

# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Paper 0511/11

Reading and Writing (Core)

## Key Messages

In Exercises 1 and 2, reading comprehension, more emphasis needs to be placed on answering the key point of each question in order to avoid the inclusion of superfluous information which could result in the mark being lost. The most successful responses are those which focus on brief phrases as answers, rather than full sentence-length responses.

Candidates should continue to revise numbers and remember to qualify their numerical responses with a unit of measurement where appropriate, e.g. 'centimetres', 'metres', 'days'.

In Exercise 3, form-filling, candidates should be more precise in following the conventions, and tick, underline or circle as required. This was not always the case in this session. There was improvement in clarity of handwriting, and a noticeable attempt to distinguish clearly between upper and lower case letters could be seen. For full marks to be awarded in *Section C*, the two sentences must be relevant as well as accurate. There was evidence in this session that candidates needed to answer the question more precisely, in order to gain a mark for content. Marks were frequently lost due to a lack of relevance in an otherwise accurate sentence.

In Exercise 4, note-making, candidates need to ensure that the responses they supply correspond to the headings of each section. Although brief, the notes that the candidates give must be clear and contain separate points on each line. These points must be relevant and make sense in relation to the heading.

In Exercise 5, to be successful, candidates need to focus on: a) relevant information; b) accuracy of language; c) writing a connected paragraph; and d) keeping to the word limit. The best summaries are those in which candidates have understood the ideas in the original text, and make an attempt to recreate those ideas, using their own words. Care should be taken not merely to list points from the previous exercise, but to link the details in a cohesive manner. In this session, top marks were denied to many candidates who concentrated on the life of the dowser, rather than writing a summary about the 'techniques' of dowsing, as the question demanded.

The two longer writing tasks require different registers; more informal in Exercise 6, writing a letter to a friend or family member, and more discursive in Exercise 7.

A key point arising from the assessment of Exercise 6 is the need for this informal register to remain constant throughout the response and candidates should take care to maintain contact with the reader.

It is important that candidates introduce their own ideas in Exercise 7, together with clear paragraph organisation, demonstrating coherence and cohesion, in order to obtain marks in the top band.

In this session, many candidates found the topics accessible and of interest, and so were able to write at appropriate length and with the inclusion of their own ideas.

## **General Comments**

Overall the majority of candidates were correctly entered at this level and many showed a good response to the variety of different tasks included in the paper. Time management did not present a problem for the majority, and few were unable to complete all the exercises. In addition, a number of candidates scored high marks and for these, the extended tier paper might arguably have been more appropriate to their linguistic ability.

The seven exercises in the paper include a range of tasks, requiring the candidate to demonstrate a variety of practical skills, from scanning to locate details to be expressed in note-form or as a short answer, to the more complex demands of writing at greater length, using different styles and for different purposes. There were degrees of difficulty within each exercise and differentiation was achieved in specific questions and across the paper as a whole. There was little evidence of misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the rubric for each exercise and the full range of marks was awarded.

Handwriting and presentation of answers were acceptable in the majority of cases and an increasing number of candidates used black ink. Candidates should be encouraged to write using black or dark blue ink. In addition, Centres are asked to encourage candidates to write clearly and within the marked space on each page. As a general rule, the amount of space and the number of lines designated for an answer should provide a guide as to the requirement for the length of response. If a candidate needs to write at greater length or to rewrite an answer, the blank pages at the end of the booklet can be used and candidates are asked to indicate this with a note to the Examiner on the answer page. Candidates who wish to plan or write a first draft of their answer are advised to do this on one of the blank pages at the end of the answer booklet. Responses which are first written in pencil and then over-written in ink should be discouraged, as this leads to an indistinct piece of writing, often difficult to mark. Candidates should be discouraged from starting Exercises 6 and 7 under the question, and should begin their response on the lined page.

## **Exercise 1**

This exercise was generally well answered by the majority of candidates, providing an appropriate introduction to the reading comprehension exercises and enabling many candidates to make a confident start to the paper. Marks were lost when a lack of precision in identifying the key element in a question led to insufficient detail being included in the answer and an over-generalised response being offered.

- (a) The key detail of the activity was well identified by most candidates, who correctly offered 'indoor skydiving'. Other acceptable responses included the idea of 'flying 12 metres above the ground', or 'skydiving without a plane' which was the title of the article. The mark was lost in generalised responses, when the specific detail of 'indoor' or 'above the ground' was omitted.
- (b) Most candidates correctly found two of the three possible details required for the mark. As in (a), the omission of the precise detail, '200-250 visitors per day', '1200 online fans' meant that a number of candidates were denied the mark.
- (c) Some candidates omitted important details which resulted in an incomplete answer. For example, what hand signals to use and the correct body positions', without reference to 'a lesson' or 'instruction'. Other incorrect responses included reference to the clothes that had to be worn by the skydivers.
- (d) This was well answered by the majority of candidates who understood that the instructor and the skydiver were not able to communicate verbally with each other during the sky dive because of the protective clothing worn and the earplugs. The incomplete response, 'they are not able to talk' could not be credited on its own, as this conveyed the wrong meaning in the context. 'They are not able to talk to each other' or 'they are not able to hear each other' was the required response.
- (e) This was a discriminating question, in which candidates had to distinguish between the general role of the instructor and the 'real aim' as stated in the text. The key question words 'main task' provided the link to the correct section of the text, and identification of the corresponding detail, 'make everybody fly'. Weaker candidates missed this differentiation, and offered the generalised response, 'check body position of the divers'.
- (f) The numerical detail, '145 dirhams' was correctly found by the majority of candidates. Careful reading of the question was needed, as 'on Friday' was a key element at the end. The incorrect response, '125 dirhams' could not gain credit, as this was the cost on other days of the week.

## **Exercise 2**

More able candidates selected the key details from the text and provided precise answers. In most cases the graphic element was accurately read and interpreted, although there were instances of extra detail being included which denied the mark. As in Exercise 1, candidates need to be exact in their selection of detail, and answers should be brief.

- (a) This was well answered overall, although 'to overcome difficulties' was a common inaccurate response, and related more to 'why' people work closely together, rather than 'when', as the question demanded.
- (b) Candidates clearly identified the need to select a period of time for their answer, and the correct response, '25 days' was offered by most. However, a number of candidates misread the question and overlooked the key item, 'previously', and supplied a time period of 'two months', the time spent underground by the current miners. Candidates are reminded to look for different types of key words in questions, and not merely the opening words, in order to convey precise information.
- (c) This question provided differentiation within the exercise. The more able candidates correctly identified 'the miners' as the subject for their answer, and explained that the 'note was attached to the drill'. Weaker candidates lost the mark by selecting 'the rescuers' as their subject, offering the information that 'the rescuers drilled through the rock'.
- (d) The majority of candidates correctly located the key sentence in the text and responded with a full answer, with the points clearly written using both lines, and gained both marks. The omission of some idea of 'human beings' in the first part of the answer meant that the mark was lost, because by using the pronoun 'they' instead of the full subject, the answer no longer followed from the question.
- (e) In this question a degree of precision was required in the answer. The key idea in the text of the rescuers 'watching a video' or 'seeing the miners' was required for the mark to be awarded. Candidates needed to include this idea to be successful, and the mark could not be given for the general response 'they had no shirts and were unshaven'. In addition, credit could not be given to responses which were incomplete, 'they had no shirts', or were factually inaccurate, 'they had no clothes and were unshaven'.
- (f) This question was well answered. The majority of candidates made the connection between 'the same colour shirts' in the question with 'matching red shirts' in the text and included the two required details. Occasionally the incomplete response, 'a feeling of unity' was supplied, which did not gain credit.
- (g) For candidates to be successful in this question, the focus of their answer needed to be on the change in food from the start to the finish. It was not sufficient to name the different types of food without reference to 'at first', and 'then' or 'finally'. The more able candidates correctly selected 'vitamin drinks' as the first stage, and some transcribed each of the three stages directly from the text. Unsuccessful responses were characterised by the omission of the final stage.
- (h) Many candidates demonstrated good understanding of the graphical element and interpreted the information accurately. Candidate responses which supplied the detail of the length and the width were not credited, as this did not fulfil the requirement of the question.
- (i) This question presented a challenge to many candidates and proved to be a good discriminator. Successful candidates understood the key idea in the question of 'how they prepared' and conveyed the idea of the action that was taken by the miners, 'they read books' or 'they read a guide', in preparation for their emergence from the mine. Other answers were less precise, 'they were given books', 'they prepared to speak to journalists'. Without the precise detail, the mark could not be awarded. A number of candidates misunderstood and supplied information relating to the way the miners were released from the rescue tunnel, 'they were lifted in a special capsule'.

### **Exercise 3**

In general, this exercise was better attempted than previously. More candidates completed the exercise and demonstrated greater understanding and better preparation for the specific demands of the exercise. The exercise requires the application of the conventions of form-filling, total accuracy in spelling, and the use of capital letters where necessary. *Section A* and *Section B* of the form are designed to be completed with brief answers, and there are instructions to tick, delete, circle and underline. A good number of candidates scored well in these sections. A small number of candidates did not follow the instructions, and misapplied the form-filling conventions. It was pleasing to see that the majority of candidates understood the need to complete the form from the standpoint of the person in the text and not as themselves.

*Visitors to the USA*

#### **Section A**

A great many candidates were successful with the name, the date of birth, and the nationality. There continues to be uncertainty about the way to delete YES/NO, and despite the name being clearly written on the line above, a number of candidates conveyed the opposite information. Centres are asked to encourage candidates by practising this aspect in particular as part of class activities. Marks were lost when candidates were asked to indicate the city and country of birth and too much information was provided, 'Amman, the capital of Jordan'. Candidates are reminded of the need for brief information responses, 'Amman, Jordan', without extra explanation. Additionally, marks were denied if the handwriting did not clearly differentiate between upper and lower case letters.

#### **Section B**

Candidates made a confident start, correctly transcribing the passport number. Typical errors in this section were the inaccurate use of tick, circle and cross as required. Those who incorrectly used a different form of identification, e.g. a cross instead of a tick, could not be credited for an otherwise correct answer. When transcribing the contact address, it is important that candidates check their spelling against that in the text to ensure accuracy. A number of candidates gave the address in the wrong order. It is encouraging to note that fewer candidates this session used the prepositions 'at' or 'in' as part of the address, as this is inappropriate and cannot be given credit.

Candidates are again reminded of the need for clear legible handwriting in this exercise, and a clear and obvious distinction between upper and lower case letters must be made.

#### **Section C**

In this section, for maximum marks, candidates are required to write two sentences. To be successful, candidates should focus on relevance and grammatical precision. For relevance, candidates should make sure they have read and understood the question, and that they have addressed this question in their sentence. Grammatical accuracy is concerned with writing a full and complete sentence, with correct spelling and punctuation.

It was pleasing to note that fewer candidates omitted this section than previously, although it remains a challenge for the majority of candidates to score more than half of the available marks. The most common error in the first sentence was that candidates did not fully answer the question. The requirement was for the sentence to include the detail of the travel arrangements from the airport to the apartment. The best candidates offered, 'My uncle will meet me at the airport and drive me in his car to the apartment'. However, a great many candidates were denied the marks for this sentence by omitting the transport detail and merely stating that, 'My uncle will meet me at the airport when I arrive'. This lack of relevance meant that no marks could be awarded for an otherwise accurate sentence. The second sentence was better answered, and a number of candidates scored two marks for a completely correct sentence. Common mistakes in the second sentence were the lack of capital letters or misspelling of 'Grand Canyon', and 'New York', or the omission of a final full stop at the end.

Candidates are reminded that:

- these two sentences must be written from the point of view of the person in the text, so sentences that start with 'he' gain no mark,
- the answer will always be found in the text, and fictional detail will not be credited,

- if the sentence starts with 'because', 'and', 'to' or 'so', it will arguably be considered grammatically incomplete and will receive no mark.

#### **Exercise 4**

Many candidates were able to demonstrate sufficient understanding of the text to locate and select the relevant information corresponding to the three separate headings, and scored well in this exercise. Maximum marks were obtained by a good number of candidates and the majority were able to achieve more than half of the available marks. Very few candidates were unable to attempt this exercise. In this session it was noticeable that more candidates recognised the bullet points at the start of each line and used brief notes to convey their information, restricting their responses to the lines provided.

#### *Costas' early discoveries*

The key points were well recognised, with all of the available content details used. The most popular points were that the 'metal went wild in his hands', and that he discovered 'water underground'. Occasionally candidates identified that Costas had discovered 'his gift'. Although the requirement is for brief notes as answers, they must include the key ideas, and under this heading, marks were lost for the omission of 'in his hands', or the response 'he found water in the fields', omitting the idea of 'underground'. Other errors included the reaction of his body to the presence of water, 'my body sends electromagnetic waves which respond to the presence of water', and the information relating to his clothes, 'he cannot wear clothes made of synthetic materials because they make his body itch'.

#### *What Costas can tell companies about water underground*

This section was equally well attempted, with all five of the possible content points found and used. A number of candidates included two points on the same line and teachers are asked to remind candidates that only the first point on each line will be credited. Additionally, certain candidates had difficulty separating two ways of expressing the same content point. For example, the two responses, 'the purity of the water' and 'whether the water contains salt' were often written as two separate points on two different lines, when they are, in fact, two representations of the same idea. Some less able candidates went too far and supplied the detail of how he demonstrated his ability to distinguish water from oil, 'how his instruments behaved differently when placed over buried tanks of a petrol station in comparison to a water well'.

#### *Tools that Costas now uses to detect water*

This section was slightly more challenging and candidates had to read more carefully and be more precise in the wording of their responses. All three content points were included in candidate answers and most scored two marks for this part. Typical errors related to the omission of key information in the answers, thus 'rod with a loop' could not be credited without 'at either end'. Similarly, 'weight' did not gain the mark without 'on a piece of string'. Answers, although brief, needed to be complete, and insufficient and over-generalised responses were not rewarded.

#### **Exercise 5**

This exercise was attempted by a greater number of candidates this session, with fewer omissions. It remains a discriminating exercise, and the full range of marks was awarded. Candidates appeared fairly well prepared in the required summary skills, and had read the rubric. Candidates were asked to write a summary about the technique of dowsing. Most candidates completed their summary within the prescribed word limit, although there were some who wrote over-extensively, continuing on the blank page at the back of the booklet. Candidates are reminded that the number of lines on the page should be used as a guide to the appropriate length of the summary, and those who write beyond the word limit are at risk of making a greater number of errors, and therefore being penalised.

The best answers addressed the idea of 'dowsing technique', taking selected information from the previous exercise and re-wording the content, using summary-style linking expressions to create an ordered paragraph. Less able candidates formed their summary by listing points from Exercise 4, with little attempt at paraphrase or organisation of ideas. Candidates are reminded that, in order to achieve the top marks of 3 or 4 in this exercise, they must attempt to use their own words, as well as provide a sense of organisation throughout the paragraph. At times, candidates lost expression and accuracy when attempting to use their own words, but there were many good responses in this session. Weak responses were characterised by an

over-emphasis on the biographical details of Costas, rather than on the techniques of dowsing, and these limited responses did not gain more than 2 marks.

## **Exercise 6**

### **General comments**

In general, candidates responded well to the topic. The rubric was understood and most candidates produced work which was satisfactory or better. The majority wrote within the specified word limits, although candidates whose work was short of the minimum requirement were prevented from gaining marks in the top band for content due to a lack of satisfactory development of the content points.

There are three written prompts for this exercise and candidates are expected to address each prompt to achieve a satisfactory mark for content. The use of paragraphing provides an appropriate division between each bullet point, and candidates are encouraged to use paragraphs as a means of providing balance and structure in their writing. More able candidates used paragraphing well in conjunction with an informal introduction and closing sentences to form a successful letter in an informal register. Less able candidates wrote in one continuous paragraph with little attempt at organisation and development. In addition to paragraphing and adopting an appropriate conversational style, candidates should convey a good sense of the purpose of writing and engage the reader's interest. Sustained engagement with the reader throughout is an integral part of this type of informal letter writing and many candidates demonstrated this successfully.

In addition to the three bullet points, there are two picture prompts, which are provided as a guide for candidates in their selection of content. It should be emphasised that candidates are always free to use their own ideas, and those who use their own imagination often produce work of greater fluency, originality and ambition.

Ambitious attempts at language and the inclusion of some modern idioms in the right context will receive credit from Examiners. The use of idiomatic expressions can be appropriate in an informal piece of writing, but candidates should be aware that the use of abbreviated language such as is used in text messages, or the indiscriminate use of pre-learned idioms and colloquialisms in an examination answer can obscure the intended meaning, and prevent the candidate from achieving marks in the top band for language.

## **Exercise 6**

### *First time for everything*

In general, this task was satisfactorily addressed. Many candidates made an appropriate attempt to cover all three bullet points, and the best answers gave each point a separate paragraph, with description and development within the paragraph. It was disappointing to note that many candidates centred their writing around the activity in the text for Exercise 1, skydiving. Many candidates recycled the ideas and vocabulary from this text, rather than including original and interesting material of their own. Apart from this, many other candidates used the visual prompts as the basis for their writing. Very few candidates took the opportunity to provide unusual or engaging ideas, although the topic should have been very familiar and accessible to most candidates.

There was some effective detail in response to the first point, with ideas ranging from a television programme candidates had watched or a book they had read, to a family member or friend who had previously done the same activity. Despite the lack of original ideas, many candidates were able to supply a good degree of detail for the second point which became the central focus of the letter. There were some interesting descriptions of activities, such as rock-climbing or mountaineering, with effective use of adjectives, and better candidates were able to express their feelings of pleasure or fear, 'I could feel the wind rushing through my hair', 'I could not look down, I was so terrified', while taking part in the activity. The third bullet point was often mentioned rather briefly at the end of the letter, 'I would not like to do that again', without providing an explanation of the reason. To achieve the top marks, candidates should include development of each point. A number of candidates used the letter to explain about travelling on a plane for the first time to a country not previously visited, and at times these two ideas led to a certain amount of confusion as to the central focus of the letter.

A number of responses were less successful in this session, due to the inclusion of an excessive amount of generic detail at the start of the letter. It is always recommended that candidates start their writing by involving the reader directly, but for some candidates the introduction and closing sentences became over-emphasised, and on occasion, formed the greater part of the answer. Centres are asked to encourage

candidates to keep their introductions short; provide more detail in the main body of the letter, and make sure that each point has been fully answered.

Candidates are advised to allow some time after finishing to check their responses for accuracy. In this session, it was noticeable that there were a number of candidates who wrote fluently and with some ease of style. With checking, these candidates would have noticed the lack of punctuation in their work. There were frequent instances of a paragraph or even the whole letter written without a full stop. Additionally, the omission of a capital letter at the start of sentences, and the pronoun 'I' written as 'i' contributed to the language errors preventing the award of high marks. Centres are asked to continue to practise spelling in order to avoid the mistakes in spelling of high-frequency words, such as 'studing' (studying) and 'writting' (writing). Finally, it should be noted that the use of 'firstly', 'secondly', 'lastly' is inappropriate as paragraph openers in a letter written in a conversational style.

## **Exercise 7**

### **General comments**

In the final writing exercise, candidates discuss a topic for a specific audience. They are required to use the more formal tone and register that is appropriate for this audience. It is essential that candidates read the rubric carefully and then refer to the written prompts. These prompts are useful only as a stimulus for the candidate's own thoughts on the topic and as a springboard for further ideas. There were four written prompts – two supporting and two against the topic in the question – to guide candidates. As in Exercise 6, the more successful responses were those in which the candidate had understood the ideas in the prompts, but expanded these ideas showing greater independence of thought, as well as including some further original ideas and opinions. Many candidates considered the topic from both sides, giving a balanced viewpoint and using paragraphs and suitable linking phrases to provide an effective framework for their writing.

Less successful candidates tended to rely closely on the information provided, often without any personal contribution apart from a brief statement of opinion at the end. Candidates are asked not to use the written prompts as quotations from their school friends. For example, 'one of my friends thinks that it's cheaper for a family to travel together in a car, but another says that cars cause more accidents'. In order to achieve higher band marks, candidates need to paraphrase and build on the ideas provided, rather than copy them directly.

