be detrimental for individuals in both groups – with demotivation a danger for one student, and complacency a danger for the other. Instead you place students in groups according to a shared weakness in their work and give them a task that specifically addresses that skill.

This way, all students in the class are working on and developing the skills they most need to improve, rather than everyone working on the same thing, whether they need to or not.

To make students active in their learning, you could even give them the choice of which group to join, making them take a self-reflective and metacognitive approach to their development.

EXAM ADVICE FOR THE SPEAKING TEST

KNOW THE EXAM

In the Writing paper, marks for individual questions are allocated for different skills, using different mark schemes: Content and communication, and Language. The balance between these two elements is also different for different questions, so it's vital that both you and your students have a strong understanding of what each question requires.

For example, the Language marks for Q1 only focus on accuracy of spelling and punctuation. Therefore, students should only attempt elaborate, ambitious vocabulary for this question if they are confident of spelling it accurately. As students move through the exam, the Language mark scheme rewards more varied and ambitious use of vocabulary, which might change how a student approaches responding to those questions.

EXAMPLE RESPONSES

Marked samples with examiner commentaries are an invaluable resource as you prepare students for the Writing exam, as it gives you a clear indication of the skills required to be successful on each question. It also helps you calibrate your own marking.

It can also be very useful to get students to look at genuine student responses, ones with high marks and lower marks gives students a good idea of what examiners are looking for and how to avoid making common mistakes. It will also give them the chance to 'mine' for good examples of language and grammar they could use in their own writing. Students could even have a go at being an examiner, using the mark scheme to say what mark they think a particular response would receive. This is a highly effective way of helping students understand the specific demands of each question.

It doesn't have to be the case that all students look at the same thing when using exemplars. You could divide the class into different groups, with each group focusing on a particular aspect of the mark scheme (e.g. spelling, vocabulary and grammar). The groups work on the text, correcting the mistakes that relate to their focus, before sharing their feedback with the class.

CLARITY AND COMMUNICATION

Although the Writing paper does not award marks for structure, format or use of formal writing, marks are awarded for communication. Therefore, if a response is unclear and irrelevant with a delay in communication, this will impair a student's ability to achieve a high mark.

Teaching students how to develop an outline by creating an introduction, body and conclusion will make their writing communicate to the reader more effectively. This outline can save students time thinking of what to write next and gives the writing a flow that will keep them confident, and improve marks for Content and Communication.

Q4 in particular, enables students to demonstrate their sophistication, creativity and flair. To achieve high marks for this question, students need to consider:

- organising their writing into a logical sequence appropriate to the question
- developing paragraphs which contain one idea per paragraph, with support, and smooth transitions between paragraphs
- showing progress clearly from beginning to end
- writing a good introduction and concluding paragraph
- using clear, concise sentences, with each sentence carefully constructed
- communicating the meaning of their writing, using effective word choices and purposeful vocabulary.

Often student responses do not stay within the suggested word count. For the more able students this may not cause any issues, yet for others the accuracy of their writing can often diminish and have an overall negative effect on communication. Therefore, activities which require students to practice removing irrelevant details from texts are helpful, enforcing the requirement to be selective in the details they choose in order to present their ideas and opinions clearly and concisely. Students could be given a list of sentences each with an extra word which is not necessary and they have to identify which words need to be removed. Then, they should look at an exam question with the bullet points relating to that question and decide which elements from the sentences are not really relevant

and would therefore not be included in their answer. The teacher could also give the students an exemplar containing superfluous sentences which they have to identify and remove due to their irrelevance and to explain their decision to the class.

It is also important that students include a range of vocabulary, structures and tenses and, where appropriate, opinions supported by clear explanation. One mnemonic that many students find helpful is AVOCADO:

Adjectives
Verbs
Opinions
Connectives
Adverbs
Description
Originality

This gives students a way of remembering the different aspects of language the examiner will be looking for in their response and a useful checklist to self-assess their work against.

TOPIC SENTENCES

Topic sentences help produce a logical, coherent piece of writing. Practising them can help students structure their ideas and signpost their writing. You can model this technique by providing students with a set of topic sentences from a model answer. Students then work (individually, in pairs or in groups) to put the sentences into what they feel is a logical order. The teacher then gives the students the missing paragraphs from the composition and they have to match the paragraphs with the topic sentences. To conclude the exercise, they compare their order with the model text within class.

