

LEVEL 1 AND 2 FUNCTIONAL SKILLS IN ENGLISH

(8720/8725)

Marked responses
Component 2 Writing

See a range of responses to questions from the sample papers with commentaries from an examiner to demonstrate how to apply the mark scheme.

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EXAMPLE RESPONSES



Whilst every attempt has been made to show a range of student responses, the following responses and examiner comments provide teachers with the best opportunity to understand the application of the mark scheme. They are not intended to be viewed as 'model' answers and the marking has not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

Specimen paper 8720

Question 1

6 mark question

You are a member of the Clinton Park Support Group and receive the following invitation:

We need your help!

We all love our beautiful park, but recently there have been problems with litter, especially in the picnic area. Also, people are taking short-cuts across the flower beds and trampling on the plants.

People have told us that the park is not as enjoyable as it used to be. We need to look at how we can make sure that everyone who uses the park does so responsibly, so that we can all continue to enjoy it.

We want to put up a short notice at the park gates.

Write the notice for the park gates. This notice should:

- have an introduction, setting out what the problems are
- give some helpful rules for people to follow
- be easy to read
- be approximately 80-120 words.

Remember to:

- plan your answer
- use correct spelling, punctuation and grammar
- write clearly and effectively.

[6 marks]

[+3 marks for SPAG]

Student response 1 (low level)

Hi, my park is not th palce for the swim and therun I go wif frend to them ther an thers not stp into the water becos.yo can get som ijrules the man is in the front in te gars the flwers, with the dog in the pak is why I lik to run aroun

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- An attempt to respond to the task, but little awareness of audience/purpose evident.
- Task is inappropriately formatted and length is inappropriate.
- An attempt at structuring sentences, but meaning is unclear.
- An attempt at logical sequencing. Level of detail is inappropriate for the task.

Examiner response: writing composition

There is very little sense of task although ‘my park’ shows an awareness of one aspect of it. There is no formatting or layout of any sort here so the sense of a set of instructions for people using the park is not evident. Clearly the length is inappropriately short. Sentence structure is non-existent but the beginnings of meaning can be gleaned from phrases such as ‘yo get som ijrules’. Without sequencing and an arbitrary arrangement of lexical features this struggles for sense. However, there are attempts to respond here so the mark is.

2 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- Numerous errors make it difficult to follow the meaning.
- Few examples of conventional spelling.
- Some punctuation is used, but not correctly.
- Numerous grammatical errors make reading very difficult.

Examiner response: SPaG

This has all of the features of a bottom level response. Most spellings are incorrect and there is no punctuation that serves any purpose. Grammatical errors, such as inaccurate subject/verb agreement are evident throughout

1 mark awarded

Student response 2 (medium level)

The prolems in the park is great and we need to do some thing.
 These ar the rules in the park for the poeple to use the park
 No playing on the garss and in the floers
 Do not drop anystuff because it is not nice
 If you want to play. Play with friends in the midle by the layk.
 Thats the enf for the rules

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- An attempt to respond to the task, with some awareness of audience/purpose.
- Some attempt to format the task, though length may not be appropriate.
- Sentence structures, including complex sentences, convey basic meaning.
- Some attempts at logical sequencing in parts of the text, but level of detail is not necessarily appropriate for the task.

Examiner response: writing composition

Clear sense of a set of rules written for park visitors. Each rule is given a single line so formatting is valid but length is below the lower end of the advisory limits so therefore meets the descriptor for this level. There are clear sentences which convey meaning and there is an evident sequence, with an introduction followed by the park rules.

3 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- Errors make reading more challenging, but the meaning can be followed.
- Simple words are spelled correctly.
- Some simple sentence level punctuation is correct.
- Grammatical errors make reading more challenging.

Examiner response: SPaG

Most spellings are actually correct but there are errors on more challenging words such as ‘poeple’ (sic) and there evidence of punctuation at sentence level that serves a clear purpose. Grammatical errors do not really impinge on meaning and the imperative is used quite effectively. Meaning can be followed.

2 marks awarded

Student response 3 (top level)

Clinton Park Support Group

We hope you enjoy our beautiful park and we would like you to follow some rules. These are simple rules to follow so that everyone can benefit from this wonderful place.

1. No walking in the flower beds because the plants are there for everyone to look and admire.
2. Keep dogs on the lead. Because we don't want any nasty incidents with animals.
3. Do not ride bikes on the paths we have had one or two accidents so please follow this rule
4. In order to keep the picnic area clean, put your litter in the bins at the edge.
5. No fires on the grass even in the summer. It's too dangerous.

Mark scheme descriptors – writing composition

- An appropriate response to the task, which is tailored to the audience/purpose.
- Format and length are appropriate to the task.
- Sentence structures, including complex sentences, convey meaning clearly.
- Text is sufficiently logically sequenced to convey meaning, with a level of detail appropriate to the task.

Examiner response – writing composition

Appropriate in the way the notice is set out with a clear sense of audience and rules that are clear and relevant. Each rule is given a single numbered line so formatting is very good while length is well within limits and perfectly appropriate. There are clear sentences including one or two complex sentences. The details in the instructions (such as the one about the flower beds) are incorporated into a logical sequence.

6 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors – SPaG

- Errors make reading more challenging, but the meaning can be followed.
- Simple words are spelled correctly.
- Some simple sentence level punctuation is correct.
- Grammatical errors make reading more challenging.