It appears that time did not present an undue problem at this stage of the paper, and most candidates were able to write within the word limit. There was little evidence of short or unfinished work.

## **Exercise 7**

### *Cars – Advantages and Disadvantages*

A good number of candidates responded well, engaging in a thoughtful manner with the topic. Most candidates had a view of their own, but were able to consider both sides of the argument. On balance, the majority opinion favoured the use of public transport over private cars, with environmental factors being the deciding issue. Candidates felt confident using vocabulary connected with the topic and many demonstrated this by using words such as 'emissions', 'CO<sub>2</sub>', 'pollution' and 'global warming'. Occasionally, candidates' enthusiasm for the task mistakenly led them to move away from the topic of cars to discuss wider environmental issues, and at times it was felt that candidates had reproduced a previously written piece on the general topic of the environment.

There were also some interesting economic arguments, with candidates discussing the comparative costs for a family travelling by car, by bus, or on a train, with a further comparison of different forms of transport for travelling short or long distances. Comfort, convenience and cleanliness were also contributing factors to the discussion. A number of candidates held strong views on one side of the argument, and provided persuasive and convincing ideas in support of their view, and these pieces of writing were given equal credit with responses which presented the topic from two sides.

A small number of candidates misinterpreted the question and wrote, often quite convincingly, about the advantages of a particular make of car – in most cases a Ferrari – over other makes of car. These responses could not be credited as having fully addressed the content of the topic, and so were prevented from achieving marks in the top band, despite the fluency and expressive use of language.

In this session it was noted that a number of candidates tended to list their points in support of their argument, writing a series of single points, rather than writing a cohesive paragraph containing a main idea and supporting ideas. Candidates should be encouraged to include discursive phrases, such as 'on the other hand', 'despite these factors', or 'having said that' as an integral part of their argument writing. The inclusion of an introduction and a conclusion should also be an essential ingredient in the structure of this type of writing.

Centres are asked to continue to provide grammar practice, as some candidates' work was affected by a lack of grammatical accuracy.

In this session, obvious misapplication of grammar was seen in:

- subject and verb agreement: 'Cars has advantages, it also have disadvantages', 'most people depends';
- comparatives: 'much dangerous than', 'more faster than', 'twice more expensive than';
- countable and uncountable nouns: 'transports', 'traffics', 'a mean of transports'.



# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Paper 0511/12

Reading and Writing (Core)

## **Key Messages**

Exercises 1 and 2, reading comprehension, were handled quite well this session. Where marks were not achieved on particular questions the cause was due to misreading the question, a lack of precision in the response or insufficient attention to the details given in the text. Candidates should be advised to locate the precise answer in the text and be warned too that if they are unsure and need to guess, including more than one potential answer can often be counterproductive. It is noticeable, also, when extra information is lifted from the text that it is more likely the response will contain some errors which could negate the answer and deny the mark.

Centres are reminded again that accurate spelling and precision of detail are essential requirements for Exercise 3, the form-filling exercise. Words which appear in the text are all too often misspelled when completing the form and as a result many marks are lost. Candidates should be encouraged to include the minimum information on the form without adding unnecessary extra detail which can spoil the response. In Exercise 3D, where two sentences are required, too few candidates scored full marks. The key requirements for this section are accurate information in the answer and proper sentence construction. More classroom practice is recommended for this section as many marks are currently being lost through carelessness.

The text for Exercise 4 was generally well understood and the responses to the first part were usually appropriately precise. The second section, however, proved more difficult for many candidates as the emphasis moved to the effect of the 'Premier Skills Project' on the quality of the coaching offered by the teachers.

Many made a satisfactory attempt at Exercise 5, but few achieved full marks. Some went beyond the 70 word limit, and even used the blank pages at the back of the question paper booklet. Others concentrated on the children's behaviour both before and after the project when what was needed was a summary of the benefits for all concerned after the teachers had attended the course.

Candidates engaged in an interesting manner with the tasks set in Exercise 6 and 7. In Exercise 6 some candidates clearly had good experience of work, and most were able to write about the subject matter. The content was often better than the language, but overall the quality of responses to this exercise was good. There were many creditable attempts at the magazine article in Exercise 7. All candidates used the prompts offered. The better responses developed these ideas and added some ideas and detail of their own. For these extended pieces of writing, work on clause building to create sentences, and sentence building to create effective paragraphs is recommended.

## **General comments**

Most candidates were entered at the correct level for this paper, and were able to respond with confidence to the wide range of tasks set. The relatively small number of candidates who scored high marks could arguably have been entered for the extended tier, to enable them to demonstrate their linguistic ability and achieve a higher grade.

The paper offered a range of tasks within each exercise, requiring candidates to show a number of practical skills, from scanning to identify detail and to express this as a short answer or in note form, to the more complex demands of writing at greater length in a summary, a letter and a discursive article.

Most candidates were able to complete all exercises in the allotted time. If an exercise was omitted, it was usually Exercise 3D, Exercise 5, or, if time had run out, Exercise 7. It was rare for both of these last two exercises to be left unanswered.

## Comments on specific questions

### Exercise 1

The questions in this exercise were of varying difficulty and differentiation was achieved.

- (a) Unusually, this first question proved to be challenging and many wrong answers were given, due to misinterpretation of the words 'known for'. Many construed this as 'known as', causing them to describe the place, 'one of Buenos Aires's largest neighbourhoods', which lost the mark. Similarly the mark was lost to those who added the unnecessary information, 'shops and cafes'.
- (b) There were many correct responses to this question. If the mark was lost it was due to excessive lifting from the text to provide an incorrect answer such as 'local artists are laid out on the pavements'.
- (c) This question was satisfactorily addressed. Where wrong answers were given, it was usually through a misreading of the question, 'What were they recommended to see?' Consequently what was given was simply a general description of what is exhibited in the museum, 'early history and past cultures'.
- (d) The responses to this question were generally accurate, with the best candidates offering just the two key words 'ancient temple'. Weaker responses lifted the whole sentence, which in this instance did not deny the mark.
- (e) Those who matched the question 'Who?' to the owners rather than to the volunteers lost the mark, as did those who missed the requirements for a second detail to describe what the volunteers did for the cats. Careful reading of the question was required.
- (f) This was perhaps the easiest question in this exercise, for which the great majority scored the mark. Here candidates successfully saw the 'short train ride' mentioned in the question and matched it with 'day trip' in the text and so selected the correct detail. If the mark was lost, it was for the omission of 'less than', or the use of the wrong symbol (£).

### Exercise 2

- (a) This question was generally well answered. If the mark was lost, it was due to lifting of the first sentence in the text which did not explain the purpose of the holiday but merely expressed an opinion.
- (b) Those who were able to connect 'suitable for people with little money' in the question with the National Trust's provision of cheap accommodation and food in return for a working holiday earned the mark. Some candidates who personalised the response from William's point of view responded often with 'it was a way for William to take a break without having to spend too much'. This was incorrect, for the question asked for information relating to the National Trust.
- (c) This question discriminated well. Relatively few candidates correctly identified the need for 'trainers' as the subject in the answer. This resulted in many incomplete answers, 'William was wearing were quite unsuitable for outdoor work'. There were some successful attempts at paraphrasing the contextual information, such as 'suitable shoes to wear for outdoor work'.
- (d) There were many correct responses to this question. Those who lost the mark chose inaccurate detail, 'overgrown with thick bushes and tangled weeds', or they omitted the key word 'trees' in their answer. 'To give *them* more room' did not achieve a mark, since it was not specific enough.
- (e) There were three options available in the mark scheme, which enabled the majority of candidates to be successful. The mark was lost by those who simply gave the list of volunteers, for example 'teenagers, pensioners, students'.
- (f) Somewhat surprisingly, this question was not as well answered as expected. Some candidates did not read the question carefully enough. They missed '*apart from teenagers, which age range...?*' Those who selected '13-19' therefore gave an incorrect response.

- (g) This was another question which needed careful reading to provide a correct response. Some candidates gave their attention to 'the volunteers', rather than to the 'volunteer leaders' as the question required. Consequently they described the possibilities open to the volunteers ('go on a brief training course', 'drive the minibus', 'buy the food'). The key word in the question was 'greatest'; 'What is the *greatest* benefit of becoming a volunteer leader?' Others offered 'playing their part in making the world a better place', which could apply to all volunteers, not just the leaders.
- (h) The answer required candidates to select information which indicated something positive and rewarding from the work. The correct response was that he was able to work at his own speed or pace. A more general answer such as 'he enjoyed making new friends' was not rewarded.
- (i) Many candidates missed the requirement in the question for the work to be 'indoor work' and offered 'gardening', 'picking fruit and vegetables', 'looking after animals', or even 'clearing woodland'. Once again, if they key words in the question were missed, then no reward could be given.
- (j) This question was well answered; it was the cold room which kept William awake.

### **Exercise 3**

*Churchill Foundation Scholarships 2013*

#### **Section A**

Nearly all candidates made an attempt at this section. Marks were lost in the home address by including 'in the city of Islamabad', which appears in the text. Candidates should be advised to write any address as it would appear on an envelope. For the same reason the addition of 'at' before the address or 'in' in front of Islamabad was not accepted. In the address of the school 'Murree' was very often misspelled. All the names in the section are proper nouns and should start with a capital letter.

#### **Section B**

The four subjects for which 'A' grades were predicted should begin with a capital letter, as should all the proper nouns in the remainder of this section. Examiners insist on correct transposition of the information sought in this exercise, so all candidates need to be warned to observe the convention of starting all proper nouns with a capital letter just as they appear in the text. Carelessness in writing a proper noun without an upper case initial letter led to many marks being lost.

In this section many could not find the university answer or were unable to copy it down correctly on the form. Few managed to give the name of the degree course and frequently selected the name of the university instead.

#### **Section C**

A good number of candidates managed to circle 'parent', but very many were unsuccessful with the final two points. Marks were lost through misspelling and once again the omission of capital letters for proper nouns. Candidates needed to understand the meaning of the words 'referee' and 'occupation', because often these two pieces of information were omitted.

### **Section D**

Candidates found it hard to achieve success with the first sentence, where many explained why they had chosen the university with, 'I chose SOAS to study Development Economics'. What was required was that choosing SOAS would allow them to specialise in the economies of South Asian countries.

There was more success overall with the second sentence. Where ideas were somewhat muddled, however, errors of grammar or punctuation led to a loss of marks.

#### **Exercise 4**

There were some good attempts to engage with this exercise. For most candidates the first section was better attempted than the second. All options in the mark scheme were used in the first section with a good degree of accuracy. Where marks were lost, it was for inaccurate copying, such as 'strike it in the face' or unclear understanding of the text, 'did not know how to kick the ball'. Under the second heading candidates were much less successful. They needed to look for detail in the text on what the teachers had learned from the course, but many opted for improvements in the children's behaviour such as 'become more respectful', 'do not argue as much', 'become popular members of the community', which could not achieve the mark. Those who responded from the perspective of the teachers used all the points in the mark scheme, but often lost the mark by omitting the essential detail at the start of their answer. Thus 'deal with young players' was not a successful response, unless it was preceded by 'knows how to' or 'has learned how to'. Precise use of language is important in this exercise.

#### **Exercise 5**

Most candidates made a satisfactory attempt at this exercise, although relatively few managed to achieve full marks. Rather too many wrote beyond the 70 word limit, some even extending on to the blank pages at the back of the question paper booklet. Weaker answers were characterised by too much focus on the behaviour of the children before and after the coaching course, with little or no mention of the benefits which accrued from the teachers' attendance on the 'Premier Skills' course. In fact what was required was an emphasis on the skills the teachers were now able to bring to the training sessions for the children. Some good responses briefly mentioned the children's behaviour before the course in order to provide a contrast with the resulting benefits for all concerned after the 'Premier Skills' course.

Examiners noted an improvement in the way in which candidates generally organised the summary, with a noticeable effort being made to achieve a summary style and to use linking words and phrases.

#### **Exercise 6**

This was an accessible topic and there were some very interesting letters written. Candidates appeared to enjoy the theme and many were able to use their own experience to engage with the subject matter at a personal level. The types of work most commonly written about were: supermarket / local shop / local café or restaurant / family business / office / school library. Those who chose voluntary work could not achieve marks in the top band for content, as they did not fully engage with the idea of paid work and those who wrote about doing a piece of school work given by their teacher did not gain any marks.

Writing in three separate paragraphs according to the three bullet points makes the answer more coherent, and is likely to keep the focus more clearly on each point, thus increasing the possibility of scoring in the top band. The first bullet point was nearly always covered with some considerable detail given about the place of work and the work carried out. Stronger candidates were able to provide precise details for the second bullet point, but weaker responses mentioned, for example, a family member, without any further information. There was often too little development of the third bullet point, merely 'I learnt a lot from this experience.'

It is advisable for candidates to open their letter with 'Dear', and to close it with an appropriate ending, as it will help the candidate to stay aware of the purpose and audience of this exercise throughout. Without a conversational style of writing, this piece can easily become too narrative in style, preventing it from achieving marks in the top band.

### **Exercise 7**

This was a topic on which the majority of candidates had an opinion, and with which many could empathise. Some were able to write a well balanced piece and to give their judgement in a final paragraph, whereas others wrote from one side, stating their position firmly from the start. Good answers used the prompts to their advantage developing them beyond what was offered and adding some new ideas, such as learning science from watching experiments on the internet. Less successful answers stayed with the given wording in the prompts, making little attempt to use words and ideas of their own.

Lack of punctuation and carelessness in spelling again meant that too many were unable to achieve marks in the top band. There were some examples of the entire article being written in one paragraph with little or no punctuation.

Overall, this was an accessible and fair paper which gave candidates of all abilities an opportunity to demonstrate the results of good classroom practice.

# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Paper 0511/13

Reading and Writing (Core)

## Key Messages

In Exercises 1 and 2, reading comprehension, more emphasis needs to be placed on answering the key point of each question in order to avoid the inclusion of superfluous information which could result in the mark being lost. The most successful responses are those which focus on brief phrases as answers, rather than full sentence-length responses.

Candidates should continue to revise numbers and remember to qualify their numerical responses with a unit of measurement where appropriate, e.g. 'centimetres', 'metres', 'days'.

In Exercise 3, form-filling, candidates should be more precise in following the conventions, and tick, underline or circle as required. This was not always the case in this session. There was improvement in clarity of handwriting, and a noticeable attempt to distinguish clearly between upper and lower case letters could be seen. For full marks to be awarded in *Section C*, the two sentences must be relevant as well as accurate. There was evidence in this session that candidates needed to answer the question more precisely, in order to gain a mark for content. Marks were frequently lost due to a lack of relevance in an otherwise accurate sentence.

In Exercise 4, note-making, candidates need to ensure that the responses they supply correspond to the headings of each section. Although brief, the notes that the candidates give must be clear and contain separate points on each line. These points must be relevant and make sense in relation to the heading.

In Exercise 5, to be successful, candidates need to focus on: a) relevant information; b) accuracy of language; c) writing a connected paragraph; and d) keeping to the word limit. The best summaries are those in which candidates have understood the ideas in the original text, and make an attempt to recreate those ideas, using their own words. Care should be taken not merely to list points from the previous exercise, but to link the details in a cohesive manner. In this session, top marks were denied to many candidates who concentrated on the life of the dowser, rather than writing a summary about the 'techniques' of dowsing, as the question demanded.

The two longer writing tasks require different registers; more informal in Exercise 6, writing a letter to a friend or family member, and more discursive in Exercise 7.

A key point arising from the assessment of Exercise 6 is the need for this informal register to remain constant throughout the response and candidates should take care to maintain contact with the reader.

It is important that candidates introduce their own ideas in Exercise 7, together with clear paragraph organisation, demonstrating coherence and cohesion, in order to obtain marks in the top band.

In this session, many candidates found the topics accessible and of interest, and so were able to write at appropriate length and with the inclusion of their own ideas.

## **General Comments**

Overall the majority of candidates were correctly entered at this level and many showed a good response to the variety of different tasks included in the paper. Time management did not present a problem for the majority, and few were unable to complete all the exercises. In addition, a number of candidates scored high marks and for these, the extended tier paper might arguably have been more appropriate to their linguistic ability.

The seven exercises in the paper include a range of tasks, requiring the candidate to demonstrate a variety of practical skills, from scanning to locate details to be expressed in note-form or as a short answer, to the more complex demands of writing at greater length, using different styles and for different purposes. There were degrees of difficulty within each exercise and differentiation was achieved in specific questions and across the paper as a whole. There was little evidence of misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the rubric for each exercise and the full range of marks was awarded.

Handwriting and presentation of answers were acceptable in the majority of cases and an increasing number of candidates used black ink. Candidates should be encouraged to write using black or dark blue ink. In addition, Centres are asked to encourage candidates to write clearly and within the marked space on each page. As a general rule, the amount of space and the number of lines designated for an answer should provide a guide as to the requirement for the length of response. If a candidate needs to write at greater length or to rewrite an answer, the blank pages at the end of the booklet can be used and candidates are asked to indicate this with a note to the Examiner on the answer page. Candidates who wish to plan or write a first draft of their answer are advised to do this on one of the blank pages at the end of the answer booklet. Responses which are first written in pencil and then over-written in ink should be discouraged, as this leads to an indistinct piece of writing, often difficult to mark. Candidates should be discouraged from starting Exercises 6 and 7 under the question, and should begin their response on the lined page.

## **Exercise 1**

This exercise was generally well answered by the majority of candidates, providing an appropriate introduction to the reading comprehension exercises and enabling many candidates to make a confident start to the paper. Marks were lost when a lack of precision in identifying the key element in a question led to insufficient detail being included in the answer and an over-generalised response being offered.

- (a) The key detail of the activity was well identified by most candidates, who correctly offered 'indoor skydiving'. Other acceptable responses included the idea of 'flying 12 metres above the ground', or 'skydiving without a plane' which was the title of the article. The mark was lost in generalised responses, when the specific detail of 'indoor' or 'above the ground' was omitted.
- (b) Most candidates correctly found two of the three possible details required for the mark. As in (a), the omission of the precise detail, '200-250 visitors per day', '1200 online fans' meant that a number of candidates were denied the mark.
- (c) Some candidates omitted important details which resulted in an incomplete answer. For example, what hand signals to use and the correct body positions', without reference to 'a lesson' or 'instruction'. Other incorrect responses included reference to the clothes that had to be worn by the skydivers.
- (d) This was well answered by the majority of candidates who understood that the instructor and the skydiver were not able to communicate verbally with each other during the sky dive because of the protective clothing worn and the earplugs. The incomplete response, 'they are not able to talk' could not be credited on its own, as this conveyed the wrong meaning in the context. 'They are not able to talk to each other' or 'they are not able to hear each other' was the required response.
- (e) This was a discriminating question, in which candidates had to distinguish between the general role of the instructor and the 'real aim' as stated in the text. The key question words 'main task' provided the link to the correct section of the text, and identification of the corresponding detail, 'make everybody fly'. Weaker candidates missed this differentiation, and offered the generalised response, 'check body position of the divers'.
- (f) The numerical detail, '145 dirhams' was correctly found by the majority of candidates. Careful reading of the question was needed, as 'on Friday' was a key element at the end. The incorrect response, '125 dirhams' could not gain credit, as this was the cost on other days of the week.

## **Exercise 2**

More able candidates selected the key details from the text and provided precise answers. In most cases the graphic element was accurately read and interpreted, although there were instances of extra detail being included which denied the mark. As in Exercise 1, candidates need to be exact in their selection of detail, and answers should be brief.

