

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

International GCSE English as a
second language (4ES0) Paper 1

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Paper Background

The Reading and Writing Paper is divided into 6 Parts as follows:

Part	Topic	Question types
Part 1 Reading	Giving advice: 'Top 10 things you can do to reduce global warming'	multiple matching (10)
Part 2 Reading	Article: 'How to fund a gap year'	true/false/not given (5) sentence completion (10)
Part 3 Reading	Article: 'The Olympic Games'	sentence completion (10) multiple choice (5)
Part 4 Writing	School exchange visits	article 100 – 150 word response
Part 5	Shopping for new clothes	informal e-mail 100 – 150 word response
Part 6	Ice cream	summary 100 – 150 word response

Reading Paper

General comments

Candidates performed best on Part 1, with Parts 2 and 3 proving more challenging. The sentence completion questions in Parts 2 and 3 caused most difficulty for candidates. Some responses were either over the word/number limit, or the words/numbers taken from the text did not make grammatical sense in the sentences. Also, some candidates changed the grammatical form of words taken from the text and then used them in the sentence completion questions. A small number of candidates also lost marks by not copying words correctly from the text for the sentence completion questions.

Advice to centres:

- Prepare candidates for the Reading tasks by familiarising them with the style of the Paper and with the types of questions they can expect to find.
- Advise students to follow the instructions in the rubric when answering questions and to adhere to the word/number limit.
- Candidates should consider the grammatical fit of their answers in sentence completion questions.
- Advise candidates that they should only use words/numbers taken directly from the text.
- Candidates should make sure they copy words from the text correctly when providing their answers.

Writing Paper

General comments

Part 4

In general, candidates were able to positively demonstrate their understanding of the style and register needed to write an article, and responded to this task appropriately. A wide range of vocabulary was used and candidates attempted to use a variety of grammar structures.

For a number of candidates, Part 4 proved problematic as they misinterpreted the task rubric and their responses were not entirely on-topic. Also, in some cases, candidates included excessive detail on off-topic material, which meant that they could not adequately cover the bullet points in the given word count.

There were also some instances where candidates had gone over the 150 word limit, causing them to lose marks, and in some cases, missing out one of the bullet points, as this information was included in the response after the permitted 150 words.

Part 5

Candidates found Part 5 to be the most accessible writing task, as would be expected, with it being an informal e-mail to a friend.

Part 5 was successfully responded to by the majority of candidates. The style and register necessary for an informal e-mail were confidently applied, with a good range of vocabulary and grammar. The majority of candidates made effective use of paragraphing and cohesive devices.

In some cases, candidates used language/set phrases that were too formal for the task and used formal linking devices. Also, some candidates finished their response with 'yours faithfully' as opposed to a more informal ending. A number of responses for Part 5 were over the 150 word limit, as some candidates did not remain focused on the information required to cover the bullet points, and gave much fuller and more detailed responses than was necessary.

Part 6

As with previous years, the summarising task was the most challenging for candidates.

A number of candidates successfully extracted the required information from the text and were able to present this information using their own words, linking their ideas effectively and making good use of paragraphing.

However, on the whole, even where some candidates were able to extract the necessary information from the text, they were unable to put this into their own words. A large number of candidates were overly reliant on the source text. Where candidates did make some attempt to use their own words, the complex nature of the text combined with the need to formulate a summary, meant that responses lacked cohesion and there were issues with grammatical and lexical accuracy.

Advice to centres:

- Advise students to respond fully to all the bullet points as they lose marks for not doing so.
- Insist on students not going beyond the 150 word limit as they lose marks for doing this.
- Remind students that if they go beyond the 150 word limit and address any of the bullet points outside the word limit, they will not be rewarded for this material.
- Work with students on a range of writing tasks - articles, reports, letters and e-mails (formal and informal) to develop understanding of appropriate style and register.
- Develop student summarising skills using texts of the right length and level (500 words and upper-intermediate).

Resources available to help with your teaching:

- Edexcel International GCSE English as a Second Language Student Book (Pearson Longman)
- Edexcel International GCSE English as a Second Language Teacher's Book (Pearson Longman)
- Edexcel International GCSE English as a Second Language Practice Tests: Reading and Writing (CUP)
- Teacher's Guide (Edexcel)
- Past papers (Edexcel)
- The link to the Edexcel website is here:
<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/igcse/igcse09/eng/eng-2nd/Pages/default.aspx>

Please note that the mark shown on the question paper for IGCSE English as Second Language paper 01 (4ES0/01) on Results Plus, will differ from the mark shown on the Candidate Statement of Provisional Results. The raw marks for the reading and writing sections on the Candidate Statement of Provisional Results have been adjusted to reflect the equal weighting as indicated in the specification on page 2.

Grade Boundaries

The modern foreign languages specifications share a common design, but the assessments in different languages are not identical. Grade boundaries at unit level reflect these differences in assessments, ensuring that candidate outcomes across these specifications are comparable at specification level.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link: <http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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