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ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Papers 0510/01 (Core) and 0510/02 (Extended)
Reading and Writing

General comments

Most of the candidates managed to complete the paper but in some Centres a significant percentage did not. The main omissions were in the summary question (**Part 2 Exercise 2**) and one or more of the extended writing tasks.

There were few serious rubric infringements.

Part 1 was reasonably accessible to the majority of candidates in both the Core and Extended paper. Responses showed a pleasing improvement in reading comprehension overall.

In **Part 2** there was continued improvement in the summary task and there were fewer candidates writing over the recommended word length. Only very able candidates attempted their own words in the summary. Across all Centres there was some difficulty in the note making exercise.

By contrast in **Part 3** many candidates wrote well under the word length due to either lack of inspiration or carelessness, depriving themselves of marks.

The scripts of some candidates were marred by very poor handwriting, together with poor spelling, grammar and punctuation. This mainly affected **Part 3** but indecipherable handwriting can cause problems both for the Examiner and the candidate in all parts of the paper. This was a very noticeable fault in this session's responses. Candidates must be reminded to write clearly and legibly.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1

Exercise 1

Most candidates in the Core and Extended found this an accessible exercise at the start of the paper.

- (a) This was generally well answered, although some did not mention 'conservation', merely 'protecting species and habitats', and others spelled 'conservation' as 'conversation'.
- (b) Usually well answered. The most common mistake was to call the section 'Big and Small' which had been wrongly lifted from the stimulus text.
- (c) Again well answered by the majority of candidates at both levels and there were enough options allowed on the mark scheme for most candidates to obtain a mark. Some put 'painting' instead of 'face painting' but then added another option to gain the mark.
- (d) Here candidates often copied out part of the text failing to specify exactly what the visitors were transfixed by and so failed to gain the mark.
- (e) The most usual answer was 'by bus'. Some candidates failed to understand that the key factor was the 'Zoo Safari Ticket'.

Exercise 2: Paper 1 (Core) – Skateboard

Candidates generally gave a good account of themselves in this exercise.

- (a) Well answered. Some candidates wrote 'nothing to do'.
- (b) Usually correctly answered in line with the mark scheme.
- (c) A lot of candidates put 'skatepark' with no idea of 'build' or 'provide'.
- (d) This was usually correctly answered although a few candidates were confused about giving an answer related to time.
- (e) This caused some confusion to a few candidates who wrote about 'a controlled road' rather than recognising that one of the safety factors relied on the crossing not the road.

Exercise 2: Paper 2 (Extended) – Bulls in Pamplona

In the main this was well answered by all candidates. There was good engagement with the subject matter and many gained full marks for this exercise.

- (a) Almost all candidates answered correctly.
- (b) Again, a very accessible question with the main responses being 'the atmosphere', 'watching the event' or 'participating'.
- (c) Most got this correct although a few mentioned that it was to honour St Fermain.
- (d) Well answered except for a few candidates who thought the opposition to the race was because of human casualties.

Exercise 3

Most candidates managed this exercise quite well although relatively few gained the full seven marks.

- (a) Quite a few candidates missed out the length of stay and some wrote Mumbai or Kolkata. A few gave the length of time as three days and two nights.
- (b) This caused a little confusion to some candidates who wrote merely about lions or even lions on the train, and others gave the answers to (d).
- (c) This was well answered and the candidates usually gave one or two rewardable items, which usually included comics or steam trains.
- (d) Very often correctly answered. Some did not mention the availability of food and drink on the stations when the train stopped.
- (e) This more challenging question caused some difficulty for Core tier candidates who often lifted from the text randomly but the Extended tier candidates were able to include the answers on the mark scheme even if heavily lifted. Some talked about Jim's disappointment that India was not all jungle (an answer to (f)) whilst others mentioned the delicious smells or the crowds without explaining how they affected Jim.
- (f) Some candidates mentioned the flatness of the landscape but failed to elaborate about Jim's feelings.
- (g) The most common error was to say that Jim had spent most of his life travelling, referring to his adult journeys rather than his journey as a child.

Part 2

This was well attempted by the majority of candidates although there were challenges in **Exercise 1** and **Exercise 3** in the Extended paper and **Exercise 3**, the form filling, for Core candidates.