- (a) This was well answered overall, although 'to overcome difficulties' was a common inaccurate response, and related more to 'why' people work closely together, rather than 'when', as the question demanded.
- (b) Candidates clearly identified the need to select a period of time for their answer, and the correct response, '25 days' was offered by most. However, a number of candidates misread the question and overlooked the key item, 'previously', and supplied a time period of 'two months', the time spent underground by the current miners. Candidates are reminded to look for different types of key words in questions, and not merely the opening words, in order to convey precise information.
- (c) This question provided differentiation within the exercise. The more able candidates correctly identified 'the miners' as the subject for their answer, and explained that the 'note was attached to the drill'. Weaker candidates lost the mark by selecting 'the rescuers' as their subject, offering the information that 'the rescuers drilled through the rock'.
- (d) The majority of candidates correctly located the key sentence in the text and responded with a full answer, with the points clearly written using both lines, and gained both marks. The omission of some idea of 'human beings' in the first part of the answer meant that the mark was lost, because by using the pronoun 'they' instead of the full subject, the answer no longer followed from the question.
- (e) In this question a degree of precision was required in the answer. The key idea in the text of the rescuers 'watching a video' or 'seeing the miners' was required for the mark to be awarded. Candidates needed to include this idea to be successful, and the mark could not be given for the general response 'they had no shirts and were unshaven'. In addition, credit could not be given to responses which were incomplete, 'they had no shirts', or were factually inaccurate, 'they had no clothes and were unshaven'.
- (f) This question was well answered. The majority of candidates made the connection between 'the same colour shirts' in the question with 'matching red shirts' in the text and included the two required details. Occasionally the incomplete response, 'a feeling of unity' was supplied, which did not gain credit.
- (g) For candidates to be successful in this question, the focus of their answer needed to be on the change in food from the start to the finish. It was not sufficient to name the different types of food without reference to 'at first', and 'then' or 'finally'. The more able candidates correctly selected 'vitamin drinks' as the first stage, and some transcribed each of the three stages directly from the text. Unsuccessful responses were characterised by the omission of the final stage.
- (h) Many candidates demonstrated good understanding of the graphical element and interpreted the information accurately. Candidate responses which supplied the detail of the length and the width were not credited, as this did not fulfil the requirement of the question.
- (i) This question presented a challenge to many candidates and proved to be a good discriminator. Successful candidates understood the key idea in the question of 'how they prepared' and conveyed the idea of the action that was taken by the miners, 'they read books' or 'they read a guide', in preparation for their emergence from the mine. Other answers were less precise, 'they were given books', 'they prepared to speak to journalists'. Without the precise detail, the mark could not be awarded. A number of candidates misunderstood and supplied information relating to the way the miners were released from the rescue tunnel, 'they were lifted in a special capsule'.



### **Exercise 3**

In general, this exercise was better attempted than previously. More candidates completed the exercise and demonstrated greater understanding and better preparation for the specific demands of the exercise. The exercise requires the application of the conventions of form-filling, total accuracy in spelling, and the use of capital letters where necessary. *Section A* and *Section B* of the form are designed to be completed with brief answers, and there are instructions to tick, delete, circle and underline. A good number of candidates scored well in these sections. A small number of candidates did not follow the instructions, and misapplied the form-filling conventions. It was pleasing to see that the majority of candidates understood the need to complete the form from the standpoint of the person in the text and not as themselves.

*Visitors to the USA*

#### **Section A**

A great many candidates were successful with the name, the date of birth, and the nationality. There continues to be uncertainty about the way to delete YES/NO, and despite the name being clearly written on the line above, a number of candidates conveyed the opposite information. Centres are asked to encourage candidates by practising this aspect in particular as part of class activities. Marks were lost when candidates were asked to indicate the city and country of birth and too much information was provided, 'Amman, the capital of Jordan'. Candidates are reminded of the need for brief information responses, 'Amman, Jordan', without extra explanation. Additionally, marks were denied if the handwriting did not clearly differentiate between upper and lower case letters.

#### **Section B**

Candidates made a confident start, correctly transcribing the passport number. Typical errors in this section were the inaccurate use of tick, circle and cross as required. Those who incorrectly used a different form of identification, e.g. a cross instead of a tick, could not be credited for an otherwise correct answer. When transcribing the contact address, it is important that candidates check their spelling against that in the text to ensure accuracy. A number of candidates gave the address in the wrong order. It is encouraging to note that fewer candidates this session used the prepositions 'at' or 'in' as part of the address, as this is inappropriate and cannot be given credit.

Candidates are again reminded of the need for clear legible handwriting in this exercise, and a clear and obvious distinction between upper and lower case letters must be made.

#### **Section C**

In this section, for maximum marks, candidates are required to write two sentences. To be successful, candidates should focus on relevance and grammatical precision. For relevance, candidates should make sure they have read and understood the question, and that they have addressed this question in their sentence. Grammatical accuracy is concerned with writing a full and complete sentence, with correct spelling and punctuation.

It was pleasing to note that fewer candidates omitted this section than previously, although it remains a challenge for the majority of candidates to score more than half of the available marks. The most common error in the first sentence was that candidates did not fully answer the question. The requirement was for the sentence to include the detail of the travel arrangements from the airport to the apartment. The best candidates offered, 'My uncle will meet me at the airport and drive me in his car to the apartment'. However, a great many candidates were denied the marks for this sentence by omitting the transport detail and merely stating that, 'My uncle will meet me at the airport when I arrive'. This lack of relevance meant that no marks could be awarded for an otherwise accurate sentence. The second sentence was better answered, and a number of candidates scored two marks for a completely correct sentence. Common mistakes in the second sentence were the lack of capital letters or misspelling of 'Grand Canyon', and 'New York', or the omission of a final full stop at the end.

Candidates are reminded that:

- these two sentences must be written from the point of view of the person in the text, so sentences that start with 'he' gain no mark,
- the answer will always be found in the text, and fictional detail will not be credited,

- if the sentence starts with 'because', 'and', 'to' or 'so', it will arguably be considered grammatically incomplete and will receive no mark.

#### **Exercise 4**

Many candidates were able to demonstrate sufficient understanding of the text to locate and select the relevant information corresponding to the three separate headings, and scored well in this exercise. Maximum marks were obtained by a good number of candidates and the majority were able to achieve more than half of the available marks. Very few candidates were unable to attempt this exercise. In this session it was noticeable that more candidates recognised the bullet points at the start of each line and used brief notes to convey their information, restricting their responses to the lines provided.

#### *Costas' early discoveries*

The key points were well recognised, with all of the available content details used. The most popular points were that the 'metal went wild in his hands', and that he discovered 'water underground'. Occasionally candidates identified that Costas had discovered 'his gift'. Although the requirement is for brief notes as answers, they must include the key ideas, and under this heading, marks were lost for the omission of 'in his hands', or the response 'he found water in the fields', omitting the idea of 'underground'. Other errors included the reaction of his body to the presence of water, 'my body sends electromagnetic waves which respond to the presence of water', and the information relating to his clothes, 'he cannot wear clothes made of synthetic materials because they make his body itch'.

#### *What Costas can tell companies about water underground*

This section was equally well attempted, with all five of the possible content points found and used. A number of candidates included two points on the same line and teachers are asked to remind candidates that only the first point on each line will be credited. Additionally, certain candidates had difficulty separating two ways of expressing the same content point. For example, the two responses, 'the purity of the water' and 'whether the water contains salt' were often written as two separate points on two different lines, when they are, in fact, two representations of the same idea. Some less able candidates went too far and supplied the detail of how he demonstrated his ability to distinguish water from oil, 'how his instruments behaved differently when placed over buried tanks of a petrol station in comparison to a water well'.

#### *Tools that Costas now uses to detect water*

This section was slightly more challenging and candidates had to read more carefully and be more precise in the wording of their responses. All three content points were included in candidate answers and most scored two marks for this part. Typical errors related to the omission of key information in the answers, thus 'rod with a loop' could not be credited without 'at either end'. Similarly, 'weight' did not gain the mark without 'on a piece of string'. Answers, although brief, needed to be complete, and insufficient and over-generalised responses were not rewarded.

#### **Exercise 5**

This exercise was attempted by a greater number of candidates this session, with fewer omissions. It remains a discriminating exercise, and the full range of marks was awarded. Candidates appeared fairly well prepared in the required summary skills, and had read the rubric. Candidates were asked to write a summary about the technique of dowsing. Most candidates completed their summary within the prescribed word limit, although there were some who wrote over-extensively, continuing on the blank page at the back of the booklet. Candidates are reminded that the number of lines on the page should be used as a guide to the appropriate length of the summary, and those who write beyond the word limit are at risk of making a greater number of errors, and therefore being penalised.

The best answers addressed the idea of 'dowsing technique', taking selected information from the previous exercise and re-wording the content, using summary-style linking expressions to create an ordered paragraph. Less able candidates formed their summary by listing points from Exercise 4, with little attempt at paraphrase or organisation of ideas. Candidates are reminded that, in order to achieve the top marks of 3 or 4 in this exercise, they must attempt to use their own words, as well as provide a sense of organisation throughout the paragraph. At times, candidates lost expression and accuracy when attempting to use their own words, but there were many good responses in this session. Weak responses were characterised by an

over-emphasis on the biographical details of Costas, rather than on the techniques of dowsing, and these limited responses did not gain more than 2 marks.

## **Exercise 6**

### **General comments**

In general, candidates responded well to the topic. The rubric was understood and most candidates produced work which was satisfactory or better. The majority wrote within the specified word limits, although candidates whose work was short of the minimum requirement were prevented from gaining marks in the top band for content due to a lack of satisfactory development of the content points.

There are three written prompts for this exercise and candidates are expected to address each prompt to achieve a satisfactory mark for content. The use of paragraphing provides an appropriate division between each bullet point, and candidates are encouraged to use paragraphs as a means of providing balance and structure in their writing. More able candidates used paragraphing well in conjunction with an informal introduction and closing sentences to form a successful letter in an informal register. Less able candidates wrote in one continuous paragraph with little attempt at organisation and development. In addition to paragraphing and adopting an appropriate conversational style, candidates should convey a good sense of the purpose of writing and engage the reader's interest. Sustained engagement with the reader throughout is an integral part of this type of informal letter writing and many candidates demonstrated this successfully.

In addition to the three bullet points, there are two picture prompts, which are provided as a guide for candidates in their selection of content. It should be emphasised that candidates are always free to use their own ideas, and those who use their own imagination often produce work of greater fluency, originality and ambition.

Ambitious attempts at language and the inclusion of some modern idioms in the right context will receive credit from Examiners. The use of idiomatic expressions can be appropriate in an informal piece of writing, but candidates should be aware that the use of abbreviated language such as is used in text messages, or the indiscriminate use of pre-learned idioms and colloquialisms in an examination answer can obscure the intended meaning, and prevent the candidate from achieving marks in the top band for language.

## **Exercise 6**

### *First time for everything*

In general, this task was satisfactorily addressed. Many candidates made an appropriate attempt to cover all three bullet points, and the best answers gave each point a separate paragraph, with description and development within the paragraph. It was disappointing to note that many candidates centred their writing around the activity in the text for Exercise 1, skydiving. Many candidates recycled the ideas and vocabulary from this text, rather than including original and interesting material of their own. Apart from this, many other candidates used the visual prompts as the basis for their writing. Very few candidates took the opportunity to provide unusual or engaging ideas, although the topic should have been very familiar and accessible to most candidates.

There was some effective detail in response to the first point, with ideas ranging from a television programme candidates had watched or a book they had read, to a family member or friend who had previously done the same activity. Despite the lack of original ideas, many candidates were able to supply a good degree of detail for the second point which became the central focus of the letter. There were some interesting descriptions of activities, such as rock-climbing or mountaineering, with effective use of adjectives, and better candidates were able to express their feelings of pleasure or fear, 'I could feel the wind rushing through my hair', 'I could not look down, I was so terrified', while taking part in the activity. The third bullet point was often mentioned rather briefly at the end of the letter, 'I would not like to do that again', without providing an explanation of the reason. To achieve the top marks, candidates should include development of each point. A number of candidates used the letter to explain about travelling on a plane for the first time to a country not previously visited, and at times these two ideas led to a certain amount of confusion as to the central focus of the letter.

A number of responses were less successful in this session, due to the inclusion of an excessive amount of generic detail at the start of the letter. It is always recommended that candidates start their writing by involving the reader directly, but for some candidates the introduction and closing sentences became over-emphasised, and on occasion, formed the greater part of the answer. Centres are asked to encourage

candidates to keep their introductions short; provide more detail in the main body of the letter, and make sure that each point has been fully answered.

Candidates are advised to allow some time after finishing to check their responses for accuracy. In this session, it was noticeable that there were a number of candidates who wrote fluently and with some ease of style. With checking, these candidates would have noticed the lack of punctuation in their work. There were frequent instances of a paragraph or even the whole letter written without a full stop. Additionally, the omission of a capital letter at the start of sentences, and the pronoun 'I' written as 'i' contributed to the language errors preventing the award of high marks. Centres are asked to continue to practise spelling in order to avoid the mistakes in spelling of high-frequency words, such as 'studing' (studying) and 'writting' (writing). Finally, it should be noted that the use of 'firstly', 'secondly', 'lastly' is inappropriate as paragraph openers in a letter written in a conversational style.

## **Exercise 7**

### **General comments**

In the final writing exercise, candidates discuss a topic for a specific audience. They are required to use the more formal tone and register that is appropriate for this audience. It is essential that candidates read the rubric carefully and then refer to the written prompts. These prompts are useful only as a stimulus for the candidate's own thoughts on the topic and as a springboard for further ideas. There were four written prompts – two supporting and two against the topic in the question – to guide candidates. As in Exercise 6, the more successful responses were those in which the candidate had understood the ideas in the prompts, but expanded these ideas showing greater independence of thought, as well as including some further original ideas and opinions. Many candidates considered the topic from both sides, giving a balanced viewpoint and using paragraphs and suitable linking phrases to provide an effective framework for their writing.

Less successful candidates tended to rely closely on the information provided, often without any personal contribution apart from a brief statement of opinion at the end. Candidates are asked not to use the written prompts as quotations from their school friends. For example, 'one of my friends thinks that it's cheaper for a family to travel together in a car, but another says that cars cause more accidents'. In order to achieve higher band marks, candidates need to paraphrase and build on the ideas provided, rather than copy them directly.

It appears that time did not present an undue problem at this stage of the paper, and most candidates were able to write within the word limit. There was little evidence of short or unfinished work.

## **Exercise 7**

### *Cars – Advantages and Disadvantages*

A good number of candidates responded well, engaging in a thoughtful manner with the topic. Most candidates had a view of their own, but were able to consider both sides of the argument. On balance, the majority opinion favoured the use of public transport over private cars, with environmental factors being the deciding issue. Candidates felt confident using vocabulary connected with the topic and many demonstrated this by using words such as 'emissions', 'CO<sub>2</sub>', 'pollution' and 'global warming'. Occasionally, candidates' enthusiasm for the task mistakenly led them to move away from the topic of cars to discuss wider environmental issues, and at times it was felt that candidates had reproduced a previously written piece on the general topic of the environment.

There were also some interesting economic arguments, with candidates discussing the comparative costs for a family travelling by car, by bus, or on a train, with a further comparison of different forms of transport for travelling short or long distances. Comfort, convenience and cleanliness were also contributing factors to the discussion. A number of candidates held strong views on one side of the argument, and provided persuasive and convincing ideas in support of their view, and these pieces of writing were given equal credit with responses which presented the topic from two sides.

A small number of candidates misinterpreted the question and wrote, often quite convincingly, about the advantages of a particular make of car – in most cases a Ferrari – over other makes of car. These responses could not be credited as having fully addressed the content of the topic, and so were prevented from achieving marks in the top band, despite the fluency and expressive use of language.

In this session it was noted that a number of candidates tended to list their points in support of their argument, writing a series of single points, rather than writing a cohesive paragraph containing a main idea and supporting ideas. Candidates should be encouraged to include discursive phrases, such as 'on the other hand', 'despite these factors', or 'having said that' as an integral part of their argument writing. The inclusion of an introduction and a conclusion should also be an essential ingredient in the structure of this type of writing.

Centres are asked to continue to provide grammar practice, as some candidates' work was affected by a lack of grammatical accuracy.

In this session, obvious misapplication of grammar was seen in:

- subject and verb agreement: 'Cars has advantages, it also have disadvantages', 'most people depends';
- comparatives: 'much dangerous than', 'more faster than', 'twice more expensive than';
- countable and uncountable nouns: 'transports', 'traffics', 'a mean of transports'.

# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Paper 0511/21

Reading and Writing (Extended)

## Key messages

In Exercises 1 and 2, it should be emphasised to candidates that precise reading of the wording of each question is vital as the first requirement to a successful answer.

In Exercise 3, it is essential that handwriting and presentation are clear because total accuracy in spelling and punctuation is required for this exercise.

For Exercise 4, Centres should continue to prepare their candidates by using the brevity of the mark scheme as a guide to what would constitute minimal but successful answers.

In Exercise 5, some candidates write in excess of 120 words. Candidates are advised to read carefully the wording of the question and to concentrate solely on those areas of the text which are relevant to the task.

In this session, for Exercise 6, many candidates chose the activity of skydiving, which was featured in Exercise 1 as a reading comprehension test. This is to be discouraged; candidates will not be given credit for using language that has been simply copied. For the award of marks in the higher bands, candidates should be encouraged to write original and independent pieces.

## General comments

Overall, the vast majority of candidates were correctly entered for the extended tier.

The paper offered a range of tasks within the seven exercises, requiring the candidates to demonstrate a variety of practical skills. There were degrees of difficulty within each exercise and differentiation was achieved in specific questions and across the paper as a whole.

An increasing number of candidates used black ink which is the preferred colour. Teachers should encourage all candidates to use this in future sessions. Overall, there was deterioration in the standard of handwriting this session. Examiners reported that extended pieces of writing in Exercises 6 and 7 were often very difficult to read. Crucially, poor handwriting can adversely affect the interpretation of candidates' answers in Exercise 3. In addition, candidates should not make pencil notes in the answer space and then write over these in ink because this often makes the script difficult to read. All necessary notes should be made at the side of the answer spaces and then crossed through.

In addition, presentation was not as precise as in previous sessions, with answers appearing in unexpected spaces. Candidates should be discouraged from writing in other areas, especially in the *For Examiner's Use* column and on pages 12 and 14 which contain the rubric and the prompts for Exercises 6 and 7. It is, however, permissible for candidates to use the blank pages at the end of the booklet as a continuation of their answers, especially in Exercises 6 and 7, but they need to indicate clearly to the Examiners where extra work has been added. Generally, candidates should be advised that throughout the paper the spaces and number of lines are arranged so as to guide them as to the length of answer required, and they should not consistently exceed this.

Centres are requested to inform their candidates that the blank page at the end of the booklet should be used rather than separate sheets or extra booklets.

Time management did not appear to be a problem this session and there were very few candidates who failed to complete all the exercises in the paper, although some responses in Exercise 7 were brief and consisted of copying the prompts in the question.



### **Exercise 1**

This exercise was generally well attempted by candidates and provided a suitable introduction to the reading comprehension tasks.

- (a) There were four acceptable answers and candidates used all the possibilities. Some lifted 'thrills and excitement in the air without a plane' which was not an activity. 'Skydiving' on its own, without the idea of 'indoor', was also an inaccurate answer.
- (b) This was very well answered, although some candidates omitted the essential detail 'per day'.
- (c) This was very well attempted. Some candidates answered 'what hand signals to use and the correct body positions' which did not address the question precisely and could not be given credit.
- (d) This was well answered, although some candidates were careless with the wording of their responses and omitted the detail of 'to them'. The answer 'they cannot talk' was incomplete and conveyed a different idea.
- (e) This question required careful reading of the text to ensure that the correct wording was provided in the answer. There were many candidates who overlooked the key expression of 'the real aim' in the text and consequently did not connect that to the wording of 'the main task' in the question. Those candidates who lifted 'checks the body position of the diver' were not credited.
- (f) This question was more challenging. There were clear differences in the content of the lessons for beginners and more advanced divers, and candidates needed to convey a detail for each level of participant. Many candidates did not communicate this and gave both details for the experienced divers. Other candidates omitted the key detail 'off the ground', so answers such as 'beginners fly a couple of metres' were factually incorrect.
- (g) This was very well answered. Occasionally candidates were imprecise with their reading of the text and wrote '125 dirhams' or '195 dirhams'.
- (h) This was very well attempted and all possible answers were selected.

### **Exercise 2**

More able candidates provided brief answers here and were able to select key detail from the text and transcribe it with precision. However, there are still candidates who write too much and teachers should encourage greater brevity. The answers in the mark scheme provide a good guide to the length of answer required. The interpretation of the graphical material in question (h) was generally good. A range of marks was achieved on the exercise as a whole.

