

Examiners' Report /  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

International GCSE English as a  
Second Language (4ES0) Paper 01

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Publications Code UG032101

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# Examiner Report

## Paper Background

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

Part	Topic	Question types and marks
Part 1 Reading	Leaflet: 'Popular Theme Parks Of The World'	multiple matching (10)
Part 2 Reading	Article: 'Is Distance Learning Right For You?'	true/false/not given (5) sentence completion (10) ** summary completion (5)
Part 3 Reading	Article: 'Why Barefoot Is Best For Children'	short answer questions (10) multiple choice (5) ** 5/10 correct statements (5)
Part 4 Writing	Advice to a friend who is thinking about learning English	informal letter (10) 75 – 100 word response
Part 5 Writing	An article about the candidate's home town/city for the school magazine	semi-formal article (20) 100 – 150 word response
Part 6 Writing	A project on tap and bottled water to be read by the teacher. Writing a summary of two texts: 'Bottled Water or Tap Water?' and 'Banning Bottled Water in Universities'	formal summary (20) 100 – 150 word response

Changes to this year's specification have meant that the Reading Paper now consists of 50 questions as opposed to 40. There are now two new task types\*\* available for use in Part 2 and Part 3 Reading (summary completion and 5/10 correct statements). Part 4 Writing is now an informal writing task (letter/fax or e-mail) and is worth 10 marks. Part 5 Writing requires candidates to write a report/article and carries 20 marks. Part 6 Writing remains a summary writing task and is worth 20 marks.

## Reading Paper

### General comments

Candidates performed best on Part 1, with Parts 2 and 3 proving more challenging. The sentence completion and short answer questions in Parts 2 and 3 caused most difficulty for candidates. Some responses were either over the allowed word limit, or the words taken from the text did not make grammatical sense as a response. Some candidates changed the grammatical form of words taken from the text, i.e. used lexis not actually found in the text. In some cases, candidates formed a response by putting words together which are not found together in the text, i.e. reformulating or rephrasing. A small number of candidates also lost marks by not copying words correctly from the text.

### 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 and short answer questions.
- Advise candidates that they should only use words/numbers taken directly from the text.
- Advise candidates that when completing sentence completion and short answer questions, the words they need run together in the text and candidates do not need to do any reformulation of the text.
- Candidates should make sure they copy words from the text correctly when providing their answers.

## Writing Paper

### General comments

#### Part 4

Candidates found Part 4 to be the most accessible writing task, as would be expected, with it being an informal letter to a friend.

Part 4 was successfully responded to by the majority of candidates. The style and register necessary for an informal letter were confidently applied, with a good range of vocabulary and grammar. The majority of candidates made effective use of paragraphing and cohesive devices.

A number of responses for Part 4 were over the 100 word limit, as some candidates gave much fuller and more detailed responses than was necessary. Where information about one or more of the bullet points was given after the 100 word limit, this content could not be credited.

## Part 5

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.

There were some instances where candidates had included information about one or more of the bullet points after the 150 word limit, causing them to lose marks.

## 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.

Where candidates had copied directly and entirely from the source texts, or done so and also used only isolated words or phrases of their own, these responses were not awarded any marks. In these cases, what the candidates had themselves produced was insufficient and could not be awarded marks.

### Advice to centres:

- Advise students to respond to all the bullet points.
- Remind students that if they go beyond the given word limits 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 appropriate texts.
- Remind students that they need to try and use their own words for the summarising task in order to gain marks.

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