Exercise 1

- (a) Many got this correct, but a few gave 'one in five children aged five is obese'.
- (b) This was very well done, although a few did put both answers on the same line and then added the idea of problems in the future even though the question asked what happened at school.
- (c) Weaker candidates seemed to find interpretation of the chart difficult or they looked at the wrong part of the chart and included answers about the female chart or wrong ideas. Some gave 'from 0 to 5' without any indication of percentage. However, the majority gave the answer 'increased' in some form or another.
- (d) Quite well done with a variety of rewardable responses. Weaker candidates wrote about the food industry instead of school.
- (e) Although candidates seemed to understand the question they often experienced difficulties in giving a coherent answer. Some vaguer answers did not clearly differentiate between the two workers so marks could not be awarded. Others wrote that 'people should eat what they need according to the kind of work they do'. This was not rewarded.

(Extended Paper 02 only)

- (f) This gave able candidates scope to give a good answer which included at least four of the points in a neat paragraph. A few candidates repeated the idea of 'disease' and one or two digressed completely describing what parents or schools should do to prevent obesity. A few felt that the food industry was responsible which was not required.

Exercise 2: Summary

The summary question shows improvement session on session although there was not a great deal of attempt by candidates to use their own words. Many able candidates could still obtain the full four content points whilst making an attempt to put the ideas in their own words. Nevertheless, the majority of candidates merely lifted the relevant points and many gave a very long preamble about how African music is being affected by globalisation. This influenced the language mark as in this instance the candidates had not really attempted the summary which had been set. It was a little disappointing to see how many candidates made this mistake. As always candidates should be encouraged to read the rubric very carefully to establish precisely what is required in the summary.

Exercise 3: Paper 1 (Core) – Form filling

Performance on this exercise showed a welcome improvement on November 2003. There was no evidence that candidates thought they were filling in the form as themselves.

In the first section a significant number of candidates did not use capital letters foregoing a mark straight away. Candidates must be reminded that they often need to use capital letters of tick or circle answers in various parts of the form. Sadly those who did use capitals often lost the mark because they confused the capital 'L' with the 'l' in Iolku Street. Some candidates are still using an idiosyncratic approach to address writing and ignoring the conventions that this paper has used for some considerable time. For example many began the address with 'outside Athens'.

In Section 2 the email address was usually accurate although some candidates used capitals here which was not required. Some spelled 'Piraeus' wrongly.

Section 3 was usually well done except that mistakes were made by candidates writing that the subjects were Leisure Studies and Technology instead of Business technology. A pleasing number of candidates gave both answers to the Special Interests and the question on Relevant Experience was well done.

Section 4 caused some difficulties as candidates did not always give the correct answer to her Preferred Volunteer Work. Able candidates gave the complete answer here. Some said 'her mother' in the Nearest Relative section. The phone number was nearly always correct.

Exercise 3: Paper 2 (Extended) – Note Making

This was a challenging exercise to all except the most able candidates. They often struggled with the concepts and the text. The most accurate section was **(b)** where most candidates managed to gain some marks.

- (a)** Break-up of Ice Shelves: Many were confused on this section but a reasonable number correctly identified the process as a 'natural process of renewal'. Some understood that edges only broke off with the rise in temperature and a small number of candidates gave the answer about the size and rate of production worrying scientists.
- (b)** Current Problems: This was the most accessible section and many candidates gained both marks. Some did not explain fully enough that the world climate was being affected. Others gave answers which would have been relevant in section **(c)**.
- (c)** Long Term Effects: Many able candidates gained the full three marks from the mark scheme correctly identifying the ideas from the text. Less able candidates frequently made point 9 in two or three different ways.

Part 3**Exercise 1 – Activity Holiday**

This subject opened a whole wide range of interpretations depending on the candidate's background and Centres can be assured that all responses were marked sympathetically. There were adventures from bungee jumping and horse riding to more sedate activities with family members such as a day out at the zoo. The tone and register were almost always appropriate and accounts were in the main very detailed and lively. Even less able candidates managed to convey a sense of wonder, excitement and thrill. However, there were many problems with punctuation and tense usage from some Centres. Some candidates had obviously lifted ideas from other parts of the paper. This would have detracted from the engagement with the task, especially where they lifted whole sentences from the paper.

Exercise 2 – Competition

On the whole there were some good responses to this question and again the tone and register were usually appropriate. There was some excellent use made of the passive voice in this regard. Many answers were well organised and had the right authoritative tone. Some weaker answers merely listed a number of sports activities and did not always include the final prompt. Others made a great issue about how many people could enter. However, there were many ideas given from art shows and sports activities to actively helping the community in some way.