- (a) This was well answered overall, although 'to overcome difficulties' was too imprecise and could not be credited.
- (b) This proved to be challenging because many candidates were not careful enough with their reading of the question. Many answered 'more than two months' because they had overlooked the word 'previously' in the question. Others answered 'when' instead of 'what' and offered 'August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010'.
- (c) Many candidates responded from the point of view of the rescuers rather than the miners and answered 'used a machine to drill through the rock'. On occasion, credit could not be given for responses which omitted the crucial detail of the note being 'attached' to a drill.
- (d) This question required two details with a mark for each correct answer. There was a very good attempt here and most candidates scored the maximum two marks.

- (e) This was well attempted although some candidates could not receive credit because their answers did not contain any reference to the key idea that the miners were seen in a video which they sent to the surface. Other answers were incomplete, mentioning either that they were 'without shirts' or 'unshaven' when the question asked for both ideas. Others could not be credited for the inaccurate detail 'without clothes'.
- (f) This was very well answered with both details included in brief answers.
- (g) This question proved to be a very good discriminator. Candidates needed to refer to the 'early stages' and the 'final stages'. A large number of candidates missed the fact that the detail about 'yoghurt, cereal, tea and sandwiches' was not the final stage in the supply of food to the miners. The inclusion of this detail was tolerated provided that candidates were able to convey the idea that 'vitamin drinks' were the earliest and 'hot meals' were the final sources of food. The detail about 'hot meals' was often overlooked.
- (h) This was the graphical question. It was well attempted, although answers with the additional detail of '700 metres long' were not rewarded.
- (i) This was well answered and most candidates included the key idea that a book was read with the purpose of preparing for arrival at the surface rather than just reading for its own sake.
- (j) This question proved to be a very good discriminator. Most candidates were awarded at least two marks overall by conveying the ideas of a 'daily routine' and 'physical exercise'. There was some repetition of the idea of having information and being prepared for disappointment. Less able candidates were imprecise in their reading of the rubric and listed the food that the miners ate.

Centres are reminded that this final question in Exercise 2 is more challenging and is designed to differentiate between the most able candidates. Candidates should be prepared to review the stimulus article as a whole because key information may appear at any point in the text.

### **Exercise 3**

Candidates continue to be well prepared for the specific demands of this exercise which requires application of the conventions of form-filling and total accuracy in spelling. *Sections A* and *B* of the travel and tourism project form were designed to be completed with brief details. Candidates generally answered these sections well although there was often unnecessary detail in the tasks regarding places of interest in the town and the best month to visit.

Candidates need to be reminded of the importance of good, clear handwriting throughout the paper. This is especially important in this exercise where correct spelling is crucial and where capital letters need to be clearly formed when introducing proper nouns in names and addresses. There was an unwelcome increase in untidy presentation and handwriting this session. Candidates risk not being credited if they are careless with the formation of a letter or a word.

### **Travel and Tourism Project Form**

Generally, candidates were precise with the name of the candidate in the first task and scored well.

#### **Section A**

The names of the town and the country were generally correct, although some candidates confused where the candidate was living with the name of the town and the country in the project and answered 'Rome' and 'Italy' respectively. There was also some confusion about the exact location of the project and both 'Grandcharmant' and 'Paris' were included on occasion. The distance of '40 kilometres' was well recognised and most candidates successfully extracted 'hills and lakes', although some candidates added incorrect detail about 'the new bridge'.



## **Section B**

This section proved more challenging and many candidates wrote too much and made spelling errors. Some candidates overlooked the instruction to 'tick as many as applicable' and placed a tick in only one box. Other candidates ticked an extra box and 'campsites' was often indicated incorrectly. Many candidates correctly identified the castle and the art gallery, but imprecise reading of either the text or the form meant that some included 'outdoor activity centre' in their answer when the detail required was 'in the town'. The temperatures were well recognised but a number of candidates could not gain credit because they misspelt 'Celcius' (sic). Imprecise reading of the text meant that 'airport' was sometimes underlined together with 'road', although the text clearly stated that the airport was not yet open. The responses to the 'best month to the visit' and the 'reason why' tended to be more challenging. Some candidates incorrectly answered 'during the festival' for the month. This meant that they searched for an extra unnecessary detail for the reason, when 'festival' would have been a brief and successful response. Finally, the email and phone number were well answered, although there was occasional carelessness with the spelling of 'gracha'.

## **Section C**

An encouraging number of candidates composed a sentence which was well punctuated, with a clear full-stop at the end, and accurately spelt. Overall, however, this section was less successfully attempted than in previous sessions. Firstly, it must be stressed that if candidates are outside the prescribed word limits for the sentence then they automatically score zero, as detailed in the mark scheme. In this session, this requirement was much better observed than in the past, but there were still some candidates who wrote in excess of 20 words. There were different errors which meant that full credit could not be given. The most common mistake was beginning the sentence with 'because' which is not considered to be a proper sentence construction. Another significant error was the lack of a full stop at the end. Some candidates also ignored the specific content of the text and wrote a sentence about the attractions of Grandcharmant for the tourist generally rather than for the student personally. There were encouraging aspects also in this section, notably fewer candidates who used the third person, 'his father', and the accuracy of the spelling, especially with more challenging words such as 'particularly', 'attracted' and 'historian'. The majority of candidates either scored zero or 1 mark overall for this task.

## **Exercise 4**

This exercise was successfully answered by the majority of candidates. Many were able to show enough understanding of the text and extract the relevant information to score very well here. The exercise produced good differentiation, with maximum marks being obtained by only a few of the more able candidates. There were fewer candidates this session who wrote full sentences, and most answers were brief, in note form and written within the space provided. The bullet points and the length of line are always a guide to candidates as to how to present their answers.

### **Costas' early discoveries**

Key points were well recognised. All of the three possible content details were used, with the second and third points being the most popular. Some answers could not be credited because essential detail was not supplied. For example, some candidates did not include the key words 'in his hands' or 'underground'.

### **What Costas can tell companies about water underground**

This section was well answered with many candidates gaining the maximum three marks. All possible responses were used. Occasionally, some candidates were not able to separate discrete items and offered 'the quality of the water', 'the purity' and 'whether it contains any salt' as individual items on separate lines. They were considered to be repetitions of the same point and were only credited once.

### **Tools that Costas now uses to detect water**

This section was more challenging and there were some inaccuracies here. The key detail of 'at either end' was sometimes omitted or written as 'at both sides', which was factually inaccurate. Similarly, the detail about the weight had to be accompanied by the words 'on a piece of string' in order to convey the idea that Costas uses a pendulum device. There was also repetition of the detail about the pendulum and some candidates were not able to appreciate that 'pendulum' and 'weight on a piece of string' were the same idea and wrote them as individual items. The idea of 'twig' was well recognised.

## **Exercise 5**

The summary proved to be a good discriminating exercise and there was a range of marks awarded. Candidates needed to write a summary about two aspects of the text – the difficulties that teenagers face in their region and how Manisha Kaur is a role model for them. More able candidates selected precise detail and wrote with a good sense of order, selecting carefully and sequentially from the text. All the content points proved accessible and an encouraging number of candidates addressed both aspects of the rubric and were able to identify at least 5 content details successfully.

There was, however, a significant number of candidates who completed the summary outside the prescribed word limit. This occurred generally when candidates started copying from the first paragraph of the text without sufficient care as to the rubric requirements. As a result, there were needlessly detailed descriptions of the group of young boxers training in the early morning and the academy itself. Consequently, the key details about the difficulties that the young people face and how Manisha is a role model were only addressed after the 120 word limit.

Less able candidates could not be credited with high marks for content because they were too wordy in conveying Manisha's achievements and listing all her titles, when a more selective approach would have sufficed. Similarly, there was repetition regarding her strength of character and her defiance and forcefulness, and some candidates referred to her 'physical strength' rather than her 'strength of character'. Some descriptions were also too general and mentioned that Manisha was 'a success in her life' with no idea of her being 'a successful boxer'. In addition, the unemployment problem and the lack of opportunities in Manipur were not related to teenagers specifically but to the population in general.

Language marks were awarded across the whole range. It was pleasing to note that a good number of candidates attempted to use their own words and expressions. Centres are reminded that higher marks of three and four for language are available for those candidates who make an attempt to paraphrase with the use of noun and adjective synonyms. It must be emphasised that candidates need to exercise care when using their own words to ensure that the sense and meaning of the content is not altered. There was an encouraging attempt by many candidates to use appropriate linking words and phrases, especially when progressing from the first to the second requirement of the task.

## **Exercise 6**

### **General comments**

In general, this exercise was successfully attempted. The rubric was well understood, the word limit was well observed and there was little evidence of short work.

There are three prompts in Exercise 6 and arguably each one deserves a paragraph to give the whole piece appropriate balance. More able candidates used paragraphs to good purpose and they provided an effective division between the different ideas that the candidates needed to address. There was often a good attempt to supply a suitably brief introduction and concluding statement, in an informal register.

It should be noted that prolonged greetings and conclusions, which are often pre-learnt and not always relevant, can be counter-productive. It is recommended that candidates restrict these to about three lines only. In the worst cases, the start and finish of the essay use an inordinate number of words which would be better employed developing the requirements of the bullet points.

In addition to the bullet prompts, there is a visual guide to help candidates when selecting content for their writing. It must be emphasised that candidates are always free to choose their own material and those that do often produce pieces which have greater originality and ambition.

Candidates must, of course, address and develop the three bullet prompts to achieve the higher bands in the grade criteria for content. In addition, candidates should convey a good sense of purpose and engage the reader's interest. Examiners are looking to reward those candidates who can demonstrate a more vital style and provide some innovative detail.

Candidates need to be aware that pre-learnt phrases and expressions do not always work in certain contexts. Some candidates fill their writing with a wide array of inappropriate and poorly chosen idioms. Individually these idioms can be very effective but a succession of these in an essay is counter-productive and proverbs should not be included for their own sake. Colloquialisms need to fit the situation and should

be chosen with care and not used excessively. In an attempt to use extravagant language, meaning is sometimes obscured and the language mark may be adversely affected.

## **Exercise 6**

### **A new experience**

It was somewhat disappointing to see that many candidates did not take the opportunity to include more engaging and original detail in their responses. Some answers were interesting and were clearly developed but many were predictable and were not particularly engaging. Many exclamation marks were used in an attempt to provide interest, but interest is not generally to be found in punctuation but in stories which are believable. It seemed as though many candidates had not actually experienced their chosen activity and this affected the presentation of the content. Many followed the visual prompts and wrote about their first plane journey or ice skating. Many others used the idea from the first exercise and wrote about skydiving. It is acceptable to use the prompts but there must also be development and originality. It is always refreshing when candidates think up their own situations.

For this exercise, Examiners were looking to credit candidates who described the new experience in some detail. There was a lack of originality and some candidates wrote about holidays and trips without making it clear that it was a first time experience. More able candidates made the piece more lively and enjoyable to read by introducing some humour and light-heartedness into the narrative. Stronger candidates responded to the rubric with more detail and expansion, and often supplied the less predictable conclusion that they would never repeat the experience.

The first bullet point about what gave the candidate the idea for the experience was not always covered. The third bullet point was often addressed briefly but, encouragingly, there was a range of emotions expressed, although many wrote about why their friends should or should not partake in the experience rather than whether they themselves would like to repeat it.

The vast majority of candidates stayed on task throughout. Most candidates remembered to write in paragraphs, although there was a significant number who made no attempt to divide their essay into sections. Basic punctuation was generally sound, although there were candidates who substituted commas for full stops throughout the whole piece. There were some candidates who did not use capital letters, thus making their letter one uninterrupted sentence. On the whole, the responses were generally safe and most candidates used a letter format with the correct salutation and appropriate conclusion.

## **Exercise 7**

### **General comments**

Most candidates were able to adopt a more formal tone and register for the final discursive exercise. There was a selection of four prompts – two for and two against the proposal in the title – to guide candidates. Less able candidates tended to stay very close to these cues, at worst copying them directly with little or no development or personal contribution. In similar fashion, some candidates often used the prompts as ‘quotes’ from ‘other candidates’. For example, ‘I asked people in my school and one student said, “It would take twice the time for me to travel by bus or train than by car”’.

More able candidates expanded on the prompts and showed some independence of thought. They also achieved some variety of style by, for example, the use of rhetorical questions. It is recommended that candidates are selective in their choice of prompts, perhaps one for and one against, and attempt to develop those in some depth rather than giving superficial coverage to all four. There needs to be evidence that candidates can develop arguments and persuade the reader of their convictions in order to gain access to the higher mark bands. Many candidates gave a balanced view and considered both sides of the argument with good use of paragraphs and linking words to support this. Word limits were well-observed and it appears as though time constraints at this stage of the paper were not a problem for the majority of candidates. There were some candidates who had obviously left themselves short of time and resorted to copying the prompts with little or no individual comment.

## **Exercise 7**

### **The advantages and disadvantages of the car**

Many candidates did not appear to have particularly strong views on this issue and resorted to using the statements provided in the prompts. More mature candidates with a wider knowledge of current affairs were able to contrast the need for fast, efficient transport with the issues of global warming and pollution. There were some passionate pieces from ecologically-minded candidates who suggested urgent research into developing alternative, environmentally-friendly technology for cars.

By contrast, a number of candidates were careless in their reading of the rubric heading and produced pieces which expressed ideas about pollution generally without specific reference to cars. This interpretation missed the real point of the argument and there was a sense that certain candidates had reproduced a previously written piece about the environment in general. This approach should be avoided because such pieces are often of limited relevance and cannot be credited with higher marks for content.

More able candidates responded with a balanced argument, both for and against. They were able to expand beyond the subject prompts and produced pieces that were persuasive. There were many commendable attempts to intersperse the writing with rhetorical questions and to provide an introduction and concluding opinion. This gave a sense of cohesion to many of the pieces.

# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Paper 0511/22

Reading and Writing (Extended)

## Key messages

Candidates should take time to read and understand the requirements of specific questions and instructions so that responses are precise enough for a successful answer. The omission of important detail or the inclusion of incorrect information can result in marks being lost. This was mainly the case in Exercises 1 to 5. Candidates should also look through the entire paper and divide the time according to the difficulty and total points for each exercise to ensure good time management.

In Exercises 1 and 2 questions must be read carefully. Sometimes more than one detail is required for the mark. Responses must connect to the question although answers can be brief and a complete sentence is not required. Most candidates approached these exercises appropriately.

When completing the form in Exercise 3, candidates should abide by the conventions and tick, circle, underline or delete as instructed, and they should also use the correct address format. Clear handwriting is particularly important in this exercise since correct spelling and the accurate use of capital letters is required. On occasion, handwriting was not sufficiently legible. In *Section C*, the word limit must be adhered to and the requirements of sentence construction fulfilled in order for the candidate to gain available marks. The sentence must also be relevant. There were candidates whose responses were unsuitable with regard to length, grammar, punctuation or relevance. The information must also be contained in a single sentence. Occasionally candidates wrote two sentences.

In Exercise 4 the notes should be sufficiently brief, whilst including key information. Headings should be connected accurately to the text, so that answers are relevant to the heading for each section. The response given alongside each bullet point must include a different idea, and these need to be clear and connect logically to the heading. Candidates generally appeared to understand the requirements of this task.

In Exercise 5, a good summary is expressed in the candidate's own words and the points are grouped and sequenced to form a connected piece of writing. It is important for the candidate to clearly communicate the relevant ideas in the original text and keep within the word limit. The inclusion of lifted irrelevant information or repetition of points should be avoided. In this session, candidates were generally able to locate most of the content points.

In the extended writing tasks of Exercises 6 and 7, the candidate's response should demonstrate effective content and a range of language, and be of an appropriate length. In Exercise 6, the best answers address and develop all three bullet points, with appropriate and consistent register. In Exercise 7, views should be presented and supported. In these exercises, good organisation, clear paragraphing, along with cohesive and coherent expression are important for a candidate to gain marks in the higher bands. There should be appropriate and accurate use of grammar and vocabulary. Some candidates attempt to learn idiomatic language, which should be used in keeping with the context of the writing, and such language should not be used to the extent that it is unnatural. Candidates dealt with these tasks with varying degrees of success but most responses were satisfactory or better.

## **General comments**

Most candidates were entered appropriately at the extended tier. A small number of candidates found it too challenging, so the core tier paper might have been more suitable for their linguistic ability.

The paper provided a range of tasks over the seven exercises, requiring the candidates to use different practical skills. There were degrees of difficulty within each exercise and differentiation was achieved in specific questions and across the paper as a whole.

There were occasional misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the rubric on certain questions. Handwriting and presentation were mostly acceptable. Candidates should be encouraged to use black ink as this is the preferred colour. Candidates should avoid writing in the *For Examiner's Use* column to the right of each answer page. Generally, they should be advised that the spaces and number of lines for each question are arranged to guide them as to the length of answer required. It is permissible for them to use the blank pages at the end of the booklet to continue their answers, especially in Exercises 6 and 7, but it is important that they indicate clearly to the Examiner where extra work has been completed. Candidates should not use the question pages for Exercises 6 and 7 for this. Most candidates were able to complete all the exercises in the paper, indicating that time management was not generally a problem.

## **Exercise 1**

In the reading comprehension exercises, answers need to be precise. Candidates should find the relevant section of text, and read carefully to establish the full, correct answer. It is important to distinguish between relevant and incorrect details. Exercise 1 was well attempted by most candidates. For certain questions, candidates lifted both correct and incorrect information, which meant the mark could not be awarded.

- (a) This was quite well answered. A number of candidates did not recognise the significance of 'famous above all for its parks and museums' in the text and wrote 'Palermo is one of Buenos Aires' largest neighbourhoods'. Some also added 'shops and cafes' to their answer, making the response incorrect.
- (b) This was well answered by most candidates. A small number lifted 'artists are laid out on the pavement', which conveyed a different meaning since it was the paintings which were on the pavement. 'Serrano Avenue' was also occasionally given as an incorrect answer.
- (c) Most candidates supplied the two details required. A few omitted one detail, or provided incomplete information. For example, the response 'fossils of the ancestors' did not cover the key detail as 'armadillos' rather than 'ancestors' carried the meaning to be conveyed. A few candidates gave the response 'early history and past cultures', which was not precise enough.
- (d) This was very well answered and nearly all candidates understood the requirements of the question.
- (e) This question proved challenging. A significant number of candidates gave a response which referred to government buildings instead of 'apartments'. Some candidates also described the apartments as 'a mixture of nineteenth century Parisian and traditional South American styles', which described the government buildings.
- (f) This question was very well answered. Nearly all candidates understood that the elephant house looked like a temple. A very small number gave the incorrect response 'unusual house'.
- (g) This question required two details. Most candidates gave correct information regarding *who* cared for the cats, but a number of candidates omitted information on *how* this was done.
- (h) This question was very well answered. Occasionally candidates omitted 'less than' or wrote 'less then', which meant the response was incorrect.

## **Exercise 2**

Some candidates gained the full range of marks on this exercise and differentiation was achieved. Answers were suitably brief and most candidates read the chart accurately. As in Exercise 1, candidates need to be precise in their answers, ensuring that responses follow on from the question. When candidates are satisfied they have located the correct answer, they should check that they understand and use reference words such as pronouns correctly in order to give an unambiguous response.

