UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

International General Certificate of Secondary Education

MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2010 question paper

for the guidance of teachers

0500 FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

0500/31 Paper 31 (Directed Writing and Composition), maximum raw mark 50

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the report on the examination.

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Note: All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Section 1: Directed writing

Question 1

This question tests Writing Objectives W1–W5:

- articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined
- order and present facts, ideas and opinions
- understand and use a range of appropriate vocabulary
- use language and register appropriate to audience and context
- make accurate and effective use of paragraphs, grammatical structures, sentences, punctuation and spelling.

AND aspects of Reading Objectives R1–R3:

- understand and collate explicit meanings
- understand, explain and collate implicit meanings and attitudes
- select, analyse and evaluate what is relevant to specific purposes.

You are a journalist. Write an article on the subject of young people's interest in computer games. In your article you should: discuss the positive and negative aspects of playing such games; persuade readers to take a balanced view towards the use of computer games.

Base what you write on the texts you have read. You should write between 1½ and 2 sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting. Up to ten marks are available for the content of your answer, and up to fifteen marks for the quality of your writing. [25]

General notes on possible content:

We are looking for an integrated response with points from one person used as rebuttal points against the other. There should be a general introduction – neither of these pieces has an introduction so it forces candidates to think up one of their own – and the main aspects of both arguments should be presented without listing.

A – <u>Negative</u> points may include: parental worries, future educational/health concerns:

- Withdrawal from family life – 'slumped', 'motionless' almost catatonic!
- Partaking in violence, not just 'watching' but 'zapping' and 'killing'.
- Addictive behaviour – retreating from the real world.
- Others getting rich from this 'gaming' – targeting young adults 'multi-million' industry – prohibitive cost – 'feed a family of four for a week' (these could be developed: e.g. families going without.)
- Realism of the sets and graphics, 'more like murder', shooting one of the villains.
- Move away from 'innocence' at an early age.
- Parental responsibility – children as young as seven playing on game consoles before and after school (this could be developed as a balance point or even a 'pro' point – e.g. why aren't parents more strict).
- No exercise so unhealthy and getting obese – also the element of no 'fresh air'.
- Alternative 'cyberspace' lives worryingly 'remove' young people further away from reality and family life.
- Family life falling apart – only 'meets briefly for meals'.
- Not reading/non educational/missing out on developing imaginations of their own – too easy to access immediate gratification.

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- Physical damage down the line: arthritis in hands/eye strain or even psychosis, 'saturated with violent images'.

B – <u>Positive</u> points from Kofi's pro video games reply:

- It's the 21st Century and computer/technology and entertainment emerging from this are here to stay.
- Young people *need* computer skills for almost any career now/in the future.
- Teens are quicker at picking up technology and often adults rely on them (mobile phone/internet).
- Gaming isn't *passive* like television: young people interact/they problem solve and understand about negotiation when playing many of these seemingly violent games – possible development here as candidates will know certain games that can illustrate these points better (although they shouldn't stray too far from the text, they can support their argument).
- Agility of fingers, hands and mind – in fact, instead of what looks like a 'blinking lizard', there really is a fully functioning person with better reactions than many adults.
- Different games, such as virtual pets (candidates will know of others) bring out the *nurturing* and responsible side of young children/teens – again possible development here – instead of parents indulging a child with a puppy or kitten that may lose its novelty value and become abandoned, children are getting a sense of responsibility in a different/better way.
- Games that engage young people down a career path and show them virtual days in the life of a teacher/nurse/vet/doctor.
- Evidence has shown that students *learn better* via computers – they are more challenged one on one than in a classroom etc.
- 'Wii fit' and other games consoles now have interactive exercise games for up to four people – this is a good rebuttal point against the overweight aspect above – now these get people active in their front room with everything from Olympic sports to skiing/snowboarding, creating a rock band and many others.
- Playing these physical games as a family gets everyone involved and brings the family together as a unit.

C – Ideas for the balance aspect [persuading readers]:

As candidates deal with the many aspects of the pros and cons of computer/console gaming, they will see that there are some points that need addressing more than others (with regard to trying to have a sense of balance in the home or just for gaming in general).

- The parental issue is important – points could/should be made about not letting young children stay on game consoles for hours at a time. What else could they be doing?
- The family issue also needs developing – the idea of everyone in a separate room playing/using a computer is unhealthy so again there needs to be family time.
- Exercise and going outside is another aspect.
- Budgeting for games or even recycling games with friends or starting a 'free library'.
- Making sure that children/young people *read* – e.g. introducing good writers via films at first.
- Parents taking an interest in what type of valid games their youngsters are interested in and talking to them about it.

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The question is marked out of 10 for Reading and 15 for Writing.

Use the following table to give a mark out of 10 for Reading.

