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ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
9280/W

Writing Paper

Mark scheme

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Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the releva questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from oxfordaqaexams.org.uk

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Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly Level 3 with a small amount of Level 4 material it would be placed in Level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the Level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Assessment Objectives

The paper is designed to assess the following Writing AOs:

W1: write short texts to convey meaning and exchange information.
W2: produce clear and coherent text of extended length to present key points, details and ideas.
W3: make accurate use of vocabulary and grammatical structures; spell and punctuate accurately.
W4: manipulate the language with increasing fluency and creativity for a variety of purposes.

Mark allocation

	Content and Communication (W1, W2)	**Language (W3, W4)**	**Total**
Q01	6	3	**9**
Q02	6	6	**12**
Q03	8	8	**16**
Q04	8	15	**23**
Total	**28**	**32**	**60**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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