- (a) This question was generally well answered. A few candidates gave the response 'a contradiction in terms', which was lifted from the text but was not an appropriate answer.
- (b) This question was quite well answered. Some candidates repeated the idea in the question as their response, lifting 'take a break without spending too much'. The question asked why people did not need much money. A few candidates gave the response 'cheap' without specifying that it was either the food or accommodation that made the holiday cheap, which was an essential part of a successful answer.
- (c) This question was challenging for candidates as it required them to understand the inference in the text about suitable footwear. Some candidates gave the response that William's clothes were unsuitable, rather than his trainers or footwear.
- (d) This was well answered. A few candidates wrote 'to give them more room'. This was incorrect since the pronoun 'them' in an answer to this question refers to the weeds and bushes. Candidates should check when using pronouns that they are used correctly.
- (e) This question was well answered. There were candidates who gave the response 'the National Trust is a charity and receives no money'. This is an example of an incomplete lift and consequently an incorrect response as the National Trust receives no money *from the government*.
- (f) Most candidates read the pie chart accurately. A few did not take note of 'apart from teenagers' in the question, and wrote '13-19'.
- (g) This was well attempted by most candidates. A few candidates gave answers which focused on the activities of the leader, the enjoyment of the role or the chance to do a training course. These things were not the greatest benefit for the leader.
- (h) This question was generally well answered. There were candidates who misread the text and wrote either 'space' or 'place' instead of 'pace', which changed the meaning of the response, making it incorrect. A few referred incorrectly to William being able to use an axe or chainsaw.
- (i) In this question, some candidates either did not understand or note the importance of 'indoor' in the question and referred to outdoor activities such as gardening or archaeology when the only possible response was 'cataloguing books'.
- (j) This question was very well attempted and very few candidates gave an incorrect response.
- (k) Most candidates obtained two or more of the available marks. A few candidates did not read the question carefully enough and gave cheap food or accommodation as one reason. Another incorrect reason given was 'a chance to go on a training course', which was not why so many people choose the holiday. A few candidates gave repeated points, which could only be credited once.

It may be helpful for Centres to be aware that this final question in Exercise 2 is global and is designed to differentiate. Candidates review the stimulus article as a whole because relevant information may appear at any point in the text.

### **Exercise 3**

Candidates had been generally well prepared for the requirements of this exercise. They are expected to apply the conventions of form-filling and demonstrate total accuracy in spelling, the use of capital letters and punctuation, where appropriate. Sections A, B and C of the application form are designed to be completed with brief answers, and there are instructions to underline, circle, delete or tick as necessary. Candidates need to be aware that clear handwriting is especially important in this exercise. Therefore, capital letters should be easy to distinguish, as should individual letters. This was not always the case. A few candidates did not follow the instructions and underlined, deleted, circled or ticked inappropriately. Nearly all candidates completed the form as Shokat Aziz.

#### **Water Sports Tournament Application Form**

##### **Section A**

Many candidates accurately provided the necessary details. There were very few misspellings in this section and it appears candidates were careful to check their spellings against those in the text to avoid losing marks. There were candidates who did not note the requirement in brackets for Shokat's age in 2013 and wrote 17 instead of 20. A few candidates gave Shokat's occupation as 'qualified jeweller' when he was a trainee. There were also candidates who did not understand the word 'occupation' and gave a sports activity. The address details were occasionally in the incorrect order or the country was omitted or given as Egypt. A few candidates used prepositions such as 'at' and 'in', which are inappropriate and cannot be credited. The email address was rarely incorrect.

##### **Section B**

This section was quite well answered overall. Candidates lost marks for different reasons. Some circled the age category instead of underlining it while others underlined the wrong group. Swimming, diving or sailing were all incorrect alternatives given for the sport Shokat wished to compete in. A few candidates gave windsurfing along with other sports. A few candidates deleted 'Yes' rather than 'No'. If one answer has been deleted, it is not necessary to circle the alternative, although this does not mean the answer is incorrect. There were sometimes mistakes in the details of previous tournaments. Words such as 'October' requiring a capital letter were started with a lower case letter. 'Medal' was occasionally misspelt 'metal'. One of the three details such as 'deep-sea diving' was sometimes omitted. 'His father' was occasionally given to indicate who would pay. This form had to be completed in the first person as Shokat Aziz. Similarly, responses such as 'Aziz' were not clear enough as this could have referred to Shokat Aziz.

##### **Section C**

Most candidates completed this section correctly. Occasionally, only one form of transport was supplied when both ferry and bus had to be specified. A few candidates put a cross in the box instead of a tick, or ticked the wrong box.

##### **Section D**

In this section, for maximum marks, candidates are required to keep within the prescribed word limit, use proper sentence construction with no errors of punctuation, grammar or spelling, and give relevant details according to information in the stimulus text. Candidates lose marks when these conventions are not followed. A number of candidates wrote a correct and relevant sentence. In some sentences there were errors of punctuation such as the omission of a comma to indicate a non-defining relative clause. A few candidates did not end the sentence with a full stop or wrote two sentences. Words such as 'Cairns' and 'scholarship' were sometimes misspelt. Occasionally, there was no subject/verb beginning to the sentence, for example, 'Try for a scholarship'. In this case, no marks can be awarded because correct sentence structure is lacking. The pronoun 'he' instead of 'I' was occasionally used, so the answer was incorrect. Candidates should take care to write the sentence from the point of view of the form-filler and copy words from the text accurately.



#### **Exercise 4**

A number of candidates completed this note-taking exercise well. On the whole, notes were appropriately brief. Occasionally, important details such as verbs that add to or clarify meaning were omitted and points were either incomplete or repeated. In such cases, responses could not be credited. It is important that candidates check that each point they make has a different focus.

##### *The children's behaviour before they were coached*

This section was generally well answered. Sometimes candidates repeated the idea that the children did not know the ball had to be kicked. Instead of writing 'let the ball strike them', some candidates used the pronoun 'it' when the ball had not been referred to previously, while others lifted 'strike them in the face', so the point was unclear.

##### *The teacher's improved coaching after the training course*

This section was quite well attempted. Some points were again repeated. The example bullet point was sometimes repeated as candidates had not noticed this following the heading. Verbs were required for clarity, for example, 'knows how to deal with young people,' and sometimes they were omitted. The idea of 'all' was important for the point 'lists all activities' as it communicates the degree to which the teacher was organised. This was not always included.

##### *Positive effects of football on the children*

Many candidates scored well in this section although there was also some repetition of points. Under this heading the comparative idea was important, so notes like 'respectful' or 'organised' without this idea could not be credited.

#### **Exercise 5**

Many candidates performed well on this exercise. Most candidates appeared to have been well prepared generally in the necessary summary skills, equipping them to carry out the requirements of the exercise. Candidates were asked to write a summary of the reasons for the decline in the number of tigers and the steps being taken by the World Wildlife Fund. There were candidates whose summary exceeded the word limit and included content points after 120 words, and in such cases marks were lost. Sometimes a mark could not be awarded if the point was not sufficiently precise. For example, candidates needed to state that *illegal* hunting contributed to the decline in tiger numbers, not just hunting. The fact that there were *more* anti-hunting patrols was also an essential idea. There were eleven possible content points in total and a number of candidates successfully located six of these.

Language marks were awarded across the whole range. Some candidates lifted the relevant points from the text and connected them with conjunctions without attempting to express these in their own words. A number of candidates were able to communicate the salient points by using some of their own words and restructuring ideas from the original text in order to gain a higher mark for language. It is important that content points remain clear when re-expressed. Since higher marks of three and four for language are available for candidates attempting to use their own words, practice with verb, noun and adjective synonyms, along with practice in forming alternative grammatical structures is recommended.

#### **Exercises 6 and 7**

##### **General comments**

The majority of candidates produced letters and articles which were satisfactory or better with regard to language and content in Exercises 6 and 7. Some candidates were able to write more than the specified number of words. There were a few whose writing was short of the minimum requirements for length. Candidates are not penalised for exceeding the number of words recommended but short answers are unlikely to be awarded a satisfactory mark for content, and the language mark can also be affected where the range of language is limited. Many candidates demonstrated that they were able to organise their writing into paragraphs, generally supplying an appropriate introduction and ending to the task set. Good organisation is an integral part of a coherent and cohesive piece of writing. The reader should be engaged and the ideas should be sufficiently clear and developed to do this.

There were some candidates who quite skilfully introduced idiomatic language and turns of phrase into their writing. Others sometimes used such language inappropriately, which does not help to achieve marks in the higher bands as communication is unnatural and precision is lost. Some candidates demonstrated good control of language, showing variety of structure and length, which meant that their mark for language was in the higher bands. Sometimes the language used was formed using basic structures and more complex structures were inaccurate, containing errors. It is important that tenses are used accurately, and past events were sometimes expressed using present tenses. Punctuation was generally sound, although sometimes commas were substituted for full stops, making sentences overlong and meaning unclear. Candidates who gained marks in the higher bands for content were able to present relevant views effectively.

### **Exercise 6**

In this exercise, the extent to which all the bullet point prompts are addressed and developed will determine the band achieved for content. For a mark in a higher band, candidates should have a good sense of purpose whilst sustaining the reader's interest. Examiners are looking to reward candidates adopting a more engaging style with some imaginative detail.

*Account of paid work during the last school holiday*

Candidates responded well to the topic, generally adopting a satisfactory or effective register and tone. Most candidates seemed to be aware of what doing a job involves. There was usually an appropriate beginning to the letter and the majority of candidates addressed all three bullet points. It is important that candidates clearly cover these, as this will affect the content mark. Details of what the job involved and what was learnt from the experience were often well developed. For most candidates this was described as a positive and useful experience and a range of jobs was chosen, from those requiring IT expertise to cafe work. The detail of who gave them the job, and why, was sometimes unclear or not well developed. A small number of candidates wrote about unpaid voluntary work or work at school. A few also lifted language from the reading texts in the paper; this cannot be credited if it is directly copied. In terms of language, some candidates were able to demonstrate a range of vocabulary, sometime quite specific, to describe the job. There were candidates who included inappropriate idiomatic language. Some candidates attempted more sophisticated language structures successfully.

### **Exercise 7**

In this exercise candidates give their views on a topic for a specified target audience. It is important that candidates read the rubric carefully and consider the prompts, which are given to help candidates form ideas on the subject. For a mark in one of the higher bands, candidates can develop the views in the prompts, expressing these in their own words and if possible giving other perspectives on the topic. Candidates should demonstrate that they can present arguments and support these with evidence and examples. They should also adopt a consistent tone and register for the context which will arouse the reader's interest in the topic.

*Selling the school sports fields to buy equipment for the science laboratories*

Candidates were expected to write an article for their school magazine discussing their views on selling the school sports fields to buy equipment for the science laboratories. There were two guiding prompts for the proposed sale and two against it. There were a few candidates who used the exact wording in the prompts along with the introductory rubric as the basis of their writing. It is important that candidates express ideas in their own words, as copied language cannot be given credit. There were different views expressed in responses to this question. A number of candidates felt that the fields and the equipment were equally important and suggested alternative ways of raising the money. Well developed articles discussed both sides of the argument, expanding on the health-promoting aspects of sports and the importance of a space for leisure to complement the demands of important academic work, and acknowledging the value of scientific study. Candidates were interested by the topic and able to relate to it.

# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Paper 0511/23

Reading and Writing (Extended)

## Key messages

Candidates should take time to read and understand the requirements of specific questions and instructions so that responses are precise enough for a successful answer. The omission of important detail or the inclusion of incorrect information can result in marks being lost. This was mainly the case in Exercises 1 to 5. Candidates should also look through the entire paper and divide the time according to the difficulty and total points for each exercise to ensure good time management.

In Exercises 1 and 2 questions must be read carefully. Sometimes more than one detail is required for the mark. Responses must connect to the question although answers can be brief and a complete sentence is not required. Most candidates approached these exercises appropriately.

When completing the form in Exercise 3, candidates should abide by the conventions and tick, circle, underline or delete as instructed, and they should also use the correct address format. Clear handwriting is particularly important in this exercise since correct spelling and the accurate use of capital letters is required. On occasion, handwriting was not sufficiently legible. In *Section C*, the word limit must be adhered to and the requirements of sentence construction fulfilled in order for the candidate to gain available marks. The sentence must also be relevant. There were candidates whose responses were unsuitable with regard to length, grammar, punctuation or relevance. The information must also be contained in a single sentence. Occasionally candidates wrote two sentences.

In Exercise 4 the notes should be sufficiently brief, whilst including key information. Headings should be connected accurately to the text, so that answers are relevant to the heading for each section. The response given alongside each bullet point must include a different idea, and these need to be clear and connect logically to the heading. Candidates generally appeared to understand the requirements of this task.

In Exercise 5, a good summary is expressed in the candidate's own words and the points are grouped and sequenced to form a connected piece of writing. It is important for the candidate to clearly communicate the relevant ideas in the original text and keep within the word limit. The inclusion of lifted irrelevant information or repetition of points should be avoided. In this session, candidates were generally able to locate most of the content points.

In the extended writing tasks of Exercises 6 and 7, the candidate's response should demonstrate effective content and a range of language, and be of an appropriate length. In Exercise 6, the best answers address and develop all three bullet points, with appropriate and consistent register. In Exercise 7, views should be presented and supported. In these exercises, good organisation, clear paragraphing, along with cohesive and coherent expression are important for a candidate to gain marks in the higher bands. There should be appropriate and accurate use of grammar and vocabulary. Some candidates attempt to learn idiomatic language, which should be used in keeping with the context of the writing, and such language should not be used to the extent that it is unnatural. Candidates dealt with these tasks with varying degrees of success but most responses were satisfactory or better.

## **General comments**

Most candidates were entered appropriately at the extended tier. A small number of candidates found it too challenging, so the core tier paper might have been more suitable for their linguistic ability.

The paper provided a range of tasks over the seven exercises, requiring the candidates to use different practical skills. There were degrees of difficulty within each exercise and differentiation was achieved in specific questions and across the paper as a whole.

There were occasional misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the rubric on certain questions. Handwriting and presentation were mostly acceptable. Candidates should be encouraged to use black ink as this is the preferred colour. Candidates should avoid writing in the *For Examiner's Use* column to the right of each answer page. Generally, they should be advised that the spaces and number of lines for each question are arranged to guide them as to the length of answer required. It is permissible for them to use the blank pages at the end of the booklet to continue their answers, especially in Exercises 6 and 7, but it is important that they indicate clearly to the Examiner where extra work has been completed. Candidates should not use the question pages for Exercises 6 and 7 for this. Most candidates were able to complete all the exercises in the paper, indicating that time management was not generally a problem.

## **Exercise 1**

In the reading comprehension exercises, answers need to be precise. Candidates should find the relevant section of text, and read carefully to establish the full, correct answer. It is important to distinguish between relevant and incorrect details. Exercise 1 was well attempted by most candidates. For certain questions, candidates lifted both correct and incorrect information, which meant the mark could not be awarded.

- (a) This was quite well answered. A number of candidates did not recognise the significance of 'famous above all for its parks and museums' in the text and wrote 'Palermo is one of Buenos Aires' largest neighbourhoods'. Some also added 'shops and cafes' to their answer, making the response incorrect.
- (b) This was well answered by most candidates. A small number lifted 'artists are laid out on the pavement', which conveyed a different meaning since it was the paintings which were on the pavement. 'Serrano Avenue' was also occasionally given as an incorrect answer.
- (c) Most candidates supplied the two details required. A few omitted one detail, or provided incomplete information. For example, the response 'fossils of the ancestors' did not cover the key detail as 'armadillos' rather than 'ancestors' carried the meaning to be conveyed. A few candidates gave the response 'early history and past cultures', which was not precise enough.
- (d) This was very well answered and nearly all candidates understood the requirements of the question.
- (e) This question proved challenging. A significant number of candidates gave a response which referred to government buildings instead of 'apartments'. Some candidates also described the apartments as 'a mixture of nineteenth century Parisian and traditional South American styles', which described the government buildings.
- (f) This question was very well answered. Nearly all candidates understood that the elephant house looked like a temple. A very small number gave the incorrect response 'unusual house'.
- (g) This question required two details. Most candidates gave correct information regarding *who* cared for the cats, but a number of candidates omitted information on *how* this was done.
- (h) This question was very well answered. Occasionally candidates omitted 'less than' or wrote 'less then', which meant the response was incorrect.

## **Exercise 2**

Some candidates gained the full range of marks on this exercise and differentiation was achieved. Answers were suitably brief and most candidates read the chart accurately. As in Exercise 1, candidates need to be precise in their answers, ensuring that responses follow on from the question. When candidates are satisfied they have located the correct answer, they should check that they understand and use reference words such as pronouns correctly in order to give an unambiguous response.

- (a) This question was generally well answered. A few candidates gave the response 'a contradiction in terms', which was lifted from the text but was not an appropriate answer.
- (b) This question was quite well answered. Some candidates repeated the idea in the question as their response, lifting 'take a break without spending too much'. The question asked why people did not need much money. A few candidates gave the response 'cheap' without specifying that it was either the food or accommodation that made the holiday cheap, which was an essential part of a successful answer.
- (c) This question was challenging for candidates as it required them to understand the inference in the text about suitable footwear. Some candidates gave the response that William's clothes were unsuitable, rather than his trainers or footwear.
- (d) This was well answered. A few candidates wrote 'to give them more room'. This was incorrect since the pronoun 'them' in an answer to this question refers to the weeds and bushes. Candidates should check when using pronouns that they are used correctly.
- (e) This question was well answered. There were candidates who gave the response 'the National Trust is a charity and receives no money'. This is an example of an incomplete lift and consequently an incorrect response as the National Trust receives no money *from the government*.
- (f) Most candidates read the pie chart accurately. A few did not take note of 'apart from teenagers' in the question, and wrote '13-19'.
- (g) This was well attempted by most candidates. A few candidates gave answers which focused on the activities of the leader, the enjoyment of the role or the chance to do a training course. These things were not the greatest benefit for the leader.
- (h) This question was generally well answered. There were candidates who misread the text and wrote either 'space' or 'place' instead of 'pace', which changed the meaning of the response, making it incorrect. A few referred incorrectly to William being able to use an axe or chainsaw.
- (i) In this question, some candidates either did not understand or note the importance of 'indoor' in the question and referred to outdoor activities such as gardening or archaeology when the only possible response was 'cataloguing books'.
- (j) This question was very well attempted and very few candidates gave an incorrect response.
- (k) Most candidates obtained two or more of the available marks. A few candidates did not read the question carefully enough and gave cheap food or accommodation as one reason. Another incorrect reason given was 'a chance to go on a training course', which was not why so many people choose the holiday. A few candidates gave repeated points, which could only be credited once.

It may be helpful for Centres to be aware that this final question in Exercise 2 is global and is designed to differentiate. Candidates review the stimulus article as a whole because relevant information may appear at any point in the text.

### **Exercise 3**

Candidates had been generally well prepared for the requirements of this exercise. They are expected to apply the conventions of form-filling and demonstrate total accuracy in spelling, the use of capital letters and punctuation, where appropriate. Sections A, B and C of the application form are designed to be completed with brief answers, and there are instructions to underline, circle, delete or tick as necessary. Candidates need to be aware that clear handwriting is especially important in this exercise. Therefore, capital letters should be easy to distinguish, as should individual letters. This was not always the case. A few candidates did not follow the instructions and underlined, deleted, circled or ticked inappropriately. Nearly all candidates completed the form as Shokat Aziz.

#### **Water Sports Tournament Application Form**

##### **Section A**

Many candidates accurately provided the necessary details. There were very few misspellings in this section and it appears candidates were careful to check their spellings against those in the text to avoid losing marks. There were candidates who did not note the requirement in brackets for Shokat's age in 2013 and wrote 17 instead of 20. A few candidates gave Shokat's occupation as 'qualified jeweller' when he was a trainee. There were also candidates who did not understand the word 'occupation' and gave a sports activity. The address details were occasionally in the incorrect order or the country was omitted or given as Egypt. A few candidates used prepositions such as 'at' and 'in', which are inappropriate and cannot be credited. The email address was rarely incorrect.

##### **Section B**

This section was quite well answered overall. Candidates lost marks for different reasons. Some circled the age category instead of underlining it while others underlined the wrong group. Swimming, diving or sailing were all incorrect alternatives given for the sport Shokat wished to compete in. A few candidates gave windsurfing along with other sports. A few candidates deleted 'Yes' rather than 'No'. If one answer has been deleted, it is not necessary to circle the alternative, although this does not mean the answer is incorrect. There were sometimes mistakes in the details of previous tournaments. Words such as 'October' requiring a capital letter were started with a lower case letter. 'Medal' was occasionally misspelt 'metal'. One of the three details such as 'deep-sea diving' was sometimes omitted. 'His father' was occasionally given to indicate who would pay. This form had to be completed in the first person as Shokat Aziz. Similarly, responses such as 'Aziz' were not clear enough as this could have referred to Shokat Aziz.