Band 1	**9–10**	Makes a thorough, perceptive, convincing evaluation of ideas in the blogs and creates a persuasive, mature article. Reads effectively between the lines. Develops the reading material and **integrates** it into the response to the task.
Band 2	**7–8**	A good evaluation of the ideas in the blogs, using reading material to **support** the argument. Occasionally effective development of some of the ideas in the material.
Band 3	**5–6**	A number of points are **quoted** to make a satisfactory response. Candidates cover the material satisfactorily, but may miss opportunities to develop it relevantly or at length.
Band 4	**3–4**	Selects points from the passage rather **literally** and/or uses material thinly. Does not combine points into a connected piece.
Band 5	**1–2**	Parts of the answer are relevant, though material may be repeated injudiciously, or wrongly used.
Band 6	**0**	Answer does not relate to question and/or too much unselective copying directly from the material to gain a mark in Band 5.

Use the following table to give a mark out of 15 for Writing.

Band 1	**13–15**	Excellent, consistent sense of audience; persuasive/authoritative style; very fit for purpose. Fluent, varied sentences/wide range of vocabulary. Strong sense of structure, paragraphing and sequence. Virtually no error.
Band 2	**10–12**	Sense of audience mostly secure; quite stylish and fluent; sense of overall structure; arguments occasionally well developed. Writing is mainly accurate, sentences and language generally effective in places.
Band 3	**8–9**	Occasional sense of audience; mostly written in accurate, if fairly straightforward sentences; some argument, though not strong; mostly quite well structured; errors minor; language straightforward.
Band 4	**5–7**	Appropriate if sometimes inconsistent style; sentences mainly accurate; fact rather than argument; basic structure: has beginning, middle and end; fairly frequent (minor) errors; perhaps including sentence separation; sentences and/or vocabulary simple.
Band 5	**3–4**	Functional expression; largely factual with little/no argument; has a beginning, but main part of response not always well sequenced; some serious errors in grammar/punctuation/use of vocabulary. Errors slightly intrusive.
Band 6	**1–2**	Language and style not clear; some blurring and lack of order; despite some serious errors, can mainly be followed. Simple sentences.
Band 7	**0**	Serious inaccuracies and problems with language and grammar are too intrusive to gain a mark in Band 6.

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Section 2: Composition

Questions 2 (a), 2 (b), 3 (a), 3 (b), 4 (a) and 4 (b).

Give two marks:
- the first mark is out of 13 for content and structure: see Table A
- the second mark is out of 12 for style and accuracy: see Table B

Remember that these marks will not necessarily match and one mark may well be (much) higher than the other.

The maximum overall mark for the Composition is 25. Write the total clearly at the end as follows: C7 + S10 = 17 (C standing for 'content and structure', S for 'style and accuracy').

Argumentative/discursive writing

2 (a) Some people claim to have seen UFOs (unidentified flying objects) such as flying saucers. Do you believe it is possible for such things to exist? What might be the consequences for us if they do?

(b) Do you think criminals are treated too harshly or too leniently?

Descriptive writing

3 (a) Describe a time and place (real or imaginary) when you felt so embarrassed that it still makes you uncomfortable to this day. Describe how you felt and how other people reacted.

(b) You are walking home alone when you notice signs of a storm gathering around you. Describe what happens and how you feel as you make your way to shelter.

Narrative writing

4 (a) "Alex was someone who liked to live life 'on the edge' for too long, barely managing to survive. Now, in desperation, s(he) would do *anything*…". Use this quotation as the start of a story.

(b) Write a story in which fire plays an essential part. [25]

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COMPOSITION TASKS: TABLE A – CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

	ARGUMENTATIVE/ DISCURSIVE TASK	DESCRIPTIVE TASK	NARRATIVE TASK
Band 1 **11–13**	• Consistently **well developed, logical** stages in an overall, at times **complex**, argument. • **Each stage is linked** to the preceding one, and sentences within paragraphs are soundly sequenced.	• There are many well-defined, well-developed ideas and images, describing **complex atmospheres** with a range of details. • **Overall structure is provided through devices** such as the movements of the writer, the creation of a short time span, or the creation of atmosphere or tension. There is no confusion with writing a story. Repetition is avoided and the sequence of sentences makes the picture clear to the reader.	• The narrative is **complex and sophisticated** and may contain devices such as sub-texts, flashbacks and time lapses. Cogent details are provided where necessary or appropriate. • Different parts of the story are **balanced and the climax carefully managed**. Sentence sequences are sometimes arranged to produce effects such as the **building up of tension** or providing a sudden turn of events.
Band 2 **9–10**	• Each stage of the argument is **defined and developed**, although the explanation **may not be consistent**. • The stages follow in a **generally cohesive** progression. Paragraphs are mostly well sequenced, although some may finish less strongly than they begin.	• There is a good selection of **interesting ideas and images, with a range of details**. • These are formed into an **overall picture of some clarity**, largely consistent and effective. There may be occasional repetition, and opportunities for development or the provision of detail may be missed. Sentences are often well sequenced.	• The writing **develops some interesting features, but not consistently so**. Expect the use of detail and some attention to character or setting. • Writing is orderly and the beginning and ending are satisfactorily managed. **The reader is well aware of the climax even if it is not fully effective.** Sequencing of sentences provides clarity and engages the reader in events or atmosphere.