As students develop their skills and become more confident writers, you could simply give them a set of topic sentences that relate to one of the assessment themes, and ask them to complete the piece of writing, using those topic sentences in any order they like. This will help them understand the importance of topic sentences and see their effectiveness.

DIFFERENT WRITING STYLES

Students should gain experience of looking at a variety of writing tasks, similar to the ones they will encounter in the exam and plan their answer before they start writing. This will not only ensure it is well structured and logically ordered but also give them time to think about how to adapt their writing for different situations and tasks.

Students could brainstorm vocabulary on the given topic, including a list of expressions which could be used (eg for giving an opinion, if the question required), and then make a list of key points that they need to include in their answer.

Relevant tasks to set students when preparing for the Writing exam include:

- letters
- essays
- stories
- reports (eg book or film reports, not statistical reports)
- reviews
- emails
- blogs
- diary entries.

USING THE QUESTION

The more extended questions in our Writing paper provide bullet points, guiding students on what to include in their response. This doesn't mean that students should write one paragraph per bullet point but they are a useful start point to discuss paragraphing and structure. Using the bullet points ensures that a student's response is focused and detailed – some students find it useful to 'tick off' the bullets as they work through their answer.

It is also important that students tailor their writing for the audience they are writing for, as this could affect the marks awarded for Content and Communication. If the task is not necessarily aimed at a particular audience, then students should write as they would for a general reader. If students choose a subject that is too big, they should focus on the important bits and not be trapped by chronology.

WORD COUNTS

Each question in the Writing paper gives a word count range that students should work within. Students are not directly penalised for going under or over this recommendation, except that it is likely a shorter response won't have time to demonstrate the more advanced skills, and a longer response will lack focus, as well as using up valuable time that could be spent on other questions.

It is vital that students have opportunities to practise writing to a word count, within a time constraint, as this will give them confidence that they'll be able to do that in the exam. Encourage students to estimate word counts rather than waste time counting individual words. Counting the first line to get a rough idea of how many lines they write to a line and multiplying it by the number of lines written is a quick and effective way to get a good estimate of total words written. There is no need to be more precise than that.

The word count should also give students a steer on how much time to spend on each question.

CHECKING

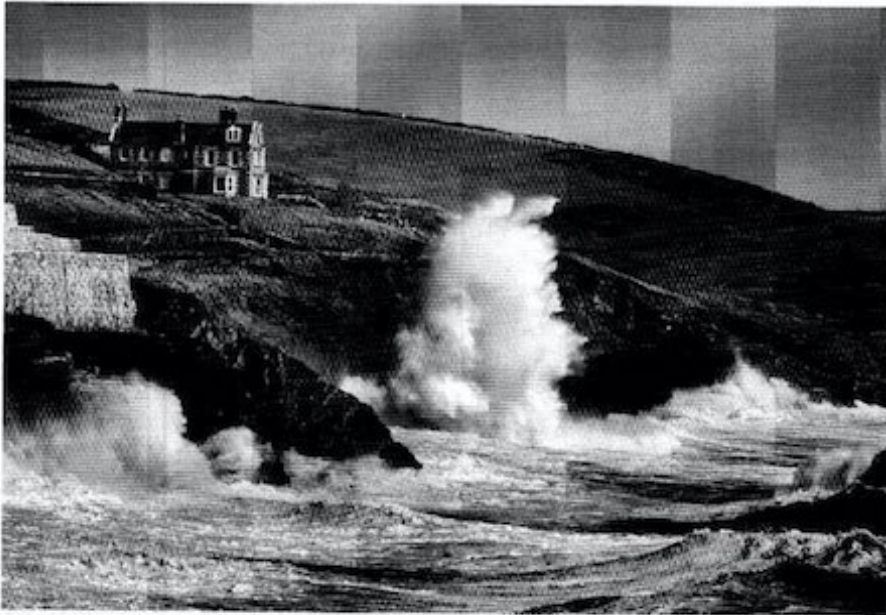
Students should leave time at the end of the exam to methodically check their work. A checklist of common mistakes/weaknesses can give students a structure to do this; it could be the same list for the whole class or an individual one based on their personal strengths and weaknesses.