##### **Section C**

Most candidates completed this section correctly. Occasionally, only one form of transport was supplied when both ferry and bus had to be specified. A few candidates put a cross in the box instead of a tick, or ticked the wrong box.

##### **Section D**

In this section, for maximum marks, candidates are required to keep within the prescribed word limit, use proper sentence construction with no errors of punctuation, grammar or spelling, and give relevant details according to information in the stimulus text. Candidates lose marks when these conventions are not followed. A number of candidates wrote a correct and relevant sentence. In some sentences there were errors of punctuation such as the omission of a comma to indicate a non-defining relative clause. A few candidates did not end the sentence with a full stop or wrote two sentences. Words such as 'Cairns' and 'scholarship' were sometimes misspelt. Occasionally, there was no subject/verb beginning to the sentence, for example, 'Try for a scholarship'. In this case, no marks can be awarded because correct sentence structure is lacking. The pronoun 'he' instead of 'I' was occasionally used, so the answer was incorrect. Candidates should take care to write the sentence from the point of view of the form-filler and copy words from the text accurately.

#### **Exercise 4**

A number of candidates completed this note-taking exercise well. On the whole, notes were appropriately brief. Occasionally, important details such as verbs that add to or clarify meaning were omitted and points were either incomplete or repeated. In such cases, responses could not be credited. It is important that candidates check that each point they make has a different focus.

##### *The children's behaviour before they were coached*

This section was generally well answered. Sometimes candidates repeated the idea that the children did not know the ball had to be kicked. Instead of writing 'let the ball strike them', some candidates used the pronoun 'it' when the ball had not been referred to previously, while others lifted 'strike them in the face', so the point was unclear.

##### *The teacher's improved coaching after the training course*

This section was quite well attempted. Some points were again repeated. The example bullet point was sometimes repeated as candidates had not noticed this following the heading. Verbs were required for clarity, for example, 'knows how to deal with young people,' and sometimes they were omitted. The idea of 'all' was important for the point 'lists all activities' as it communicates the degree to which the teacher was organised. This was not always included.

##### *Positive effects of football on the children*

Many candidates scored well in this section although there was also some repetition of points. Under this heading the comparative idea was important, so notes like 'respectful' or 'organised' without this idea could not be credited.

#### **Exercise 5**

Many candidates performed well on this exercise. Most candidates appeared to have been well prepared generally in the necessary summary skills, equipping them to carry out the requirements of the exercise. Candidates were asked to write a summary of the reasons for the decline in the number of tigers and the steps being taken by the World Wildlife Fund. There were candidates whose summary exceeded the word limit and included content points after 120 words, and in such cases marks were lost. Sometimes a mark could not be awarded if the point was not sufficiently precise. For example, candidates needed to state that *illegal* hunting contributed to the decline in tiger numbers, not just hunting. The fact that there were *more* anti-hunting patrols was also an essential idea. There were eleven possible content points in total and a number of candidates successfully located six of these.

Language marks were awarded across the whole range. Some candidates lifted the relevant points from the text and connected them with conjunctions without attempting to express these in their own words. A number of candidates were able to communicate the salient points by using some of their own words and restructuring ideas from the original text in order to gain a higher mark for language. It is important that content points remain clear when re-expressed. Since higher marks of three and four for language are available for candidates attempting to use their own words, practice with verb, noun and adjective synonyms, along with practice in forming alternative grammatical structures is recommended.

#### **Exercises 6 and 7**

##### **General comments**

The majority of candidates produced letters and articles which were satisfactory or better with regard to language and content in Exercises 6 and 7. Some candidates were able to write more than the specified number of words. There were a few whose writing was short of the minimum requirements for length. Candidates are not penalised for exceeding the number of words recommended but short answers are unlikely to be awarded a satisfactory mark for content, and the language mark can also be affected where the range of language is limited. Many candidates demonstrated that they were able to organise their writing into paragraphs, generally supplying an appropriate introduction and ending to the task set. Good organisation is an integral part of a coherent and cohesive piece of writing. The reader should be engaged and the ideas should be sufficiently clear and developed to do this.

There were some candidates who quite skilfully introduced idiomatic language and turns of phrase into their writing. Others sometimes used such language inappropriately, which does not help to achieve marks in the higher bands as communication is unnatural and precision is lost. Some candidates demonstrated good control of language, showing variety of structure and length, which meant that their mark for language was in the higher bands. Sometimes the language used was formed using basic structures and more complex structures were inaccurate, containing errors. It is important that tenses are used accurately, and past events were sometimes expressed using present tenses. Punctuation was generally sound, although sometimes commas were substituted for full stops, making sentences overlong and meaning unclear. Candidates who gained marks in the higher bands for content were able to present relevant views effectively.

### **Exercise 6**

In this exercise, the extent to which all the bullet point prompts are addressed and developed will determine the band achieved for content. For a mark in a higher band, candidates should have a good sense of purpose whilst sustaining the reader's interest. Examiners are looking to reward candidates adopting a more engaging style with some imaginative detail.

*Account of paid work during the last school holiday*

Candidates responded well to the topic, generally adopting a satisfactory or effective register and tone. Most candidates seemed to be aware of what doing a job involves. There was usually an appropriate beginning to the letter and the majority of candidates addressed all three bullet points. It is important that candidates clearly cover these, as this will affect the content mark. Details of what the job involved and what was learnt from the experience were often well developed. For most candidates this was described as a positive and useful experience and a range of jobs was chosen, from those requiring IT expertise to cafe work. The detail of who gave them the job, and why, was sometimes unclear or not well developed. A small number of candidates wrote about unpaid voluntary work or work at school. A few also lifted language from the reading texts in the paper; this cannot be credited if it is directly copied. In terms of language, some candidates were able to demonstrate a range of vocabulary, sometime quite specific, to describe the job. There were candidates who included inappropriate idiomatic language. Some candidates attempted more sophisticated language structures successfully.

### **Exercise 7**

In this exercise candidates give their views on a topic for a specified target audience. It is important that candidates read the rubric carefully and consider the prompts, which are given to help candidates form ideas on the subject. For a mark in one of the higher bands, candidates can develop the views in the prompts, expressing these in their own words and if possible giving other perspectives on the topic. Candidates should demonstrate that they can present arguments and support these with evidence and examples. They should also adopt a consistent tone and register for the context which will arouse the reader's interest in the topic.

*Selling the school sports fields to buy equipment for the science laboratories*

Candidates were expected to write an article for their school magazine discussing their views on selling the school sports fields to buy equipment for the science laboratories. There were two guiding prompts for the proposed sale and two against it. There were a few candidates who used the exact wording in the prompts along with the introductory rubric as the basis of their writing. It is important that candidates express ideas in their own words, as copied language cannot be given credit. There were different views expressed in responses to this question. A number of candidates felt that the fields and the equipment were equally important and suggested alternative ways of raising the money. Well developed articles discussed both sides of the argument, expanding on the health-promoting aspects of sports and the importance of a space for leisure to complement the demands of important academic work, and acknowledging the value of scientific study. Candidates were interested by the topic and able to relate to it.



# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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**Paper 0511/31**  
**Listening (Core)**

## **Key messages**

Teachers should continue to stress to their candidates the need to keep answers brief, concise and strictly relevant. The great majority of candidates produced the brief responses demanded by the rubric. On those occasions where candidates had offered lengthy explanations it usually proved risky, as they occasionally gave information which contradicted the right answers and so did not get credit. At best they had wasted valuable examination time writing too much.

As in previous sessions, totally accurate spelling was not demanded, since this is a test of understanding and listening, not a test of writing and spelling skills. Therefore, phonetic attempts were again accepted, so long as they were recognisable representations of the word in question, following the principle that this is a test of understanding and listening.

The advice teachers should offer their candidates remains unchanged: candidates should attempt to spell the word they hear as accurately as possible, and not be disheartened if the word is unfamiliar to them. Alternatively, candidates should be ready to rephrase ideas in their own words if they feel more confident doing this than attempting to write what they consider a difficult word.

## **General comments**

There was a wide distribution of marks achieved by the candidates this session, indicating that the paper discriminated well between them. Nearly all the candidates were able to attempt all the questions: there were very few omissions indeed, which suggests they nearly all found the paper accessible. It would appear that the candidates generally were familiar with the format of the paper, knew what was expected of them and had been prepared effectively by their Centres.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### **Questions 1 – 6**

This section was generally well answered, with most candidates offering brief responses as required.

#### **Question 1**

This was a highly accessible first question with very few omissions and most candidates gaining a mark. The most common error was to offer 'after school', on its own, without including the required 'tomorrow' or 'next day' – perhaps an example of over-brevity. Candidates need to be sure to include all necessary relevant information.

#### **Question 2**

Question 2 was another straightforward question, with most candidates offering the required information – 24<sup>th</sup>. '24' on its own was accepted, though candidates who went on to guess a month, e.g. October, did not get the mark.

### Question 3

This question was reasonably accessible for candidates, although more demanding than the first two. The idea of 'a selection of fruit and vegetables' was required. The most common error was to simply put 'fruit and vegetables', or to write 'food and vegetables'. A significant number misread the question and offered 'he lost the list'. Candidates need to be reminded to read the question very carefully, making proper use of the pre-listening time.

### Question 4

This question was of a similar level of difficulty to the previous question. 'Route' did not appear to be familiar to some candidates, so that a wide range of spellings were offered. Examiners recognised many phonetic variants, including 'rute' and 'root'. Some candidates offered alternatives with the same meaning, e.g. 'different train'.

### Question 5

This question was again of a similar level of difficulty to the previous two questions, despite it offering more challenge, in that the two parts of the question had to be correct for the mark to be awarded. The spelling of 'dentist' caused some difficulty, with many offering unacceptable phonetic attempts. The main problem, though, was in recognising the time when the girl should leave school. Many offered '4.30' – the time of her dental appointment. Candidates would benefit from practice at recognising details such as times and dates, and learning to sift out irrelevant information.

### Question 6

This proved to be the most challenging question and many candidates scored 1 or 0 out of 2. For the sport of 'squash' a wide range of variants were allowed as phonetically acceptable. Similarly, Examiners took a sympathetic line with good phonetic attempts at 'special'. However, a common mistake was to omit a verb before 'special ball'. As the question asked clearly 'What must Thomas do...?' candidates were expected to offer a verb – e.g. 'buy a special ball'. This was another instance where candidates would be well advised to read the question very carefully prior to answering. It was surprising that many candidates did not recognise the word 'ball' – 'board' was a common error, and not acceptable phonetically.

### Question 7

This question required candidates to complete some notes after listening to an interview, by inserting missing words into blank spaces. It was generally quite competently done, and nearly all candidates understood the procedure. Perhaps the most common error was for candidates to enter words which did not make proper sense in the sentence or phrase, e.g. in item (iv) offering 'swimming' for 'women'. The advice for candidates is as in past sessions: read the question paper carefully and check that the word offered fits the context sensibly.

- (i) This was a straightforward first item with most candidates answering correctly. The most common error was to write a long series of zeros which did not meet the required 'billion'.
- (ii) The second item required two numbers to be entered correctly. This proved straightforward for most candidates, though there were some who confused '18' and '80'. This is an area where practice could lead to improvement, as numbers often arise in this paper. It makes sense for teachers to ensure candidates are familiar with recognising and writing numerals.
- (iii) In this item, the word 'women' caused a little difficulty for some who offered 'winning' or 'swimming', neither of which really made proper sense in the context.
- (iv) This question proved a little more challenging. The spelling of 'trainers' caused a few candidates to fail to get the mark here. A common error was to enter the word 'players' – this made sense in the context but was not the required detail from the recording. Close listening was required. Some candidates misheard '70%' as '17%'. Perhaps a little more thought about the meaning would have suggested that the number would be a high one rather than a low one.

- (v) This item was the most difficult for the candidates generally. Examiners accepted a wide range of offerings for 'ambassador', e.g. 'ambasorder', although 'famous' was given more commonly. The most frequent errors were to offer 'publicity' – an answer which could not have been correct as it appeared in the question itself.

#### Question 8

- (i) The required answer, 'area', proved a challenge, and many different phonetic attempts were made. Generally, though, this item was well answered.
- (ii) A more challenging item, with many candidates apparently not being familiar with the word 'trader'. 'Traitor' and 'farmers' appeared quite regularly and were not awarded the mark.
- (iii) This item appeared to be less difficult and many were able to offer the correct numerals – although there were instances again of '15,000' instead of '50,000'. The same advice applies – teachers would be well advised to ensure their candidates are familiar with numerals, both low and high.
- (iv) The required answer was quite simple, 'factory', but many candidates tried to offer a much longer phrase, '£6 million factory'. In doing so, they often fell into the trap of writing '6 million factories', which clearly did not make sense in the context. This proved a very discriminating item.
- (v) This item was less demanding, so that many were able to answer it correctly and clearly. A few entered the wrong currency, e.g. \$34 – an error which could have been avoided by careful reading of the question paper.
- (vi) Although 'seedless' was not a very familiar word, many candidates offered phonetically acceptable versions. Teachers should always encourage their candidates to have an educated guess at words they do not recognise because it can often reap a reward of a mark. 'Without seeds' was seen quite often and was awarded a mark as it showed understanding.
- (vii) Although requiring two words for the mark, this item was generally well answered. Many candidates offered acceptable variants of 'disease'.

#### Questions 9 and 10

These questions required candidates to indicate whether a statement is true or false by ticking the appropriate box. As last session, the two questions had very similar results: nearly all candidates were well practised and attempted the questions satisfactorily. Many of the most able scored full marks, and even many weaker candidates were able to score half marks or more. This suggests that the candidates were able to understand the interviews and access the questions reasonably well. A very small minority of candidates left blank boxes when they would have had a chance of being correct. There were also a few instances where candidates had not been clear about amendments to their answers, or had left both boxes ticked. Candidates need to be reminded of the need to make their answers, and any amendments, absolutely clear for the Examiners.

# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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**Paper 0511/32**  
**Listening (Core)**

## **Key messages**

Teachers should continue to stress to their candidates the need to keep answers brief, concise and strictly relevant. The great majority of candidates produced the brief responses demanded by the rubric. On those occasions where candidates had offered lengthy explanations it usually proved risky, as they occasionally gave information which contradicted the right answers and so did not get credit. At best they had wasted valuable examination time writing too much.

As in previous sessions, totally accurate spelling was not demanded, since this is a test of understanding and listening, not a test of writing and spelling skills. Therefore, phonetic attempts were again accepted, so long as they were recognisable representations of the word in question, following the principle that this is a test of understanding and listening.

The advice teachers should offer their candidates remains unchanged: candidates should attempt to spell the word they hear as accurately as possible, and not be disheartened if the word is unfamiliar to them. Alternatively, candidates should be ready to rephrase ideas in their own words if they feel more confident doing this than attempting to write what they consider a difficult word.

## **General comments**

There was a wide distribution of marks achieved by the candidates this session, indicating that the paper discriminated well between them. Nearly all the candidates were able to attempt all the questions: there were very few omissions indeed, which suggests they nearly all found the paper accessible. It would appear that the candidates generally were familiar with the format of the paper, knew what was expected of them and had been prepared effectively by their Centres.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### **Questions 1 – 6**

This section was generally well answered, with most candidates offering brief responses as required.

#### **Question 1**

This was a highly accessible first question with very few omissions and most candidates gaining a mark. The most common error was to offer 'after school', on its own, without including the required 'tomorrow' or 'next day' – perhaps an example of over-brevity. Candidates need to be sure to include all necessary relevant information.

#### **Question 2**

Question 2 was another straightforward question, with most candidates offering the required information – 24<sup>th</sup>. '24' on its own was accepted, though candidates who went on to guess a month, e.g. October, did not get the mark.

### Question 3

This question was reasonably accessible for candidates, although more demanding than the first two. The idea of 'a selection of fruit and vegetables' was required. The most common error was to simply put 'fruit and vegetables', or to write 'food and vegetables'. A significant number misread the question and offered 'he lost the list'. Candidates need to be reminded to read the question very carefully, making proper use of the pre-listening time.

### Question 4

This question was of a similar level of difficulty to the previous question. 'Route' did not appear to be familiar to some candidates, so that a wide range of spellings were offered. Examiners recognised many phonetic variants, including 'rute' and 'root'. Some candidates offered alternatives with the same meaning, e.g. 'different train'.

### Question 5

This question was again of a similar level of difficulty to the previous two questions, despite it offering more challenge, in that the two parts of the question had to be correct for the mark to be awarded. The spelling of 'dentist' caused some difficulty, with many offering unacceptable phonetic attempts. The main problem, though, was in recognising the time when the girl should leave school. Many offered '4.30' – the time of her dental appointment. Candidates would benefit from practice at recognising details such as times and dates, and learning to sift out irrelevant information.

### Question 6

This proved to be the most challenging question and many candidates scored 1 or 0 out of 2. For the sport of 'squash' a wide range of variants were allowed as phonetically acceptable. Similarly, Examiners took a sympathetic line with good phonetic attempts at 'special'. However, a common mistake was to omit a verb before 'special ball'. As the question asked clearly 'What must Thomas do...?' candidates were expected to offer a verb – e.g. 'buy a special ball'. This was another instance where candidates would be well advised to read the question very carefully prior to answering. It was surprising that many candidates did not recognise the word 'ball' – 'board' was a common error, and not acceptable phonetically.

### Question 7

This question required candidates to complete some notes after listening to an interview, by inserting missing words into blank spaces. It was generally quite competently done, and nearly all candidates understood the procedure. Perhaps the most common error was for candidates to enter words which did not make proper sense in the sentence or phrase, e.g. in item (iv) offering 'swimming' for 'women'. The advice for candidates is as in past sessions: read the question paper carefully and check that the word offered fits the context sensibly.

- (i) This was a straightforward first item with most candidates answering correctly. The most common error was to write a long series of zeros which did not meet the required 'billion'.
- (ii) The second item required two numbers to be entered correctly. This proved straightforward for most candidates, though there were some who confused '18' and '80'. This is an area where practice could lead to improvement, as numbers often arise in this paper. It makes sense for teachers to ensure candidates are familiar with recognising and writing numerals.
- (iii) In this item, the word 'women' caused a little difficulty for some who offered 'winning' or 'swimming', neither of which really made proper sense in the context.
- (iv) This question proved a little more challenging. The spelling of 'trainers' caused a few candidates to fail to get the mark here. A common error was to enter the word 'players' – this made sense in the context but was not the required detail from the recording. Close listening was required. Some candidates misheard '70%' as '17%'. Perhaps a little more thought about the meaning would have suggested that the number would be a high one rather than a low one.

- (v) This item was the most difficult for the candidates generally. Examiners accepted a wide range of offerings for 'ambassador', e.g. 'ambasorder', although 'famous' was given more commonly. The most frequent errors were to offer 'publicity' – an answer which could not have been correct as it appeared in the question itself.

#### Question 8

- (i) The required answer, 'area', proved a challenge, and many different phonetic attempts were made. Generally, though, this item was well answered.
- (ii) A more challenging item, with many candidates apparently not being familiar with the word 'trader'. 'Traitor' and 'farmers' appeared quite regularly and were not awarded the mark.
- (iii) This item appeared to be less difficult and many were able to offer the correct numerals – although there were instances again of '15,000' instead of '50,000'. The same advice applies – teachers would be well advised to ensure their candidates are familiar with numerals, both low and high.
- (iv) The required answer was quite simple, 'factory', but many candidates tried to offer a much longer phrase, '£6 million factory'. In doing so, they often fell into the trap of writing '6 million factories', which clearly did not make sense in the context. This proved a very discriminating item.
- (v) This item was less demanding, so that many were able to answer it correctly and clearly. A few entered the wrong currency, e.g. \$34 – an error which could have been avoided by careful reading of the question paper.
- (vi) Although 'seedless' was not a very familiar word, many candidates offered phonetically acceptable versions. Teachers should always encourage their candidates to have an educated guess at words they do not recognise because it can often reap a reward of a mark. 'Without seeds' was seen quite often and was awarded a mark as it showed understanding.
- (vii) Although requiring two words for the mark, this item was generally well answered. Many candidates offered acceptable variants of 'disease'.