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Band 3 **7–8**	• There is a **series of relevant points** and a clear attempt is made to develop some of them. These points are relevant, straightforward and logical/coherent. • Repetition is avoided, but the order of the stages in the overall argument can be changed without adverse effect. The sequence of the sentences within paragraphs is satisfactory, but **the linking of ideas may be insecure**.	• There is a **selection of relevant ideas, images, and details**, which satisfactorily address the task. An attempt is made to create atmosphere. • The description provides **a series of points** rather than a sense of their being combined to make an overall picture, but some ideas are developed successfully, albeit straightforwardly. Some sentences are well sequenced.	• A **straightforward story** with identification of features such as character and setting. • While **opportunities for appropriate development of ideas are sometimes missed**, overall structure is competent, and some features of a developed narrative are evident. Sentences are usually sequenced to narrate events clearly.
Band 4 **5–6**	• Mainly relevant points are made and they are **developed partially with some brief effectiveness**. • The overall argument shows signs of structure but may be sounder at the beginning than at the end, or may drift away from the topic. There may be **some repetition**. The sequence of sentences may be occasionally insecure.	• Some relevant ideas are provided and **occasionally developed a little, perhaps as a narrative**. There are some descriptive/ atmospheric episodes, but the use of event may overshadow them. • There is some overall structure, but the writing **may lack direction and intent**. There may be interruptions in the sequence of sentences and/or some lack of clarity.	• Responds relevantly to the topic, but is **largely a series of events** with only brief details of character and setting. • Overall structure is sound, but there are examples where **particular parts are too long or short**. **The climax is not effectively described or prepared**. Sentence sequences narrate events and occasionally contain irrelevances.

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Band 5 **3–4**	• **A few relevant points** are made and may be expanded into paragraphs, but development is very simple and not always logical. • There is weakness of sequencing overall and within paragraphs. Paragraphing is inconsistent. **Repetition and a failure to sustain relevant argument are obvious.**	• Content is relevant but **lacking in scope or variety**. Opportunities to provide development and detail are frequently missed. • The overall structure, though readily discernible, **lacks form and dimension**. The reliance on identifying events, objects and/or people sometimes leads to a sequence of sentences without progression.	• **A simple narrative** with a beginning, middle and end; it may consist of everyday happenings or fantastic, non-engaging events. Content may seem immature. • **Unequal or inappropriate importance is given to parts of the story**. Paragraphing is inconsistent. Dialogue may be used ineffectively. There is no real climax. Sentence sequences are used only to link simple series of events.
Band 6 **1–2**	• **A few points are discernible** but any attempt to develop them is very limited. • Overall **argument only progresses here and there** and the sequence of sentences is poor.	• Some relevant facts are identified, but the **overall picture is unclear** and lacks development. • There are examples of sequenced sentences, but there is also repetition and **muddled ordering**.	• Stories are **very simple and narrate events indiscriminately**. Endings are simple and lack effect. • The **shape of the narrative is unclear**; some of the content has no relevance to the plot. Sequences of sentences are sometimes poor, leading to a lack of clarity.
0	• Rarely relevant, little material, and presented in a disorderly structure. Not sufficient to be placed in Band 6.	• Rarely relevant, little material, and presented in a disorderly structure. Not sufficient to be placed in Band 6.	• Rarely relevant, little material, and presented in a disorderly structure. Not sufficient to be placed in Band 6.

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COMPOSITION TASKS: TABLE B: STYLE AND ACCURACY

Band 1	**11–12**	**Writing is consistent, stylistically fluent, linguistically strong and accurate; has sense of audience** • Look for appropriately used ambitious words • Complex sentence structures where appropriate
Band 2	**9–10**	**Writing is mostly fluent, sometimes linguistically effective and largely accurate; may have some sense of audience** • Look for signs of a developing style • Some ability to express shades of meaning
Band 3	**7–8**	**Writing is clear, competent (if plain) in vocabulary and grammar; errors perhaps frequent, but minor** • Look for mostly correct sentence separation • Occasional precision and/or interest in choice of words
Band 4	**5–6**	**Writing is clear and accurate in places, and expresses general meaning in vocabulary and grammar; errors occasionally serious** • Look for simple sentences • Errors of sentence separation
Band 5	**3–4**	**Writing is generally simple in vocabulary and grammar; errors are distracting and sometimes serious, but general meaning can always be followed** • Look for definite weaknesses in sentence structures • Grammatical errors such as incorrect use of prepositions and tense
Band 6	**1–2**	**Writing is very limited in correct vocabulary and grammar; error is persistent; meaning is sometimes blurred** • Look for faulty and/or rambling sentences • Language insufficient to carry intended meaning
Band 7	**0**	**Writing is difficult to follow because of inadequate language proficiency and error**

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