Some students find it helpful to 'vocalise' their writing, reading it 'aloud' in their head to catch phrasing that doesn't make sense, or identify missing punctuation. It also gives them a chance to edit and enhance their writing, improving the rhythm of the piece, spotting mistakes with articles, tenses and grammar, smoothing the transition from one idea to another, and avoiding repetition of words.

WRITING TEST EXAMPLE RESPONSES

QUESTION 1, CANDIDATE A

0 1 Look closely at this photograph from a holiday magazine.



Describe what you see in the photograph.

Your description should be between 30 and 50 words.

[9 marks]

I can see in this photo a house which is located at the middle of a huge green area, at the end of this large green area there is a shore which is mainly full of rocks and a sea water having strong waves, which hits


Content and Communication (/6): 3
Language (/3): 2

COMMENTARY

For this question, marks for Content and Communication and Language have equal weighting. For this response, the marks for Content and Communication could only reach Band 2 (3 marks) due to there being some delay in communication. The errors with article use and grammatical structure have an impact on the clarity of the writing. To reach the top band for language the response must contain accurate spelling and punctuation. Therefore, due to sentence demarcation errors, the mark awarded was 2.

QUESTION 1, CANDIDATE B

0 1 Look closely at this photograph from a holiday magazine.



Describe what you see in the photograph.
Your description should be between 30 and 50 words.

[9 marks]

The photograph shows a picturesque view of an old blue house situated in a tranquil green area ^{on top of} which seems to be a hill. The crystal white-blue sea waves are rippling towards the hill's declined brown rocks. Giant splashes of salty water are caused due to the collision of the sea waves with the hill.

Content and Communication (/6): 6
Language (/3): 3

COMMENTARY

This response gained full marks for both Content and Communication and for Language. The response is relevant and detailed with clear communication. The spelling and punctuation are accurate. Please note that the mark scheme is not taking a wide range of vocabulary into account with this question. Therefore, students do not need to use elaborate language as this may cause errors with regards to spelling. Simple, straight vocabulary, accurately spelt, is the most effective way to respond to this question.

QUESTION 2, CANDIDATE A

0 2 You are going to do some voluntary work.

Write a letter to a friend asking them to help you with the voluntary work.

You **must** write about:

- ✓ what the voluntary work is → food boxes for poor people
- ✓ why you want to do the voluntary work →
- ✓ why your friend should help. →

Your letter should be between 50 and 70 words. Do not write an address. [12 marks]

Dear Farah,

Hey! I'm writing to ~~you~~ tell you that I'm doing some voluntary work and I need your help.

I decided that I want to make food boxes for people ~~the~~ poor people who don't find food. I think this such an amazing thing to do as they'll become happy ~~and~~ ^{since} they are in a bad need for this. I want you to help ~~me~~ me with this, because, as you know, it's a little bit hard but I'm sure we will be chuffed to bits.

Don't forget to ~~send~~ ^{write} me back and tell me your opinion and I'll be over the moon if you agreed

yours ~~cheer~~

cheers,

Hadit

Hadit

Content and Communication (/6): 4

Language (/6): 4

COMMENTARY

Although there is coverage of key points, the marks could not reach Band 3 for Content and Communication due to there being delay in communication due to grammatical and demarcation errors. The spelling is generally accurate and there is some success with the variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures used. This response, however did not reach the higher band due to the simplicity of the language used and punctuation not being accurate.

QUESTION 2, CANDIDATE B

0 2 You are going to do some voluntary work.

Write a letter to a friend asking them to help you with the voluntary work.

You **must** write about:

- **what** the voluntary work is → being part in a homeless charity
- **why** you want to do the voluntary work → Can't
- **why** your friend should help → You have been thinking about it

help to educate people
Money raising
Sending some to homes

Your letter should be between 50 and 70 words. Do not write an address. **[12 marks]**

Dear Sally,

How is it going? I am ^{very} sorry I haven't written for ~~ages~~ ages, but it is just till the end of the week when I will finish exams.

