UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/31**

Paper 3 Directed Writing and Composition **May/June 2011**

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

2777489429

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.
Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen.
Do **not** use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **two** questions: **Question 1 (Section 1)** and **one** question from **Section 2**.
Dictionaries are **not** permitted.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.
The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **4** printed pages.

© UCLES 2011

Section 1: Directed writing

1 Read the following transcript from a radio programme, which is an interview with the editor of *World Wonders*, a book of records published annually.

Imagine that you have heard the discussion. **Write a letter to the producer of the programme to express your views on whether or not such books should exist**.

In your letter you should:

- examine the reasons the editor gives for publishing this book;
- examine the reasons why the interviewer feels it should not be published;
- give your own view and develop your arguments.

Begin your letter, 'Dear Producer…'.

Base what you write on the ideas in the transcript and be careful to use your own words.

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]

Interviewer: Good evening, and thank you for joining us. I understand that you have been involved in publishing this catalogue of world records since its creation?

Editor: Yes, that's right. I had the idea nearly 40 years ago. A friend wanted to know which was the highest-flying bird in the world and we couldn't find it in any book. Of course, there was no internet then.

Interviewer: Indeed. And since then the book has grown in content and sales every year?

Editor: Yes, it has, and it has become the best-selling annual of all time, as it makes the perfect present. Teenagers are particularly interested in facts and stories about anything extreme.

Interviewer: Undoubtedly there is an appetite for this kind of information, but some believe that what started out as admirable and educational has now become sensational, and that many of the recently introduced 'records' are nothing of the sort. Is it really a record if people stuff so many hamburgers into their mouths that they have to be taken to hospital?

Editor: Well, it is a record of sorts, and what has made the book so popular over the years is the fact that it includes human records as well as physical and natural ones. It's the human ones which change from year to year as people strive to scale new heights of human endeavour.

Interviewer: Well, you may describe a new world record for running 100 metres as human endeavour, but is that an accurate description of someone who hasn't cut his hair or her fingernails for 40 years? Or a man who has extracted 15.41 grams of fluff from his belly button over 20 years? Surely this is just like 19th century freak shows, which exhibited bearded women, dwarves and conjoined twins? These shows were outlawed decades ago, and rightly so. But nowadays anyone can become famous just by being grotesquely obese – and die of a heart attack before the book is even published.

© UCLES 2011

Editor: Of course we have to exercise judgement. As you know, we stopped including certain categories of human record which led people to indulge in unhealthy or life-threatening activities just to get into the book – like eating bicycles.

Interviewer: Yes, and isn't it true that sales have declined as a result? Surely it was ghoulish interest in the fates of the record-holders which made the book so popular? Not to mention their victims, such as the force-fed cats who died 'competing' to be the heaviest cat in the world, or those endangered by 'idiots' driving way beyond the limits of safety on public roads.

Editor: I think that's a little unfair. We have closed both the categories you mention. The majority of our sales have always been seasonal as gifts for children. The book awakens a thirst for knowledge in the young which they often keep for life. Yes, there has been some decline in traditional markets in recent years – along with those for all other reference books – as people increasingly look online for information. We shall therefore be launching a spectacular multimedia edition very soon in response to that demand.

Interviewer: Nevertheless, is it not true that you have recently reviewed the policy of censoring content in response to 'ethical' criticisms?

Editor: Yes, but I wouldn't say that we ever bowed to censorship; I'd prefer to say that we were sensitive to some complaints. Perhaps we overreacted and took out too much. After all, if adults freely decide that they wish to engage in risky behaviour in the hope of achieving a world record – well, that happens all the time. How would Mount Everest ever have been climbed without risk, and competition?

Interviewer: Scaling Mount Everest was an achievement which reflects well on the human spirit. That cannot be said for not washing your face for 50 years.

Editor: Actually, we don't have a world record for not washing. For one thing, we couldn't verify it. We have a full-time team of professional judges who check if any new claim is valid. Obviously, the ridiculous example you've just given wouldn't be acceptable.

Interviewer: So, will we see a new world record for sword swallowing in the next edition?

Editor: You'll have to wait and see!

Interviewer: Well, let's find out what listeners think. Call us now with your views.

[Turn over for Section 2]

© UCLES 2011

Section 2: Composition

Write about 350–450 words on **one** of the following:

Argumentative/discursive writing

2 **(a)** Are you glad to be living at the present time or would you prefer to have been alive in a previous historical period? Explain the reasons for your choice. [25]

OR

(b) 'The world is changed by the small actions of ordinary people, not by the big actions of important people'. Discuss this claim. [25]

Descriptive writing

3 **(a)** You arrive on an island. Write a description of your first impressions of the place and its people. [25]

OR

(b) Describe what you see and hear from a hiding place. [25]

Narrative writing

4 **(a)** You witness an incident which you are forced to get involved in. Use this idea as the basis for a narrative.

[25]

OR

(b) Write a story based on an animal that escapes. [25]

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

University of Cambridge International Examinations is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is itself a department of the University of Cambridge.

© UCLES 2011