(Extended Paper 02 only)

Exercise 3 – Careers

There were some very interesting and thoughtful answers in this exercise with only the weakest of candidates listing from the prompts. Most candidates dealt with both sides of the argument coming down in favour of getting a better education. For less able candidates this idea was repeated in several different ways but almost always with the tone appropriate to a school magazine.

<p>Papers 0510/03 and 0510/04 Listening (Core and Extended)</p>

General comments

There was evidence that candidates had been well prepared, and they made a fair attempt at all questions. Generally there was much evidence of good aural comprehension and a fair level of engagement with task and taped text. The candidates coped well with the format of the paper and used the allotted time effectively – very few questions were left unanswered. **Part 3** of each paper achieved the intended differentiation between candidates while remaining accessible for candidates at the target levels.

Comments on specific questions**Part 1****Questions 1-6: Paper 1 (Core tier)**

This was the short answer section of the paper comprising six short scenarios demanding concise answers.

Question 1

The correct answer here was £3.84 but many candidates omitted the pound notation or wrote dollars or euros, or omitted currency altogether. The currency was made very clear on the tape. Some candidates got the number wrong or omitted the decimal point.

Question 2

Many candidates named the venue here – village hall – rather than where it could be found. Some gave perfect answers but many muddled the concepts of “first” and “third” and “left” and “right”.

Question 3

Responses were generally fairly accurate although some candidates wrote pounds or dollars instead of euros or transcribed the amount incorrectly.

Question 4

The correct answer, “ice on the runway”, led to many misconceptions – “roadway”, “wrong way” “railway” – and some candidates wrote “because it was delayed” which was the question in the first place.

Question 5

The required answer was the pedestrian zone, which only the more able candidates answered correctly. Examiners credited a variety of spelling here if understanding was demonstrated by the candidate.

Question 6

This was generally well answered. Most candidates wrote about the “front five coaches” although some put “seats” and failed to score. The idea of the train dividing or separating was more complex and only the most able achieved this in accordance with the progression of challenge of the paper.

Questions 1-6: Paper 2 (Extended tier)**Question 1**

The correct answer “ice on the runway” led to many misconceptions – “roadway”, “wrong way” “railway” – and some candidates wrote “because it was delayed” which was the question in any case.

Question 2

The required answer was the pedestrian zone, which only the more able candidates answered correctly. Examiners credited a variety of spelling here if understanding was demonstrated by the candidate.

Question 3

This was generally well answered. Most candidates wrote about the “front five coaches” although some put “seats” and failed to score. The idea of the train dividing or separating was more complex and only the most able achieved this in accordance with the progression of challenge of the paper.

Question 4

This needed the full title of the cafe – the “Happy Coffee Bean” – which was generally well answered as candidates engaged with the scenario presented efficiently. Some candidates wrote the “Happy Coffee”.

Question 5

This was very well done – most candidates understood the idea that the wind was too strong for the sailing lesson and scored well here.

Question 6

This carried two points – the first was often achieved by candidates who understood that a party was being given or photos were being presented but many candidates omitted the fact that he was sad and needed cheering up or that the photos would remind him of them. Many wrote that “he was leaving” which was part of the question itself and could not be credited.

Candidates should be careful to answer the whole question – particularly if two marks are allotted and the question requires two points in the answer.

Part 2**Question 7**

Generally responses to this exercise showed a good level of understanding. The first answer needed the idea of players in time/at the same speed. A few candidates even wrote ‘synchronised’ which was an excellent answer. The size of the orchestra was generally well done although some candidates wrote 18 instead of 80. “Body language” the next answer, was well attempted. “Trumpet”, the conductor’s own instrument, was well understood by candidates as were his “3 years” at music college.

Question 8

The first answer needed “middle” but many candidates wrote “shores” which did not make sense. Then the required response was “exported” and “world” – most candidates wrote the latter correctly here, but had difficulty expressing the idea of distribution and writing “around” instead, which could not be credited. The number of stems – 800 000 – was well answered although many candidates omitted a few zeros. The daytime temperature and the altitude were very accessible to all candidates except that many wrote metres instead of “5 000 ft” or omitted the measurement entirely. “Feeding” and “planting” were well done and also the idea of the flowers being picked daily was generally accurate.

In the Extended tier version of the exercise, the amount of employees – “70 000” was usually correctly transcribed.

Part 3**Paper 1: Core Tier**

As usual, this comprised two true/false exercises. This method continues to provide challenge and good differentiation with much evidence of candidates working throughout.

Question 9 (e), which was False, was the element which worried most candidates. Only a few candidates were able to achieve full marks on the exercise.