Well, I need your help. Last week, I found a charity for homeless people that actually has an amazing reputation. ~~It~~ Can you believe it? I took part in almost all the voluntary work related to homeless people in Egypt! ~~I am~~ Of course you will ask about what specifically they do, but let me surprise you. Everything! Starting with educating people about how to help homeless and ending with raising money and sending some to ~~small~~ ^{the} homes built by government.

You know it Sally, the whole idea that there are some young girls and boys out there in streets with no place to call home just hurts me. How can we just ignore the fact ^{that} they deal with many issues they aren't supposed to face at such young age? To be honest, what encouraged me to ask for your help is that I know you have been searching for some voluntary work, so here it is! You and I will meet them and they will give us some tasks to do. As simple as that. ^{Trust me!} ~~better~~

waiting to hear from you,

Sarah.

Content and Communication (/6): 6
Language (/6): 6

COMMENTARY

This response gained full marks for both Content and Communication and for Language. Communication is clear and the response is relevant and detailed using a wide variety of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures. Clearly the student has written more words than is needed, yet the standard of the work does not reduce, and the examiner has to credit all work produced. It does need to be highlighted, however, that students can still access marks in the top band by adhering to the suggested word count.

QUESTION 3, CANDIDATE A

0 3 Write a blog about a film that you have enjoyed watching.

You must include:

- the name of the film
- where you watched the film
- what the film is about
- why you liked the film.

Your blog should be between 70 and 90 words.

[16 marks]

~~Blog~~

I've never been a hardcore fan of Marvel Movies, but that movie of them "Endgame" had enough power to effortlessly captivate the love ~~and attention~~ of millions around the globe to watch it; ~~because~~ I was one of them. Right after I saw the ~~trailer~~ trailer, I decided to book my ticket in ~~my~~ my nearby cinema.

What makes this movie stand out is how long it is yet it is able to capture your attention the entire time. The story ^{revolves} ~~revolves~~ around the reunion of all the Avengers to defeat that villain with extraordinary superpowers called Thanos, and save the ~~planet~~ universe from his evilness. Hardly, do I find a film that deeply touches me, but honestly several ~~several~~ moments and situations in ~~the~~ ~~an~~ Endgame played my emotions to the point that I ended up tearing at the end of it, and that's why it was very unique in my opinion. I highly recommend Endgame to literally anyone wanting to see a piece of art, and I'll be looking forward to Marvel's ~~new~~ new movies.

Content and Communication (/8): 8

Language (/8): 8

COMMENTARY

This response gained full marks for Content and Communication and Language. The response is detailed and relevant and covers all bullet points and communication is clear and coherent. Spelling and punctuation throughout the response is accurate and the student demonstrates a wide variety of vocabulary which is effective and shows style and flair due to the use of various grammatical structures.

QUESTION 3, CANDIDATE B

0 3 Write a blog about a film that you have enjoyed watching.

You **must** include:

- the **name** of the film
- **where** you watched the film
- **what** the film is about
- **why** you liked the film.

Your blog should be between 70 and 90 words.

[16 marks]

Dear diary,

The Film that I like the most is Midnight Sun. It is Published in 2019.

I have watched it with MY friends in a cinema near MY home.

The Film is about a girl which have a disease that she can't go in sunlight. Also, she loves a person called Jack from younger age. The Film show how to deal with any disease.

~~I like this~~

I liked the story of the Film very much, because it is related to romantic Movie.

Content and Communication (/8): 3
Language (/8): 3

COMMENTARY

This response gained marks at the lower end of Band 2, mainly due to the student not demonstrating a range of detail. The response is satisfactory and covers all bullet points but not in a significant amount of detail. Unfortunately, the choice of some words used, and their effect on the response's grammatical structure affect the communication. There is some success in variation of vocabulary, and spelling and punctuation is more accurate than inaccurate throughout the response. However, a wider variety would need to be demonstrated to reach the higher bands.

QUESTION 4, CANDIDATE A

0 4 Write an article for your school or college website about healthy living.

You could explain:

- why it is important for young people to stay healthy
- how young people can stay healthy.

Your article should be between 100 and 150 words.

[23 marks]

Have you ever Considered your life full of vegetables? Nowadays, numerous people are facing a problem in having a healthy lifestyle because of the growing number of fast food restaurants that serve delicious food.