#### Questions 9 and 10

These questions required candidates to indicate whether a statement is true or false by ticking the appropriate box. As last session, the two questions had very similar results: nearly all candidates were well practised and attempted the questions satisfactorily. Many of the most able scored full marks, and even many weaker candidates were able to score half marks or more. This suggests that the candidates were able to understand the interviews and access the questions reasonably well. A very small minority of candidates left blank boxes when they would have had a chance of being correct. There were also a few instances where candidates had not been clear about amendments to their answers, or had left both boxes ticked. Candidates need to be reminded of the need to make their answers, and any amendments, absolutely clear for the Examiners.

# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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**Paper 0511/33**  
**Listening (Core)**

## **Key messages**

Teachers should continue to stress to their candidates the need to keep answers brief, concise and strictly relevant. The great majority of candidates produced the brief responses demanded by the rubric. On those occasions where candidates had offered lengthy explanations it usually proved risky, as they occasionally gave information which contradicted the right answers and so did not get credit. At best they had wasted valuable examination time writing too much.

As in previous sessions, totally accurate spelling was not demanded, since this is a test of understanding and listening, not a test of writing and spelling skills. Therefore, phonetic attempts were again accepted, so long as they were recognisable representations of the word in question, following the principle that this is a test of understanding and listening.

The advice teachers should offer their candidates remains unchanged: candidates should attempt to spell the word they hear as accurately as possible, and not be disheartened if the word is unfamiliar to them. Alternatively, candidates should be ready to rephrase ideas in their own words if they feel more confident doing this than attempting to write what they consider a difficult word.

## **General comments**

There was a wide distribution of marks achieved by the candidates this session, indicating that the paper discriminated well between them. Nearly all the candidates were able to attempt all the questions: there were very few omissions indeed, which suggests they nearly all found the paper accessible. It would appear that the candidates generally were familiar with the format of the paper, knew what was expected of them and had been prepared effectively by their Centres.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### **Questions 1 – 6**

This section was generally well answered, with most candidates offering brief responses as required.

#### **Question 1**

This was a highly accessible first question with very few omissions and most candidates gaining a mark. The most common error was to offer 'after school', on its own, without including the required 'tomorrow' or 'next day' – perhaps an example of over-brevity. Candidates need to be sure to include all necessary relevant information.

#### **Question 2**

Question 2 was another straightforward question, with most candidates offering the required information – 24<sup>th</sup>. '24' on its own was accepted, though candidates who went on to guess a month, e.g. October, did not get the mark.

### Question 3

This question was reasonably accessible for candidates, although more demanding than the first two. The idea of 'a selection of fruit and vegetables' was required. The most common error was to simply put 'fruit and vegetables', or to write 'food and vegetables'. A significant number misread the question and offered 'he lost the list'. Candidates need to be reminded to read the question very carefully, making proper use of the pre-listening time.

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This proved to be the most challenging question and many candidates scored 1 or 0 out of 2. For the sport of 'squash' a wide range of variants were allowed as phonetically acceptable. Similarly, Examiners took a sympathetic line with good phonetic attempts at 'special'. However, a common mistake was to omit a verb before 'special ball'. As the question asked clearly 'What must Thomas do...?' candidates were expected to offer a verb – e.g. 'buy a special ball'. This was another instance where candidates would be well advised to read the question very carefully prior to answering. It was surprising that many candidates did not recognise the word 'ball' – 'board' was a common error, and not acceptable phonetically.

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This question required candidates to complete some notes after listening to an interview, by inserting missing words into blank spaces. It was generally quite competently done, and nearly all candidates understood the procedure. Perhaps the most common error was for candidates to enter words which did not make proper sense in the sentence or phrase, e.g. in item (iv) offering 'swimming' for 'women'. The advice for candidates is as in past sessions: read the question paper carefully and check that the word offered fits the context sensibly.

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- (iv) This question proved a little more challenging. The spelling of 'trainers' caused a few candidates to fail to get the mark here. A common error was to enter the word 'players' – this made sense in the context but was not the required detail from the recording. Close listening was required. Some candidates misheard '70%' as '17%'. Perhaps a little more thought about the meaning would have suggested that the number would be a high one rather than a low one.



- (v) This item was the most difficult for the candidates generally. Examiners accepted a wide range of offerings for 'ambassador', e.g. 'ambasorder', although 'famous' was given more commonly. The most frequent errors were to offer 'publicity' – an answer which could not have been correct as it appeared in the question itself.

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- (vi) Although 'seedless' was not a very familiar word, many candidates offered phonetically acceptable versions. Teachers should always encourage their candidates to have an educated guess at words they do not recognise because it can often reap a reward of a mark. 'Without seeds' was seen quite often and was awarded a mark as it showed understanding.
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These questions required candidates to indicate whether a statement is true or false by ticking the appropriate box. As last session, the two questions had very similar results: nearly all candidates were well practised and attempted the questions satisfactorily. Many of the most able scored full marks, and even many weaker candidates were able to score half marks or more. This suggests that the candidates were able to understand the interviews and access the questions reasonably well. A very small minority of candidates left blank boxes when they would have had a chance of being correct. There were also a few instances where candidates had not been clear about amendments to their answers, or had left both boxes ticked. Candidates need to be reminded of the need to make their answers, and any amendments, absolutely clear for the Examiners.

# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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**Paper 0511/41**  
**Listening (Extended)**

## Key messages

- Examiners appeal to candidates to provide clear and legible responses. Examiners need to see the formation of individual letters and where handwriting is untidy this can be extremely difficult. It is not in a candidate's interest to provide responses which are difficult to read, as benefit of doubt cannot be given under these conditions.
- In responses where one idea or item is required, candidates are advised not to list more than one idea. This follows for two items i.e. two details or ideas only. A short, concise answer is preferable to a lengthy one, which might contain material that changes the meaning and negates the response.
- In longer responses, candidates should be careful to convey their ideas clearly. The use of own words is encouraged, but candidates should try to make sure that the response offered makes sense as a whole, and in context.
- When making phonetic attempts, candidates should try to replicate the number of syllables in the word that has been heard and also try to re-create the sounds of the key phonemes. Examiners are able to give benefit of doubt for attempts at spelling.
- Candidates should be encouraged to try to predict the answers in the shorter gap-filling exercises. They should consider what type of word is needed: a noun, a verb, a number, a measurement. When predicting, they should read the text before the gap and also after the gap. Candidates often lose marks when what has been placed in the gap does not make sense in context.
- Candidates should try to establish what a longer question is asking for by highlighting the question words (e.g. how, why, when, what) and/or the key words in the question. Establishing what the question requires gives a strong indication of the type of answer that is likely to be successful.
- Examiners recommend more work in the classroom on developing pre-listening skills (particularly in predicting content) and on raising awareness of common abbreviations. The importance of prepositions and their meaning should also be emphasised, and further work on common synonyms is recommended.
- Pencil should not be used to provide initial or 'draft' responses; it is better for candidates to use a pen from the outset and simply cross out responses which need to be altered.

## General comments

Examiners are keen to allow benefit of doubt to candidates, particularly in cases where understanding appears to have been conveyed, but with limited ability in spelling, grammar or structures.

Successful responses to short-answer questions were those which provided the detail required succinctly, and did this by using note-form responses. Some candidates wrote too much and in doing so either changed the meaning or provided a response which was hard to decipher. Where several details were offered, Examiners considered the response as a whole and decided if the additional information detracted or if it could be regarded as irrelevant or superfluous (and in these cases, the mark was allowed). However, candidates should be strongly discouraged from providing a list of potential responses.

The most successful answers which required longer responses were those where the response had clear meaning as a phrase. Some candidates should re-read their longer responses to ensure clarity and that the idea is being conveyed as succinctly as possible. Examiners are not able to reward responses which do not make sense or where meaning is in doubt.

As regards spelling, phonetic attempts are always considered, and, in many cases, lead to marks being awarded. Where candidates offered an alternative spelling comprising the correct number of syllables and accurate vowel and consonant sounds, it was more likely that credit could be given.

Many questions involve numbers, years, dates, times, amounts of money, etc, and these should be practised. For example, it is useful to ensure candidates can distinguish between the pronunciation of 'eight', 'eighty' and 'eighteen'. For larger amounts, it is recommended that candidates write the word out e.g. '5 million' or '6 billion', rather than attempting the numerical amount. For smaller amounts, numbers should be used. However, Examiners will consider all methods for conveying quantities and amounts.

### **Comments on specific questions**

*Questions 1 to 6 were based on six separate brief conversations or short announcements.*

#### **Question 1**

This was generally answered well. Most candidates responded with 'different route' as expected. A number of different spellings for 'route' were seen including 'root', 'rout' and 'rute'. Where candidates suggested that a different 'road' should be taken the mark was not allowed.

#### **Question 2**

This question required a time (4.20pm) and a destination (the dentist) and most candidates were able to provide the two details successfully. Marks were lost, however, where the time was given incorrectly as '4.30' or '4.20am' or 'dentist' was not spelled with sufficient accuracy e.g. 'dontist', 'duntist', 'dedist'. 'Dental' was allowed for dentist. Candidates who reversed the details needed to be careful; for example, 'dentist at 4.20' was seen and not accepted because the dentist appointment was at 4.30pm.

#### **Question 3**

For this question, candidates needed to understand that a squash court had to be booked and that a special (beginner's) ball would be needed. 'Court' proved to be a challenging word for some and a number of candidates offered 'course' instead of 'court'. Others chose to suggest that it was a squash lesson or session that had been booked. Almost all of the alternatives to buying a ball were accepted, e.g. 'get', 'bring', 'have', 'use', 'borrow' etc.

#### **Question 4**

Although many appeared not to know the words 'canoe' and 'tuition', phonetic attempts were generally accepted, e.g. 'kanu', 'canew', and 'tuishion'. In some cases, candidates combined the two ideas and provided responses such as 'canoe lesson' or 'taught to canoe' and this was fine, showing good understanding. This proved to be the most challenging question in the opening section.

#### **Question 5**

For question 5, many candidates recognised that the offer was basically two pizzas for (the price of) one. However, a significant number of candidates then went on to quote the offer detail as 'after 6pm' or 'after 7pm' rather than the correct 'after 6.30pm'. Where 'booking a table for 12' was incorporated, but the correct details had already been provided, this was regarded as superfluous (correct but irrelevant) material and the mark was allowed. Any reasonable spelling of pizza was allowed.

#### **Question 6**

For this question, candidates were required to consider quite a lot of detail and to select accordingly. It was a challenging question and only stronger candidates managed to secure the two marks available. The second element, that an adult was needed, was understood by most candidates, but the first element proved challenging. The most common error was 'a 30% reduction' (it was actually 33%) but 'to return home' was seen and this does not display understanding of why a railcard was being used. Where 'they are 4 children under 16 and want the 30% reduction' was given, the mark was not allowed due to the presence of incorrect information. 'They are 4 children under 16' on its own, gained the mark. Candidates should be careful therefore in adding incorrect detail which can negate the answer.

*Question 7 was based on an interview about a special World Cup football tournament.*

Item 1 was answered very well with most candidates supplying '1 billion'. Where candidates attempted to write the number, errors were seen in about a quarter of cases. Large numbers will ideally be written as words.

Item 2 required two details for the mark, and it was generally answered successfully. Marks were lost where a candidate simply stated 'help' in the first gap ('help homelessness' was the wrong idea). Various spellings of 'raise' were seen and allowed e.g. 'rase', 'raze', and synonyms such as 'establish', 'attract', 'increase', 'grow', 'improve' were seen and allowed.

Item 3 was almost always correct. Where the mark was not given, it was usually the year that had been provided incorrectly.

Item 4 involved two straightforward details of '56' (teams) and (tournament for) 'women'. However, a number of candidates seemed to mishear 'women' and provided 'swimming' or the lexically close 'winning'. Neither was credited, though synonyms for 'women' were allowed. The singular, 'woman', was also allowed.

Item 5 required two details for the mark and candidates performed quite well on this item. On a few occasions, '17%' was offered for '70%'. Where phonetic attempts were provided for trainers e.g. 'traners' there was usually no problem, and synonyms that were accepted included 'coaches', 'instructors' and 'teachers'.

For Item 6, candidates mostly offered 'famous' or 'ambassador'. Both were correct, but the latter saw a very wide range of phonetic attempts, many of which could be credited if the appropriate number of syllables and phoneme sounds had been re-created e.g. 'ambasida'. 'Professional' footballer was not allowed.

Item 7 tested whether candidates had heard 'sponsors'. Many candidates had, and variants of 'sponsors' included 'sponser' and 'sponcers', and these were fine, though 'responser' was seen on a number of occasions and was not allowed. Some candidates offered 'supporters' or 'fund-raisers', probably as guesses that seemed to fit in the gap.

**Question 8** was based on an interview about pomegranates.

Item 1 required candidates to recognise that pomegranates were grown in the (modern) 'area' that is now Iran and Iraq. Candidates performed well generally, but some failed to include 'area', and supplied only 'modern day' which made little sense in the gap. 'Ancient area' was sometimes seen and was incorrect.

Item 2 was generally well answered with many candidates realising that it was 'traders' who carried the pomegranates along the silk route. Phonetic attempts that were allowed included 'tradors' and 'traiders'; those that were not allowed included 'traitors'. Where an appropriate synonym was used e.g. 'merchants', 'sellers', this was fine. The responses of 'travellers' and 'farmers', however, were not allowed.

Item 3 proved to be the most challenging question in this section. Close phonetic attempts at 'orchards' were allowed e.g. 'orchers', but 'orchids' (which was frequently seen) was not allowed. Candidates who offered educated guesses at 'fields', or 'farms', could not obtain the mark due to a lack of precision.

Item 4 was answered correctly by most candidates. Responses that did not achieve the mark included '15 thousand tonnes', '18 thousand tonnes', '50 tonnes' and '80 tonnes'.

Item 5 produced a number of different responses. Some candidates made the task more difficult than it needed to be by adding unnecessary details e.g. £6 million (factory), Kabul (factory), and missed out on the mark due to unforced errors such as 'carbon factory' and '6 million factories'. This proved to be a very useful differentiator. The plural was not allowed on this occasion as it created a detail which was incorrect.

Item 6 provided generally accurate responses but some candidates complicated things by trying to add the unit of currency which had already been given. '£34' was seen and was not accepted. However, this item was handled well by the majority of candidates.

Item 7 saw the highest rate of success of all of the items in this section. It was rare to see this answered incorrectly, but when it was it was usually because '£20 million' was given, or '£21 billion' was suggested.

Item 8 required candidates to convey the detail that farmers want to develop a seedless variety, and a wide range of misspellings of 'seedless' was seen, most of which were allowed as close phonetic attempts. Some inventive candidates offered an alternative response (rather than misspell seedless) such as 'without seeds' or 'no seeds', and these were allowed. 'Seeds' was seen quite often and not credited. Likewise, 'seedling' was sometimes seen.

Item 9 required two details for the mark, 'green' (tea) and 'disease'. It was surprising how many candidates were not able to spell 'disease' correctly (but appeared to know the word), and this word probably attracted the widest array of spelling attempts on the entire paper. Benefit of doubt was offered in most cases. Occasionally, candidates offered 'attack' rather than 'disease' and this was accepted.

**Question 9** was based on an interview about the Nobel Peace Prize.

9(a) required candidates to be quite specific and state which areas of scientific achievement are rewarded. Two areas were required, 'physics' and 'chemistry'. Where candidates provided more than two areas, and introduced inaccuracy e.g. 'physics, chemistry and literature', the mark was not allowed. Candidates needed to demonstrate skill in selecting appropriate detail to receive the mark. Candidates who listed other potential areas were therefore unlikely to receive the mark, and this principle is carried across the whole paper. Detail which is clearly inaccurate will not receive reward.

9(b) needed candidates to discriminate between Alfred Nobel leaving money in his will (on his death) from giving his money (when he was alive). Responses which equated to the former e.g. 'left his fortune' or 'financed it by his will' or 'left his worth' were credited. Responses which suggested the latter e.g. 'donated his wealth' or 'offered his wealth' or 'spent his money for the prize' were not allowed. Where 'wealth' was not securely known some candidates used 'money', and this was fine. 'He left his money to the Nobel Peace Prize winner', which was incorrect, was sometimes seen.

9(c) only had one correct response, 'suitably qualified people'. However, candidates found it difficult to extract this from the text. 'Suitable people' was sometimes seen but this was too general and the core idea of 'qualified' people needed to be present. This proved to be the most challenging question in this section.

9(d) asked how the Peace Prize differs from the other Nobel Prizes and the straightforward response is that the project under consideration does not have to be complete i.e. the Peace Prize can be given to a project in progress. Many candidates recognised this and were able to provide the simple clause 'the work does not need to be finished' or something which equated to this. It became complicated where candidates attempted to lift the idea that it can be awarded to people in the process of creating peace. In these responses, it was critical that an understanding of 'in the process' was supplied i.e. 'is awarded to people who create peace' was not allowed (as this idea is present in the name of the award). Responses which stated that the Peace Prize must not be complete were not rewarded. Where candidates tried to focus on the Nobel Prizes not allowing incomplete projects, it was important that the pronoun was used and that it referred back to the appropriate antecedent i.e. 'awarded for completed work' could not be credited as this implies the Peace Prize.

9(e) required candidates to convey two straightforward details for the mark; the date of '10th December' and that it was the 'anniversary of Nobel's death'. A good number of candidates answered accurately, but marks were lost where the wrong month was given (October and February also featured in the text) or where 'Nobel's day' was written instead of 'Nobel's death'. Alternative ways of conveying death were allowed e.g. 'Nobel's dead day'. Some candidates felt that just saying 'Nobel's anniversary' was sufficient, but this was not precise enough. A surprising number of candidates answered an imaginary 'where' question and offered 'Stockholm', which was unfortunate if it was preceded by the correct reason.

9(f) was answered very well with candidates performing better on this than any of the other questions in this section. Two ideas were required; that the concert raises the profile of the Prize and that it is a celebration. Marks were lost when 'raise profit' was given (or raise money) but also when 'raise the profile of the Peace Prize winner' was offered, which added unnecessary detail and changed the meaning. If a synonym was used e.g. 'raise the concept of', or 'raise the importance of', this was allowed. 'Ceremony' was not allowed for 'celebration' as it is much more formal in its undertaking.

**Question 10** was based on a talk about an archaeological discovery.

10(a) required candidates to identify that the purpose of the expedition was to find new or previously undiscovered species of dinosaur. It was not, therefore, to simply locate additional existing dinosaur species. It was a challenging question, therefore, intended to differentiate and to reward candidates who produced precise responses. Responses which did not recognise that a new species was being sought such as, 'to find dinosaurs', 'to study dinosaurs', 'to check for dinosaurs' and 'to uncover dinosaurs' were not allowed. Various spellings of dinosaur were seen and were generally accepted.

10(b) needed a specific time; either the 'spring of 2012', or '4.5 years after the digging began'. Candidates who offered '2012' only did not gain the mark for being imprecise, and candidates who simply stated '4.5 years' also lost the mark.

10(c) had two elements, for one mark each, and candidates were generally successful in pointing out that the horns were used for 'defence'. The other element was answered less securely, particularly when candidates offered too much information where only one detail was actually required i.e. the longest horns (ever found).

Synonymous responses which were allowed included 'largest', 'biggest', and 'longer than any other dinosaur'. This question saw a large amount of additional and unnecessary detail, which on some occasions Examiners could ignore, but on other occasions led to blurring of meaning. Candidates who provided shorter responses tended to be more successful in gaining both marks.

10(d) proved to be the most difficult question in this section. '72 million years ago' was the full response needed for the first part of the question, so '72 million years' and '72 years ago' were both incorrect. 'Carbon dating' was the means by which this was known. Responses which implied that carbon dating had been understood e.g. 'carbon data', 'carbon tests', 'carbon detecting', were allowed, but responses which did not convey good understanding e.g. 'carbonated date' were not allowed.

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# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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**Paper 0511/42**  
**Listening (Extended)**

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For question 5, many candidates recognised that the offer was basically two pizzas for (the price of) one. However, a significant number of candidates then went on to quote the offer detail as 'after 6pm' or 'after 7pm' rather than the correct 'after 6.30pm'. Where 'booking a table for 12' was incorporated, but the correct details had already been provided, this was regarded as superfluous (correct but irrelevant) material and the mark was allowed. Any reasonable spelling of pizza was allowed.