Question 10 (f) and (l) – both False – caused the most problems for candidates here. Generally, though, candidates engaged well with the subject matter presented, and attempted answers – there were very few blank spaces left on the answer papers.

Part 3**Paper 2: Extended Tier****Question 9**

Candidates engaged well with the subject matter presented on the tape. **(a)** was well answered. **(b)** needed the idea of Istanbul being in two continents and was fairly well understood by candidates. Many candidates however did not answer “location” and wrote about the food. **(c)** received a good response. In **(d)** many incorrect versions of “21 000” were seen. A good answer and a simple one was that the mosque was built on a hill and that the cathedral was built in the 6th century – some wrote 16th century. There were some incorrect transcriptions of the year 1458 in **(e)**. **(f)** needed the idea of Ms Nas finding the street where her grandmother used to live and was quite well done – although some candidates wrote in much more general terms about crossing back to Europe.

Question 10

This was in response to an interview with a Formula One driver and was quite challenging in content. **(a)** was well answered – the driver needed to convince his mother that safety measures were taken in the sport. In **(b)** 304.5 kmh was well answered except where candidates omitted the measurement of speed. In **(c)** 13th lap was well answered although some wrote “lab” and could not be credited. **(d)** needed the release of the brakes idea – this was often well done but many wrote “breaks” or “realise the breaks” and changed the sense required in the answer and could not be credited. **(e)** was a particularly challenging question – most candidates got the idea that the driver was going too fast but their answers lacked the idea of hitting a kerb or spinning off on a corner. **(f)** in response to the support of his parents was quite well answered although some wrote about the driver being determined to reach his goal rather than about his family’s support.

Paper 0510/05
Oral Communication

General comments

Moderators report again that in the vast majority of cases candidates were well prepared for this component and Examiners took great care to place candidates at ease. There continues to be a gradual improvement in the conduct of the Oral Test. The **Warm ups** were generally of a good length and focused on suitable matters, and the **Conversations** were productive, allowing candidates to exhibit their speaking skills.

Centres will note a further refinement to the Report Form (CW/Rep), with the addition of tick boxes for each of the four parts of the test. This enabled Moderators to draw attention to weaker areas, or areas needing improvement, regarding the conduct of the test.

In general, administrative procedures continue to be completed well, with many Centres showing good awareness of the moderation process. The introduction of the three additional tick boxes in November 2003 is helping again to highlight areas where there are shortcomings. There were several observations made by External Moderators with regard to procedures:

- Moderators filled out fewer Amendment Forms, and this is good news. However, where addition/transcription mistakes were made on the Summary Forms or the Mark Sheets, they tended to be at larger Centres, i.e. those with greater numbers of candidates. Centres should *nominate a person other than the Examiner* (e.g. a colleague in the English department) to check the totals which are being arrived at. It really is unacceptable to award a mark to a candidate after an examination, and then record a *different* mark on the official documentation.
- It would appear that some Centres are still failing to include *both* of the required forms. The Moderator’s copy of the Mark Sheet (MS1) is important to confirm accurate transcription of the marks. The Summary Form is equally important, as this indicates the breakdown of the marks into the three criteria for all of the candidates.
- There is clear improvement in the size of the samples being sent in. Ideally, Moderators prefer to receive the minimum number of recordings *on one or two cassettes*.

- Centres will note the new tick box for Part A – a brief explanation of the format of the examination. There are still a few Centres at which no explanation of what is going to happen is offered to the candidates.
- Moderators note that at some Centres, Examiners are reading out the content of the topic card *in full*. This is not necessary, as the candidate can read the card in her/his own time while the tape is paused. This is also a time during which candidates' queries may be answered, and this does not need to be recorded.

Comments on specific aspects of the oral

Warm up

There continues to be a considerable difference in the duration and the effectiveness of the warm ups. Examiners are reminded that the warm up serves two purposes: to place the candidate at ease and perhaps to indicate which topic card might be the most productive for discussion. At Centres where the candidates are known to the teachers, it is of course likely that a short warm up is all that is needed. However, at Centres where candidates are meeting Examiners for the first time, the Examiner's skill and sensitivity in conducting an appropriate warm up is probably more apparent.

Warm ups should not be too long or too short – Centres should adhere to the 2-3 minutes suggested in the *Teacher's/Examiner's Notes*. The warm ups should not be too formal or formulaic – the focus should be on the candidate and an effort should be made to make that person feel as comfortable as possible, given that he or she is about to take an examination. Examiners should not include the topic of examinations (or talk about nerves) in the warm ups, nor is it likely that a candidate will be placed at ease by talking *entirely* about her or his school.