To begin with, it is salient to have a healthy balanced diet for millions of reasons. ~~Eating healthy food will help you to avoid multifarious diseases. is a way to stay healthy~~ Eating ~~healtht~~ healthy food and avoiding any junk food that contain a great percentage of fats and calories will of course help you to ~~have a~~ ^{guarantee} a healthy life style. Another way to stay healthy is exercising which help you to burn a lot ~~of~~ ^{Keep} of fats and ~~keep~~ fit. ~~Talking~~ To guarantee a healthy life style, you should sleep ~~at~~ up to eight hours, as sleeping ~~impacts~~ ^{literally} impacts your whole body organs.

There are myriad of reasons why people should get a healthy life style. For example, ~~how~~ staying healthy will keep you away from many diseases later in life. Also, being healthy will keep you in the perfect body shape and I think ~~you~~ ^{if} young people especially teenagers can avoid being bullied ~~of~~ in the school because of their body shape by being fit and healthy. Talking about another advantage

of being healthy is being able to do whatever you want at any time without facing any obstacles.

Another point is

Why, then, shall we deprive ourselves from the advantages of ~~having~~ being healthy?

Content and Communication (/8): 7

Language (/15): 13

COMMENTARY

The response is excellent, relevant and detailed, and contains a wide range of variety. The response would have reached a top mark if there were no errors which affected the communication. The student does use sophisticated vocabulary and for the most part the writing is fluent and effective. There are occasional minor errors however, which impact on the confidence and effect of the response.

QUESTION 4, CANDIDATE B

0 4

Write an article for your school or college website about healthy living.

You could explain:

- why it is important for young people to stay healthy
- how young people can stay healthy.

Your article should be between 100 and 150 words.

[23 marks]

When addressing the topic of healthy living, mostly we think of having a diet or doing fitness exercises. It is partially true, however, it is not just physical well-being that we must address.

Though first let us discuss why should we keep our health up. It really has a lot of advantageous effects. Really, your mood, concentration and stamina improve by sleeping well, as if you do sleep too much or too little, your brain tires, making you less able to keep awake and do your everyday tasks. Your physical well-being is important too, as it prevents diabetes and a few heart diseases caused by fats, and it also helps you grow stronger and more tolerant to exercise, we do not need to mention how it improves self-esteem and the general look.

But how can we keep up being healthy? One of the most important things is your determination to be so, and your dreams of the future of ~~course~~ ^{course}, which make you desire to be healthy even more. For the physical well-being you can go to a gym and do exercises, and try out the machinery, and if you can't lift weights or feel like it's too much, try the cycling machines, they provide a decent exercise you can stand for a long time. If possible, it also makes you move your legs a bit to renew the blood flow. Having a diet is essential too, and rewarding yourself only once a week is even more motivating towards health. If you can not manage it on your own, ask a friend or a parent to watch over you so you don't sneak to the refrigerator every minute. Finally, we must address mental health, try doing yoga or meditate, and if you have actual health problems, talk with a friend and a therapist. Make sure you express your feelings in any way possible, art, music, venting it out, do not ever keep negative emotions inside. And keep negative, cynical people away if you can.

Content and Communication (/8): 8
Language (/15): 15

COMMENTARY

This candidate gained full marks for both Content and Communication and Language. This is an excellence response which is fully relevant and contains good detail with communication being clear. The candidate uses sophisticated language and the writing is fluent and very effective. There is also a high level of accuracy in spelling and punctuation.

ASSESSMENT PRACTICE

The following assessment task is designed to reflect the skills students will be expected to demonstrate in the Writing paper as well as the basic the format and structure of the real exam. The mark scheme is in line with the mark scheme used by the examiners for the real paper.

WRITING PAPER GUIDANCE

All of the questions on the Writing paper test generic skills but the weighting of the AOs allocated to each one should guide students on how to approach each one.

TASK 1

Up to 6 marks are awarded for clarity and detail, and up to 3 marks for accurate spelling and punctuation.

