

Marking notes
Remarques pour la notation
Notas para la corrección

May / Mai / Mayo 2015

English / Anglais / Inglés B

Standard level
Niveau moyen
Nivel medio

Paper / Épreuve / Prueba 2

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These marking notes give additional information for marking paper 2. When marking the paper, keep in mind that neither subject specific knowledge nor candidates' personal opinions, as such, should be assessed, although Criterion B marks may be influenced by how successfully knowledge or opinions are handled in the message.

These notes are intended to define the **top** mark of the scale in this examination. The phrase, "a good answer", is intended to refer to scripts which are likely to be placed in the 9 to 10 band (5 for criterion C) of descriptors. Scripts should be marked proportionately lower to the degree to which they fail to meet these requirements.

In each case, good answers will meet **most**, though not necessarily **all**, of the following requirements.

Word count

At SL, students are required to write a minimum of 250 words. Failure to write the minimum number of words will result in a [1] penalty under criterion A. There is no penalty for exceeding 400 words: the whole text should be taken into consideration in the award of marks.

Criterion A – Language

A good answer will have few language gaps, and slips or flaws rarely affect meaning.

Language

Not all errors have the same importance, and examiners should bear this in mind. Some errors affect the communication of meaning significantly, and others do not. Also, some errors indicate a fundamental lack of command of the language, while others may simply indicate a moment of forgetfulness.

SLIPS – mistakes at all levels of difficulty, but erratic and occasional – *eg* the candidate normally forms past tenses well, but occasionally forgets "-ed"

FLAWS – errors occur more regularly, particularly in certain structures – *eg* past tenses are formed correctly quite often, but are not really reliable, and there may be basic confusions (*eg* past simple versus present perfect)

GAPS – some structures are rarely correct, or simply don't appear – *eg* the past tenses are needed, but do not appear.

1. Cultural diversity

Your local newspaper has published an article proposing that students from any country should be allowed to attend your country's universities free of charge. Write a letter to the editor of the newspaper, in which you give your opinion on the matter.

A good answer:

Criterion B – Message

- will refer to the original article
- will make the writer's opinions clear, whether this is for, or against, or making a balanced assessment
- will explain the opinions with arguments and supporting details
- will focus on the "free of charge" enrolment, not intercultural understanding/cultural diversity in general. Responses that are too general should be marked down under "relevance"
- will use paragraphing and cohesive devices which structure the development of ideas effectively
- may provide alternative suggestions
- may personalise the issue.

Criterion C – Format

- will adopt a semi-formal to formal register
- will adopt a suitably serious tone
- will include appropriately formal greeting and closing salutations
- will adopt a style that engages and interests the reader
- may include address and date.

2. Customs and traditions

Your teacher has set as your next essay topic: “When countries observe annual celebrations, such as Christmas, Diwali, Halloween or Valentine’s Day, there is more emphasis on the commercial side of these festivities than on their origins and significance.” Write your essay.

A good answer:

Criterion B – Message

- will mainly focus on the commercial side of festivities vs their origins and significance, not on annual celebrations in general or their description. Responses that are too general should be marked down under "relevance"
- will make the writer’s opinions clear whether this is for, against or a balanced argument
- will provide examples that support the argument, which might include specific celebrations, countries, traditions, *etc*
- will use paragraphing and cohesive devices which structure the development of ideas effectively
- may personalise the issue.

Criterion C – Format

- will adopt a semi-formal to formal register
- will have a distinct introduction, development and a conclusion
- will use stylistic devices to enable the reader to follow the argument easily
- will have a title
- may use the first person, provided that the focus is on the substantive issue.

3. Health

Recent research has shown that modern teenagers do less physical exercise than their parents did. You find this shocking! Write a leaflet to be put on the school noticeboard in which you suggest fun ways for young people to incorporate exercise into their daily lives.

A good answer:

Criterion B – Message

- will give a clear context, *eg* refer to the recent research, express dismay at the fact that today's teenagers do less exercise than their parents did
- will suggest more than one way to exercise daily
- will make suggestions that are “fun” and which can be incorporated into teenagers' daily lives
- will move coherently from one point to another
- will contain cohesive devices which enhance the structure
- may include the benefits of doing more exercise
- may include examples, such as personal anecdotes.

Criterion C – Format

- will adopt a semi-formal register
- will have an encouraging and lively tone
- will have an engaging title
- will incorporate elements of a leaflet: bullets, sub-headings *etc*
- will include a short introduction and conclusion
- may incorporate flashes of humour and informality.

4. Leisure

Your school is closed for a mid-term break and you and your friends have decided to clean up and develop an ugly, abandoned area of your town for the benefit of the local residents. Write a blog describing your goals and the progress your group is making.

A good answer:

Criterion B – Message

- will explain the reasons for the group's action
- will cover both aspects (goals and progress made). If only one of the aspects is covered (where "cover" means more than a couple of sentences), the message should be considered as "partially communicated" (ie no more than **[6]** should be awarded)
- will explain how this will benefit the local residents
- will include both narration **and** reflection
- will use paragraphing and cohesive devices which structure the development of ideas effectively
- may also mention how necessary funds have been raised for this project
- may also contain personal anecdotes
- may describe what still has to be achieved and how this will be accomplished.

Criterion C – Format

- will adopt a semi-formal to informal register
- will have an engaging title
- will use first person narration
- will show awareness of the readers, eg through direct address, a lively and interesting style, an invitation for comments
- will have a closing statement to round off the entry, eg "that's my take on it"
- may have more than one entry.

N.B. Some limited use of textese (eg "4" for "four/for" or "u" for "you") and/or emotions is permissible.

5. Science and technology

You recently read a news report which claimed that all cars will run on electricity in 15 years' time. Write an article for your school magazine in which you consider the possible advantages and disadvantages of such a future.

A good answer:

Criterion B – Message

- will clearly identify the context, *eg* mentioning the news report
- will consider both advantages and disadvantages. If only one of the required elements is covered (where “cover” means more than a couple of sentences), the message should be considered as “partially communicated” (*ie* no more than **[6]** should be awarded)
- will use paragraphing and cohesive devices which structure the development of ideas effectively
- will support ideas and arguments with examples or explanations
- may also give the current position regarding electric cars.

Criterion C – Format

- will adopt a semi-formal to formal register
 - will adopt a suitably serious tone
 - will adopt a style that engages and interests readers
 - will have a relevant headline/title
 - will have a distinct introduction, development and conclusion
 - may use other format features, *eg* name of the author, subheadings, quotes.
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