UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

International General Certificate of Secondary Education

MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2012 question paper

for the guidance of teachers

0500 FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

0500/31 Paper 3 (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.

- Cambridge will not enter into discussions or correspondence in connection with these mark schemes.

Cambridge is publishing the mark schemes for the May/June 2012 question papers for most IGCSE, GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level syllabuses and some Ordinary Level syllabuses.

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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. Nonetheless, the content must be clearly related to and derived from the passage.

Section 1: Directed Writing

Question 1

This question tests Writing Objectives W1-W5 (15 marks):

- 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 (10 marks):

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

Read the following transcript of a radio interview with two students who discuss their views on taking a year out between school and university. Write an article for your school or college publication in which you consider the value of taking a gap year. In your article you should: identify and evaluate the different views expressed by Mali and Terri about gap years and use your own ideas to support your comments. Base your ideas on what you have read in the transcript. Be careful to use your own words. Write between 1½ sides and 2 sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting. Up to 10 marks are available for the content of your answer, and up to 15 marks for the quality of your writing.

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Responses may use the following ideas:

A Positive aspects of a gap year experience

- Very popular with teenagers.
- Break from the hard work of school work, exams and pressure.
- Time out to consider options/to discover self.
- Studying is about theory rather than practice in contrast to working/travel/experience.
- Refreshes/invigorates.
- Encourages growth in maturity.
- Good to add to a CV, perhaps compensating for exam results.
- Encourages appropriate action to be taken in the future.
- Earning money/teaching the value of money.
- Discover more about the life, culture and people of a different country.

B Negative aspects of a gap year experience

- Time factors: a gap year lengthens the period of progressing to a career.
- Some do not use the time wisely/view these years as an escape/take advantage of parents.
- Cost factors: Programmes/packages offered by some travel companies are costly and parents usually pay these costs.
- Teenagers change greatly at this time and they may find returning to education difficult/ impossible.

C Considering own views

- Don't have to go thousands of miles away to foreign countries as one can volunteer at home in the long student holidays (Mali working in local hospital).
- Volunteering at home/during holidays gives students a taste of future interests. Also buys time to choose career path – own examples and development.
- A plan is vital. Both twins didn't rush into either option and both got what they wanted from their own experience – other examples and development of the idea that it is not just an excuse to escape.
- Balance: It is down to personal taste what an individual decides to do. One needs to consider options carefully.

Accept other relevant ideas derived from the passage and relevant to the question as a basis for the article.

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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**	Gives a thorough, perceptive, convincing evaluation. Reads effectively between the lines. Shows understanding by developing much of the reading material and integrating it into a response to the task.
Band 2	**7–8**	Some evidence of evaluation, engaging with a few of the main points with success. Uses reading material to support the argument. Occasionally effective development of ideas in the material.
Band 3	**5–6**	Reproduces a number of points to make a satisfactory response. The response covers the material adequately, 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 the material thinly. Does not combine points into a connected response.
Band 5	**1–2**	Parts of the response are relevant, though the material may be repeated or used inappropriately.
Band 6	**0**	Response 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**	Consistent sense of audience; authoritative and appropriate style. 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; there is evidence of style and fluency; sentences and vocabulary are effective. Secure overall structure; mostly well-sequenced. Writing is mainly accurate.
Band 3	**8–9**	Occasional sense of audience; mostly written in correctly structured sentences; vocabulary may be plain but adequate for the task; mostly quite well structured. Errors minor.
Band 4	**5–7**	Inconsistent style; simple or faultily constructed sentences; vocabulary simple; basic structure. Frequent errors, including sentence separation.
Band 5	**3–4**	Inappropriate expression; the response is not always well sequenced. Serious errors in sentence structure/vocabulary/grammar/punctuation.
Band 6	**1–2**	Expression unclear; flawed sentence construction and order. Persistent serious errors interfere with the conveying of meaning.
Band 7	**0**	Problems of expression and accuracy are too serious 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

Argumentative/Discursive Writing

2 (a) Does music divide or unite people? Give your views. [25]

(b) 'People should give up their cars to save the earth?' Do you agree with this statement? [25]

Descriptive Writing

3 (a) You are in a crowd of people waiting to see a total eclipse of the sun. Describe what you witness from the moment the moon starts to move across the sun to the point when it is light again. Include your thoughts and feelings throughout and the reactions of the crowd. [25]

(b) Describe the character of someone who has had an effect on your life. [25]

Narrative Writing

4 (a) You have travelled backwards or forwards in a time machine. Begin your story with the opening of the machine door after you have arrived in the past or the future. [25]

(b) Write a story that starts with the opening of a door to a room you are not supposed to enter. [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 persona, 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 range of **images** with **interesting details which contribute to a sense of atmosphere**. • 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 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 but cohesive 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 details, 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 **only a series of chronological events** with occasional references to 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 an inability 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**. Paragraphing is inconsistent. The reliance on identifying events, objects and/or people sometimes leads to a sequence of sentences without progression.	• **A very simple narrative**; it may consist of nonsensical or confusing events. • **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 **incoherent and narrate events indiscriminately**. Endings are absent or 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 uses limited vocabulary and grammar; errors occasionally serious.** Look for: • simple sentences • errors of sentence separation.
Band 5	**3–4**	**Writing is simple in vocabulary and grammar; errors are distracting and sometimes serious, but overall meaning can 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 weak in vocabulary and grammar; serious, persistent errors; meaning is 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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