Moderators would like to see more Examiners probing candidates' areas of interest in the warm ups – helping to ensure that an appropriate topic card is selected for Part D of the test.

Topic cards and the Conversations

Moderators did not report any major problems with the topic cards. It was felt that candidates were able to talk with ease and at some length about all of the topics.

However, Card D often proved difficult for weaker candidates, who were unable to discuss probing and challenging environmental issues. Card A was found to be accessible to all, with many candidates able to talk about potential/future careers. Cards C and E both produced lively and entertaining discussions, about music and wish lists. Moderators were impressed by the altruism shown when Card E (Three Wishes) was under discussion. There were, however, a few occasions when the topic of Music was used for candidates who clearly had no interest or background in it. Card B was perhaps the topic that some Examiners failed to develop, or found most difficult to develop.

Examiners are not required to ensure that all of the prompts on the Cards are considered. A candidate may be able to sustain an interesting and relevant conversation based on the topic alone, and this is quite permissible. The aim of the cards is to generate focused discussion, and Examiners and candidates are achieving this in a variety of ways.

Some Examiners are reminded that it is their responsibility to do as much as possible to ensure that a conversation takes place. When Moderators hear long periods of silence, it is usually because an Examiner is choosing not to intervene. Also, if a candidate offers a potential opening for further discussion, the Examiner should seek to explore this.

Assessment criteria

Assessment was generally accurate. On occasions where adjustment was made to Centres' marks, it tended to be the result of lenient marking.

Advice to larger Centres

The use of more than one Examiner should be seen *only* at large Centres – i.e. those with a large number of candidates. It is assumed that a single Examiner should be in a position to conduct at least 25 oral tests – many Examiners have shown that they are able to cope with significantly more than this number.

Where more than one Examiner is required, Centres should ideally offer a training session or workshop to ensure that the Oral Tests are conducted in a similar manner.

It is also important that steps are taken to ensure that *the assessment criteria are applied consistently*. It is very difficult for External Moderators to confirm competent examining when Examiners at the same Centre are interpreting and applying the criteria differently.

It is requested, therefore, that Centres who need to use more than one Examiner, *appoint a single Examiner to be responsible for overseeing the Oral Test examination session*. Duties should include: planning the tests; drawing up a suitable testing timetable; ensuring that each Examiner has a good number of candidates to examine (at least 25); monitoring the examining team to maintain consistency throughout the session; and, organising and collating the documentation which is sent in to CIE. In short, CIE needs evidence that a single person has assumed responsibility for the Centre's submission.

Paper 0510/06

Coursework

General comments

In the ideal portfolio of coursework a candidate would complete three *different* tasks. It would be very pleasing to see that candidates have been involved in group discussions and pair-work, in addition to making individual presentations. Evidence of this should be presented on the Individual Candidate Record Cards.

Moderators are pleased to report that this is being achieved by most Centres. However, there are still some Centres which are not approaching coursework in an appropriate manner.

Comments on specific aspects

Tasks

The tasks chosen were generally suitable and varied, enabling the candidates to demonstrate their language skills appropriately.

However, some Centres should avoid the repetition of three similar tasks. It is not acceptable to ask candidates to deliver three speeches, for example, or for them to take part in three similar conversations, albeit on different topics. The result of these approaches is inevitably limited and disappointing coursework.

Procedural obligations

Moderators report that in cases where three distinct and appropriate tasks were set, Centres have provided candidates with suitable guidance and have helped to collate and organise interesting and productive material.

Assessment

Assessment was sound in most cases. However, Moderators noted that a degree of leniency continues to occur in cases where task-setting is limited (particularly to individual performance). For this component, the criteria do take into account how well candidates engage with others – the fluency criteria, in particular, should be applied with this in mind.

Advice to Centres

External Moderators hope 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, and also to confirm that a variety of appropriate tasks have been completed.

For the moderation process to be completed efficiently, it is now requested that Centres submit only a recording of each candidate engaged in a discussion or a conversation. This might be with a Teacher/Examiner or it might be with another candidate. There is no need to send in examples of group work, and/or recordings of candidates' presentations or speeches. (Larger Centres will, of course, still send a representative sample of their candidates' work).

If there is any confusion as to what is appropriate coursework, it is recommended that candidates are entered for the Oral Test (0510/05) instead.