UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/32**

Paper 3 Directed Writing and Composition **October/November 2011**

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

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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.

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Section 1: Directed Writing

1 Read the fact file below and the magazine article (printed on the opposite page) about home-schooling.

Imagine that your aunt and uncle are considering educating your cousin, a spoilt only child, at home and have asked for your opinions. **Write a letter** to them in which you should explain:

- the advantages of being home schooled
- the reasons why home-schooling may not be advisable
- why you would or would not recommend home-schooling for your cousin.

Base your letter on the fact file and the magazine article. Be careful to use your own words.

Begin your letter, 'Dear Aunt and Uncle …'.

You should write between 1½ 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.

[25]

HOME-SCHOOLING FACT FILE

- The most common reason for choosing home-schooling is that parents are not satisfied with local schools.
- Many home-schooled children are allowed to sit exams or participate in clubs and social activities in a local school.
- Research shows that home-schooled children consistently outperform school-educated children at all academic levels.
- A significantly higher proportion of home-schooled students, compared to school students, goes on to university.
- Many universities claim that they do not discriminate against home-schooled students.

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In this magazine article, a university student describes the experience of being home educated.

I don't have a single GCSE or A-level, but I'm in my third year at Oxford University, studying law. I was home educated from the age of 8 until 18. One of the universities I applied to responded by email, saying: 'Did you forget to fill the form in?' It's tricky and expensive to get qualifications if you're home educated, especially if you want to do lots of them, and there's no incentive for schools to assist pupils educated at home. Some universities refused to consider my application; Oxford was marvellous, though, and treated me like any other candidate.

Home-education was never the plan. My school closed down when I was eight, in the middle of the academic year. My parents asked me if I'd like to give home-education a go. I agreed, and I always enjoyed it. My father went out to work whilst my mother worked from home, but she was there all the time for us. She had done a bit of teaching before, although she isn't qualified.

Home-education is much less drastic than people imagine. It's not as though you're in your house all day, never meeting people. Other children are only in school for six hours a day, after all. The only difference is that for those six hours you are not sitting in a classroom, but getting around and leading a more active life.

My parents allowed my younger brother and me to take our own approach to studies – we were supervised, but it was very informal. We never had deadlines, exams, homework or even a timetable, but I don't have a problem with self-discipline. I might do nothing on a Wednesday, but work all weekend. I'd go through phases of hiking in the hills or reading in a corner for two weeks. In the beginning, however, I did spend a few months watching appalling TV and playing computer games. Had it gone on, my parents would have acted, but I got over it. There's only so much daytime television you can watch!

I became fascinated with Antarctica, so my parents persuaded me to research it in more detail. They nudged me into subjects that I'd need, such as maths, and we had a French tutor who came weekly. Education is much broader than someone sitting you down and telling you things. Mine was a question of working out what areas I was interested in, then finding the relevant book, website or museum.

I discovered that academic institutions – the British Antarctic Survey and the Science Museum, for example – are very willing to respond to an interested ten-year-old. I appreciated the freedom to pursue my interests to a greater extent than the school curriculum would allow. It's common that children in home-education don't get bored, and my lack of knowledge of advanced physics is not something I mourn.

I wasn't learning in complete isolation; there was a group of us who would get together for science experiments and museum trips. It is estimated that between 50,000 and 80,000 British children are educated at home each year, and there's a support service, Education Otherwise, that organises local groups and has an advice line.

People who haven't come across home-education before seem to think we have no social skills. I didn't find socialising a problem – I live in a city and made friends on my street. I also went to a music college and made friends there. You have to be more active socially, as it isn't provided on a plate, so it's more like an adult social life. I had a lot of work experience because I was free to go out and do it. I don't think home-education is perfect; it's just another valid model, though I've done well from it. I had a pleasant education, and it landed me a decent place at university.

[Turn over for Section 2]

Section 2: Composition

Write about 2 sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting,
on **one** of the following:

Argumentative/Discursive Writing

2 **(a)** Should we allow ourselves to depend on machines and electronic gadgets? [25]

OR

(b) 'Think globally, act locally.' Do you believe this is the right approach to solving the world's environmental problems? [25]

Descriptive Writing

3 **(a)** Describe the most disappointing gift you have received and your reactions at the time. [25]

OR

(b) You are in a place which you feel may be haunted. Describe the place, and your feelings and reactions. [25]

Narrative Writing

4 **(a)** 'The figure in the long, black coat.' Use this as the title of a narrative. [25]

OR

(b) Write a story which takes place in extreme weather conditions. [25]

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