Q1 student checklist:

- All sentences make sense – if there is 'some delay' (a loss of clear sense) then a response can receive no more than 4 marks for Content and Communication
- There is some descriptive detail in the response, such as some well-chosen adjectives to describe the content of the image
- Spelling is correct – remember: the mark scheme for Q1 does not reward a wide range of vocabulary, so using overly complex words runs the risk of misspelling (see exemplars above)
- Punctuation is correct – ensure capitals, full stops and commas are used accurately; there is no need to include more complex punctuation (eg colons and semicolons) to achieve full marks

A strong answer will include some detailed description about part of the image with accurate use of punctuation and spelling, although a minor error will not prevent full marks. The answer will make clear sense.

A less successful answer is likely to contain brief description of the image, some spelling and/or punctuation errors, and some phrases that don't make clear sense.

TASK 2

Students must address **all** of the bullet points. It is likely that first two bullets will be dealt with fairly briefly and that that third bullet will be given more thorough attention. Students should give a convincing reason why they want their friend to watch the sports match with them.

The mark scheme tests relevancy (making sure students stick to the question and the bullet points), clarity and detail, with 6 marks are available for this; and another 6 marks for accurate spelling and punctuation. Variety of vocabulary, punctuation and sentence structure are not rewarded

Q2 student checklist:

- The response addresses all three bullet points
- The response includes some detail (most likely in regard to the third bullet point)
- All sentences make clear sense– if there is 'some delay' (a loss of clear sense) then a response can receive no more than 4 marks for Content and Communication
- Spelling and punctuation are correct: ensure capital letters, full stops and commas are used accurately

A strong answer will include some detailed explanation in regard to the third bullet with accurate use of punctuation and spelling, although a minor error will not prevent full marks. The answer will make clear sense and will contain some complex words and sentences.

A less successful answer is likely to contain brief or unconvincing ideas in relation to the third bullet, some spelling and/or punctuation errors, some phrases that don't make clear sense, no complex words and only use straightforward sentence structures.

TASK 3

As with Q3, students must address **all** four bullet points. You are likely to spend more writing time on the third and fourth bullet points. Up to 8 marks are awarded for Content and Communication, so students should provide convincing justification of 'why you like doing it'. Answering a 'why' bullet point is a good opportunity for students to use complex sentences.

There is also an expectation that responses to Q3 will contain a greater level of detail than Q2, and that students will demonstrate the effectiveness of their word and sentence choices.

Q3 student checklist:

- The response addresses all four bullet points
- The response includes detail explanation/justification in regard to the third and fourth bullet points
- All sentences make clear sense – if 'messages break down' (a loss of clear sense) then a response can receive no more than 4 marks for Content and Communication
- Spelling and punctuation are correct: ensure capital letters, full stops and commas are used accurately

A strong answer will include detailed explanations in regard to the third and fourth bullet points, with accurate use of punctuation and spelling, although a minor error will not prevent full marks. The answer will make clear sense and will contain complex words and sentences.

A less successful answer is likely to contain brief or unconvincing ideas in relation to the third and fourth bullets, some spelling and/or punctuation errors, some phrases that don't make clear sense, few complex words and straightforward sentence structures.

TASK 4

Q4 gives a specific purpose for writing and students must address this in their response. In this case students are arguing a point of view, so there is an expectation that students will produce a piece of writing that makes a series of points in favour of helping people in poverty.

Although there is no need to follow or address the bullet points in Task 4, it is essential that the response is consistently focused on the question, with every paragraph addressing the task. The detail of the argument will partly help determine the content mark, along with clarity and coherence – the way the argument progresses or 'hangs together' – so responses should have a clear structure or pathway running through them.

There are many more marks available for Language in this task, so in addition to accurate spelling and punctuation, students should look to demonstrate fluency, with confident, seamless use of English.

Q4 student checklist:

- The response addresses the question throughout
- Construct an argument – a series of points justifying a case
- Include detailed explanation/justification of that view
- All sentences make clear sense – if 'messages break down' (a loss of clear sense), then you can score no more than 4 marks for Content and Communication
- Spelling and punctuation are correct: ensure capital letters, full stops and commas are used accurately

A strong answer will consist of a thorough, detailed and convincing set of reasons. Accurate use of punctuation and spelling should be present, although a minor error will not prevent full marks. The answer will make clear sense and will contain complex words and sentences that create an effect on the reader – they will be used consciously to convince the reader. There should be a sense that the argument is structured.