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Item 6 provided generally accurate responses but some candidates complicated things by trying to add the unit of currency which had already been given. '£34' was seen and was not accepted. However, this item was handled well by the majority of candidates.

Item 7 saw the highest rate of success of all of the items in this section. It was rare to see this answered incorrectly, but when it was it was usually because '£20 million' was given, or '£21 billion' was suggested.

Item 8 required candidates to convey the detail that farmers want to develop a seedless variety, and a wide range of misspellings of 'seedless' was seen, most of which were allowed as close phonetic attempts. Some inventive candidates offered an alternative response (rather than misspell seedless) such as 'without seeds' or 'no seeds', and these were allowed. 'Seeds' was seen quite often and not credited. Likewise, 'seedling' was sometimes seen.

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**Question 9** was based on an interview about the Nobel Peace Prize.

9(a) required candidates to be quite specific and state which areas of scientific achievement are rewarded. Two areas were required, 'physics' and 'chemistry'. Where candidates provided more than two areas, and introduced inaccuracy e.g. 'physics, chemistry and literature', the mark was not allowed. Candidates needed to demonstrate skill in selecting appropriate detail to receive the mark. Candidates who listed other potential areas were therefore unlikely to receive the mark, and this principle is carried across the whole paper. Detail which is clearly inaccurate will not receive reward.

9(b) needed candidates to discriminate between Alfred Nobel leaving money in his will (on his death) from giving his money (when he was alive). Responses which equated to the former e.g. 'left his fortune' or 'financed it by his will' or 'left his worth' were credited. Responses which suggested the latter e.g. 'donated his wealth' or 'offered his wealth' or 'spent his money for the prize' were not allowed. Where 'wealth' was not securely known some candidates used 'money', and this was fine. 'He left his money to the Nobel Peace Prize winner', which was incorrect, was sometimes seen.

9(c) only had one correct response, 'suitably qualified people'. However, candidates found it difficult to extract this from the text. 'Suitable people' was sometimes seen but this was too general and the core idea of 'qualified' people needed to be present. This proved to be the most challenging question in this section.

9(d) asked how the Peace Prize differs from the other Nobel Prizes and the straightforward response is that the project under consideration does not have to be complete i.e. the Peace Prize can be given to a project in progress. Many candidates recognised this and were able to provide the simple clause 'the work does not need to be finished' or something which equated to this. It became complicated where candidates attempted to lift the idea that it can be awarded to people in the process of creating peace. In these responses, it was critical that an understanding of 'in the process' was supplied i.e. 'is awarded to people who create peace' was not allowed (as this idea is present in the name of the award). Responses which stated that the Peace Prize must not be complete were not rewarded. Where candidates tried to focus on the Nobel Prizes not allowing incomplete projects, it was important that the pronoun was used and that it referred back to the appropriate antecedent i.e. 'awarded for completed work' could not be credited as this implies the Peace Prize.

9(e) required candidates to convey two straightforward details for the mark; the date of '10th December' and that it was the 'anniversary of Nobel's death'. A good number of candidates answered accurately, but marks were lost where the wrong month was given (October and February also featured in the text) or where 'Nobel's day' was written instead of 'Nobel's death'. Alternative ways of conveying death were allowed e.g. 'Nobel's dead day'. Some candidates felt that just saying 'Nobel's anniversary' was sufficient, but this was not precise enough. A surprising number of candidates answered an imaginary 'where' question and offered 'Stockholm', which was unfortunate if it was preceded by the correct reason.

9(f) was answered very well with candidates performing better on this than any of the other questions in this section. Two ideas were required; that the concert raises the profile of the Prize and that it is a celebration. Marks were lost when 'raise profit' was given (or raise money) but also when 'raise the profile of the Peace Prize winner' was offered, which added unnecessary detail and changed the meaning. If a synonym was used e.g. 'raise the concept of', or 'raise the importance of', this was allowed. 'Ceremony' was not allowed for 'celebration' as it is much more formal in its undertaking.

**Question 10** was based on a talk about an archaeological discovery.

10(a) required candidates to identify that the purpose of the expedition was to find new or previously undiscovered species of dinosaur. It was not, therefore, to simply locate additional existing dinosaur species. It was a challenging question, therefore, intended to differentiate and to reward candidates who produced precise responses. Responses which did not recognise that a new species was being sought such as, 'to find dinosaurs', 'to study dinosaurs', 'to check for dinosaurs' and 'to uncover dinosaurs' were not allowed. Various spellings of dinosaur were seen and were generally accepted.

10(b) needed a specific time; either the 'spring of 2012', or '4.5 years after the digging began'. Candidates who offered '2012' only did not gain the mark for being imprecise, and candidates who simply stated '4.5 years' also lost the mark.

10(c) had two elements, for one mark each, and candidates were generally successful in pointing out that the horns were used for 'defence'. The other element was answered less securely, particularly when candidates offered too much information where only one detail was actually required i.e. the longest horns (ever found).

Synonymous responses which were allowed included 'largest', 'biggest', and 'longer than any other dinosaur'. This question saw a large amount of additional and unnecessary detail, which on some occasions Examiners could ignore, but on other occasions led to blurring of meaning. Candidates who provided shorter responses tended to be more successful in gaining both marks.

10(d) proved to be the most difficult question in this section. '72 million years ago' was the full response needed for the first part of the question, so '72 million years' and '72 years ago' were both incorrect. 'Carbon dating' was the means by which this was known. Responses which implied that carbon dating had been understood e.g. 'carbon data', 'carbon tests', 'carbon detecting', were allowed, but responses which did not convey good understanding e.g. 'carbonated date' were not allowed.

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**Paper 0511/43**  
**Listening (Extended)**

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9(d) asked how the Peace Prize differs from the other Nobel Prizes and the straightforward response is that the project under consideration does not have to be complete i.e. the Peace Prize can be given to a project in progress. Many candidates recognised this and were able to provide the simple clause 'the work does not need to be finished' or something which equated to this. It became complicated where candidates attempted to lift the idea that it can be awarded to people in the process of creating peace. In these responses, it was critical that an understanding of 'in the process' was supplied i.e. 'is awarded to people who create peace' was not allowed (as this idea is present in the name of the award). Responses which stated that the Peace Prize must not be complete were not rewarded. Where candidates tried to focus on the Nobel Prizes not allowing incomplete projects, it was important that the pronoun was used and that it referred back to the appropriate antecedent i.e. 'awarded for completed work' could not be credited as this implies the Peace Prize.

9(e) required candidates to convey two straightforward details for the mark; the date of '10th December' and that it was the 'anniversary of Nobel's death'. A good number of candidates answered accurately, but marks were lost where the wrong month was given (October and February also featured in the text) or where 'Nobel's day' was written instead of 'Nobel's death'. Alternative ways of conveying death were allowed e.g. 'Nobel's dead day'. Some candidates felt that just saying 'Nobel's anniversary' was sufficient, but this was not precise enough. A surprising number of candidates answered an imaginary 'where' question and offered 'Stockholm', which was unfortunate if it was preceded by the correct reason.

9(f) was answered very well with candidates performing better on this than any of the other questions in this section. Two ideas were required; that the concert raises the profile of the Prize and that it is a celebration. Marks were lost when 'raise profit' was given (or raise money) but also when 'raise the profile of the Peace Prize winner' was offered, which added unnecessary detail and changed the meaning. If a synonym was used e.g. 'raise the concept of', or 'raise the importance of', this was allowed. 'Ceremony' was not allowed for 'celebration' as it is much more formal in its undertaking.

**Question 10** was based on a talk about an archaeological discovery.

10(a) required candidates to identify that the purpose of the expedition was to find new or previously undiscovered species of dinosaur. It was not, therefore, to simply locate additional existing dinosaur species. It was a challenging question, therefore, intended to differentiate and to reward candidates who produced precise responses. Responses which did not recognise that a new species was being sought such as, 'to find dinosaurs', 'to study dinosaurs', 'to check for dinosaurs' and 'to uncover dinosaurs' were not allowed. Various spellings of dinosaur were seen and were generally accepted.

10(b) needed a specific time; either the 'spring of 2012', or '4.5 years after the digging began'. Candidates who offered '2012' only did not gain the mark for being imprecise, and candidates who simply stated '4.5 years' also lost the mark.

10(c) had two elements, for one mark each, and candidates were generally successful in pointing out that the horns were used for 'defence'. The other element was answered less securely, particularly when candidates offered too much information where only one detail was actually required i.e. the longest horns (ever found).

Synonymous responses which were allowed included 'largest', 'biggest', and 'longer than any other dinosaur'. This question saw a large amount of additional and unnecessary detail, which on some occasions Examiners could ignore, but on other occasions led to blurring of meaning. Candidates who provided shorter responses tended to be more successful in gaining both marks.

10(d) proved to be the most difficult question in this section. '72 million years ago' was the full response needed for the first part of the question, so '72 million years' and '72 years ago' were both incorrect. 'Carbon dating' was the means by which this was known. Responses which implied that carbon dating had been understood e.g. 'carbon data', 'carbon tests', 'carbon detecting', were allowed, but responses which did not convey good understanding e.g. 'carbonated date' were not allowed.

10(e) required the detail of the creature's habitat which was a 'swamp like area'. Where 'habitat' was not known a variety of attempts were seen based on where the dinosaurs lived. Locations were often given e.g. 'Mexico', 'between the Arctic and The Gulf', 'an island area', 'a wet area', or even 'the National Museum'. Where 'swamp' was attempted, similar sounding words were allowed e.g. 'swomp'.



# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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**Paper 0511/05**  
**Oral Communication**

## Key messages

- Please read and become familiar with the *Teacher's/Examiner's Notes* booklet. This contains detailed guidance on how to conduct the tests, assess candidates' performance, and prepare the samples to be returned to CIE. Moderators feel that far fewer transgressions would occur at Centres if this booklet was read carefully beforehand, and referred to during the examination process.
- Conduct Part A at the beginning of the test so that candidates know the format of the whole test from the outset, and are aware that only Part D is assessed.
- Moderators would like to see more purposeful warm-ups. If the warm-up phase does not indicate a particular topic which will suit a candidate, please avoid selecting a topic which is clearly unsuitable.
- Begin Part D by utilising the first two prompts on the topic card and not your own opening questions. This ensures that the flow of conversation remains focused on the topic and that candidates begin in a confident manner, because the first two prompts are less demanding.
- Ensure that a focused and relevant discussion develops in Part D by utilising the last three prompts to explore the depth of the topic so that candidates can illustrate their higher-level speaking skills. Examiners are required to use all five prompts and should use them in the sequence given.
- Remain within the allowed timings: 2-3 minutes for Part B and 6-9 minutes for Part D. Tests which are too short or too long are always likely to be counter-productive.
- Examiners who allow candidates to offer speeches or monologues are reminded that they are not allowing those candidates to engage in a genuine and spontaneous conversation. In such cases, it is unlikely that a mark above the Band 4 Level for *Development and Fluency* would be acceptable, because little or no conversation has taken place. Please do not allow or encourage monologues or speeches.

## General comments

Moderators reported that more Examiners are recognising that the five prompts on the topic cards should be used in sequence to help promote developing discussions. The very best Examiners weave the five prompts into a flowing and natural discourse, adding further related questions where appropriate.

Please note that Moderators utilised the *CW Amend* form on more occasions this session to correct the occasional inaccurate marking at some Centres of individual candidates. The *CW Amend* is used for this purpose and not for correcting trends of lenient or severe marking; these are addressed by scaling the marks of all the candidates, or of candidates in particular mark ranges.

Moderators would like to remind Centres to carry out thorough clerical checks to ensure that the mark sheets provided are accurate and consistent with each other. The marks on the *Summary Form* should be identical to those presented to CIE. It is also recommended that the addition of the criterion marks be checked by another Teacher/Examiner, because errors in addition are sometimes found during the moderation process.

Please ensure that the *Summary Form* is included in the package sent to CIE. This is the form that records the three individual criterion marks, in addition to the total mark. The Examiner who conducts the tests is responsible for completing the *Summary Form*. He or she should sign the form and date it. The form also records the topic cards given to each candidate. In effect, this form is the working record of the examining undertaken, and it is therefore of most use to the external Moderator.

**Part A: Brief explanation of the test format**

Centres are reminded that Examiners should explain briefly what is going to happen in the course of the test just after the candidate has taken his/her seat and been introduced. It is better for all if Part A is conducted at the beginning and the candidate is immediately aware that Part B – the warm up – is not assessed, and that Part D is the only assessed phase. Moderators would like to emphasise that Part A is still omitted by too many Centres.

**Part B: The warm-up**

The warm-up should be used to try to select an appropriate topic card. Examiners should not miss an opportunity to present a suitable topic for discussion, particularly when a candidate has expressed an interest in an area for which one of the topic cards might generate a productive conversation.

Please therefore aim to draw out candidates' hobbies and interests and avoid talking about school matters, or anything which might make candidates uneasy, for example, nervousness, or other examinations being taken. There are Centres at which the warm-up focuses too much on school life, and Moderators also noticed that some Centres are incorporating informal discussion of the topics into the warm-ups. Neither of these approaches is acceptable.

A sensible approach is to stay within the 2-3 minutes allowed but to gain an early idea of a candidate's interests. However, please also use the warm-up to relax the candidate, to get to know a little about him or her, and to prepare the candidate for Part D and for formal assessment.

**Part C: Selecting the topic, handing out the topic card, and allowing preparation time**

Please note that the Examiner chooses the topic card and under no circumstances should a choice be offered to the candidate.

The selection of topic cards should not be random or prepared beforehand. It is not fair to candidates to choose cards in this manner. Topics should be selected to try to match each candidate's interests and ability and Moderators are listening to see how, and how well, this is being done by Examiners.

The recording must be paused at this stage, and the Examiner should announce the topic card that has been chosen, so that the candidate can have 2-3 minutes to collect and collate his/her thoughts. Moderators observed that the recording is still not being paused by some Centres, and that the announcement is sometimes omitted.

**Part D: The conversation**

The best discussions are relaxed and allow a natural conversation to flow, with skilful Examiners picking up on points made by candidates, but returning to the topic card at appropriate times to ensure focus. Examiners should certainly work through the five bullet point prompts in the given order but should remember to extend the discussions beyond the prompts to ensure a full (6-9 minutes) and rounded discussion takes place.

Examiners are reminded that development of the conversation is an integral part of the assessment. What is expected is that Examiners will help guide candidates through the levels of the discussion. The supplied prompts on the topic cards increase in sophistication and move from the personal through the general, to the more abstract and challenging; thereby allowing stronger candidates to illustrate higher level speaking skills. Weaker candidates are not expected to engage fully with prompts 4 and 5, and Examiners will need to perhaps simplify the ideas in these prompts (and paraphrase them) to accommodate and support these candidates.

It is not acceptable for an Examiner to simply run through the five prompts and re-phrase them as questions. This approach almost always results in a very formal test and does not comply with the requirement to generate and sustain a conversation.

Examiners are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure that candidates do not offer speeches or monologues. In such cases, the Examiner should intervene quickly and begin a conversation.

Moderators noted that when the first two prompts on the topic card are utilised from the outset, the discussions tend to be successful, with the candidates growing in confidence, and more able therefore to respond to the more challenging prompts, which deal with more sophisticated and sometimes abstract issues.

### **Comments on specific questions**

There is a clear link between the successful deployment of a topic card and the effectiveness of the warm-up in selecting a suitable topic. Moderators report that there were many cases where candidates expressed an interest in an area close to the subject area of a topic card, but were then given a topic which was unproductive. It is important to try to match the topics to the candidate, and not choose cards randomly.

#### *Card A: Internationalism*

This was generally given to candidates of an international background and in these cases worked well. It sometimes led to the over-use of facts and knowledge about different nations.

#### *Card B: Films*

This was a very popular topic. On a few occasions, there was too much factual detail provided and not enough engagement with the last two prompts. However, this was an accessible topic and proved useful for some of the less able candidates.

#### *Card C: Olympics*

This topic proved accessible to the sizeable number of candidates with an interest in sport or competitions. When it was given to candidates who had no interest at all in such matters, it led to difficult and stilted conversations.

#### *Card D: Writing*

This topic worked very well for those candidates with an interest in writing. The last two prompts were easily within reach of most candidates, some of whom spoke freely about the power that journalists often have in influencing people's lives and views.

#### *Card E: The Police*

This proved to be a universal topic and worked in almost all cultures. Many candidates were well-informed of the structure of their local and/or national police forces, and many held strong views on how a police force should operate. This topic produced some very mature and enlightened responses to the final prompt.

#### *Card F: Global tourism*

There were some lively exchanges in response to the fourth prompt, where some candidates clearly held strong views about the damage done by too much tourism.

#### *Card G: Happiness*

Many candidates were able to engage with the first three prompts. Less able candidates found the fourth and fifth prompt quite challenging.

#### *Card H: Consideration for others*

This proved to be a topic with universal appeal. There were some pertinent and rewarding discussions, and the last prompt opened up the potential for a philosophical debate for more able candidates around the 'individual versus society' idea.

#### *Card I: Farming*

This proved to be a topic which was not widely used. However, when it was used appropriately it led to focused and productive discussions.

#### *Card J: Science*

This was a very popular card and it generated lots of lively debate around key scientific principles. It worked well with all candidates, and even with candidates who were not especially interested in science. More able candidates clearly enjoyed the opportunity to present their views on the ideas suggested by the last two prompts. Most candidates given this topic card were able to engage with all five prompts.

### **Administrative procedures**

Please note that if a Centre chooses to divide its entry across the two syllabuses; that is, enter some candidates for syllabus 0510/05 (oral endorsement) and other candidates for syllabus 0511/05 (count-in oral) in the same examination session, a full sample and the accompanying paperwork is required by CIE for each component entry.

It is strongly recommended that all Centres use digital recording equipment to generate audio files which can then be transferred to a CD, DVD or USB drive. Please use recognised audio file formats that can be played by common computer software (e.g. mp3, wav, wma). There is no need to use the blue 'cassette inserts' – a list of the candidates in the sample, their numbers, and the mark given to each, either on the CD cover (but not on the CD itself please) or on a separate sheet is fine. It would be even better if the individual tracks on the CD could be re-named to the candidate number and name (instead of track 1, track 2, etc.). Please, avoid using analogue recording and tapes/cassettes if at all possible.

# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Paper 0511/06

Oral Communication (Coursework)

## Key messages

- Centres are reminded of the ethos of coursework, which is to provide the candidates with a broad range of activities and a variety of ways for their second language speaking skills to be demonstrated, and assessed. Evidence of this should be presented on the Individual Candidate Record Cards, which should contain full descriptions of the activities and tasks undertaken.
- If a teacher is not completely confident in designing and implementing three different and productive activities comprising relevant tasks then it is advisable to opt for Component 05, the Oral Test.
- Please note that it is important for English as a Second Language that the activities are designed to accommodate and illustrate second language English competence. Remember that the assessment criteria test language skills and not presentational or performance skill.

## General comments

A Moderator is seeking to fulfil two main duties while listening again to a Centre's coursework: initially to confirm the Centre's interpretation and application of the assessment criteria, but also to confirm that a variety of appropriate tasks and activities has been completed.

## Comments on specific tasks

This session saw a good range of coursework activities in those Centres who recognised that coursework should form an integral part of the learners' programmes of study. Productive coursework included candidates making individual presentations, working with a partner and then also taking part in small group discussions. A balance of role playing and authentic material was present in stronger work.

## Administrative matters

It is strongly recommended that all Centres use digital recording equipment to generate audio files which can then be transferred to a CD, DVD or USB drive. Please use recognised audio file formats that can be played by common computer software (e.g. mp3, wav, wma). There is no need to use the blue 'cassette inserts' – a list of the candidates in the sample, their numbers, and the mark given to each, either on the CD cover (but not on the CD itself please) or on a separate sheet is fine. It would be even better if the individual tracks on the CD could be re-named to the candidate number and name (instead of track 1, track 2, etc.). Please avoid using analogue recording and tapes/cassettes if at all possible.