A less successful answer is likely to contain brief or unconvincing ideas that don't appear to flow, some spelling and/or punctuation errors are likely, along with phrases that don't make clear sense. There will be few complex words and straightforward sentence structures.

WRITING PAPER INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer all questions in English.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You must not use a dictionary.

WRITING ASSESSMENT EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

0 1 Look closely at this photograph from a travel website.



© Stijn Dijkstra / EyeEm/ Getty Images

Describe what you see in the photograph.

Your description should be between 30 and 50 words.

[9 marks]

0	3
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Write a blog about what you do at the weekend.

You **must** write about:

- **one** thing you do at the weekend
- **where** you do it
- **some** details about it
- **why** you like doing it.

Your blog should be between 70 and 90 words.

[16 marks]

[illegible]

0	4
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Write an article arguing that we must help people in poverty.

You could argue that:

- living in poverty is bad for people's health
- everybody should help those in poverty.

Your article should be between 100 and 150 words.

[23 marks]

[illegible]

[illegible]

WRITING ASSESSMENT EXAMPLE MARK SCHEMES

Qu	Marking guidance	Total Marks
1	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.	9

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

When awarding marks for language markers should also credit widely accepted geographical variations of spelling where appropriate.

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.

Qu	Marking guidance	Total Marks
2	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 50–70 words over the whole question. The number of words is approximate and you must mark and credit all work produced by the student.	12

Content and Communication	Marks	Response
Band 3	5–6	The response is relevant and detailed. Communication is clear. Full coverage of key points.
Band 2	3–4	The response is mostly relevant. There is some delay in communication. Partial coverage of key points.
Band 1	1–2	The response contains some relevant words and/or phrases. Minimal coverage of key points.
Below band 1	0	Content is below the required standard for Band 1.

When awarding marks for language markers should also credit widely accepted geographical variations of spelling where appropriate.

Language	Marks	Response
Band 3	5–6	Spelling and punctuation are accurate. Uses a wide variety of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures.
Band 2	3–4	Some complex words are spelt correctly. Sentence demarcation is usually accurate. Some success in variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures.
Band 1	1–2	Simple words are usually spelt correctly. There is some appropriate use of punctuation. Vocabulary and grammatical structures are limited, repetitive or inappropriate.
Below band 1	0	Language is below the required standard for Band 1.

Qu	Marking guidance	Total Marks
3	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 70–90 words over the whole question. The number of words is approximate and you must mark and credit all work produced by the student.	16

Content and Communication	Marks	Response
Band 4	7–8	An excellent response which is fully relevant and detailed, conveying a wide range of detail. Communication is clear and coherent.
Band 3	5–6	A good response which is almost always relevant and which conveys a range of detail. 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. 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.

When awarding marks for language markers should also credit widely accepted geographical variations of spelling where appropriate.

Language	Marks	Response
Band 4	7–8	Spelling and punctuation are accurate. Uses a wide variety of effective vocabulary and grammatical structures.
Band 3	5–6	Spelling and punctuation are generally accurate. Uses a variety of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures.
Band 2	3–4	Spelling and punctuation are more accurate than inaccurate. Some success in variation of vocabulary and grammatical structures.
Band 1	1–2	Spelling and punctuation contain frequent errors. Vocabulary and grammatical structures are limited, repetitive or inappropriate.
Below band 1	0	Language is below the required standard for Band 1.

Qu	Marking guidance	Total Marks
4	For this question there are two bullet points. These are designed as prompts to help students structure their own detail and ideas; they are not compulsory elements of the response. The response is assessed for Content and Communication (8 marks) and Language (15 marks), as specified in the criteria below. The maximum mark is 23. The student is expected to produce approximately 100–150 words over the whole question. The number of words is approximate and you must mark and credit all work produced by the student.	23

Content and Communication	Marks	Response
Band 4	7–8	An excellent response which is fully relevant and detailed, conveying a wide range of detail. Communication is clear and coherent.
Band 3	5–6	A good response which is almost always relevant and which conveys a range of detail. 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. 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.

When awarding marks for language markers should also credit widely accepted geographical variations of spelling where appropriate.

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



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