Examiner response – SPaG

There are a few errors here, such as the missing full stop in instruction 3, but these will not hold this answer back from the top level. All of the descriptors above apply here.

3 marks awarded

Specimen paper 8720

Question 2 9 mark question

You see the following poster about The Local Bus Company:



You have used The Local Bus Company but are not happy with their service. You feel the company does not match the claims in the poster above.

Write an email to Jamie in customer care reporting your experiences and offering ideas for improvement.

You should include:

- what happened when you used The Local Bus Company
- what your feelings were
- what you want The Local Bus Company to do.

Remember to:

- plan your answer
- use correct spelling, punctuation and grammar
- write accurately in sentences and paragraphs.

[9 marks]

[+9 marks for SPAG]

Student response 1 (low level)

what happend when you used Te Local Bus Compan? is I have bad tim so it don happen wiv family not alwas the sam

what your felings where is that I fel bad. is not good becas the drive was no so I cudn get chnge what you want The Local Bus Company to do is giv me alot so I cn go to the palce I din wan to go there so I don wan to fin a new way ther is not relly the way

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- An attempt to respond to the task, but little awareness of audience/purpose evident.
- Task is inappropriately formatted and length is inappropriate.
- An attempt at structuring sentences, but meaning is unclear.
- An attempt at logical sequencing. Level of detail is inappropriate for the task.

Examiner response: writing composition

There is very little sense of task although ‘I fel bad’ shows an awareness of the complaint element. There is an attempt at formatting to match the bullet points in the question. Clearly the length is inappropriately short. Sentence structure is non-existent but the beginnings of meaning can be gleaned from phrases such as ‘so I cn go to the palce’. Although there is some attempt to sequence, this struggles for sense. However, there are attempts to respond here so the mark is placed in the middle of the level.

2 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- Numerous errors make it difficult to follow the meaning.
- Few examples of conventional spelling.
- Some punctuation is used, but not correctly.
- Numerous grammatical errors make reading very difficult.

Examiner response: SPaG

This has all of the features of a bottom level response. Most spellings are incorrect and there is little punctuation that serves any purpose. Some grammatical errors such as ‘I hav bad tim’. As there is some glimmering of meaning, this can be placed above the bottom of the level

2 marks awarded

Student response 2 (medium level)

Hi jomie, we got a lot wrong to say about the buses that you drive in this area. It is not a good becos I am not happy with the service that you are have been running in the local. Me and ivan went to the bus to go to town on satuerday and it was raining so we was wet and the driver said we coud not get on the bus I think this is compeltly disgraceful, We needed to go to town to see are friend who was going to go shopping becos we said we'd meet at twelve in the square. So the driver said we could and Ivan said it was wrong as well.

Are feelings was terrible because this was a Satudray and the only time we get off school becos we have to go to church on Sunday. So Ivan and me felt really sad a bout everythink.

What I want the bus company to do. you should do about it is give Ivan and me some tickets so we can go into town because we really like to go into twon. And also write and apology for your driver,

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- An attempt to respond to the task, with some awareness of audience/purpose.
- Some attempt to format the task, though length may not be appropriate.
- Sentence structures, including complex sentences, convey basic meaning.
- Some attempts at logical sequencing in parts of the text, but level of detail is not necessarily appropriate for the task.

Examiner response: writing composition

A fairly coherent response with a sense of the need to provide evidence for the complaint. The format reflects the bullet points but there is a short introduction. Sentence structures convey meaning although complex sentences are sometimes incorrectly demarcated eg last two sentences in the first paragraph. There is an attempt to sequence with some success and detail is present

5 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- Errors make reading more challenging, but the meaning can be followed.
- Simple words are spelled correctly.
- Some simple sentence level punctuation is correct.
- Grammatical errors make reading more challenging.

Examiner comments: SPaG

Most spellings are actually correct but there are errors on more challenging words such as 'disgraceful' (sic) and there is evidence of punctuation at sentence level although not always correctly applied. Grammatical errors such as subject/verb agreement in 'Are feelings was terrible' (sic) do not really impinge on meaning and the use of the past tense in narrative is sound. Meaning can be followed.

5 marks awarded

Student response 2 (top level)

Dear Jamie,

I am sorry to tell you that I have a serious complaint to make about your Local Bus Company bus/es. I was on the No 14 going from Heaton to the centre of town when the driver stopped the bus and asked us to get off. I asked the driver what was the problem and he said, 'Engine trouble'. I asked him when the next bus to come was due and he said he did not know. I was very angry with this.

Anway, I then had to wait for another 35 minutes for the next bus to come and it was nearly full because it was the busy time then. There was no seats and I was standing all the way. I am disabled and no-one got up to give me a seat. Then I was late for my appointment which I was due at by 11.30 and I did not get there until 12.15.

I think this is completely unacceptable and I wish to request some compensation. I would suggest some discount or free travel tickets. Am I expecting too much? Would you like to be late for your appointment because of your own bus?

yours sincerely,
Josh

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- An appropriate response to the task, which is tailored to the audience/purpose.
- Format and length are appropriate to the task.
- Sentence structures, including complex sentences, convey meaning clearly.
- Text is sufficiently logically sequenced to convey meaning, with a level of detail appropriate to the task.

Examiner comments: writing composition

Appropriate in the way the letter is set out with a clear sense of audience, using welcome and valediction appropriately. The format is clear and uses paragraphs effectively so that the letter has a structure moving from narrative into analysis. There are clear sentences including one or two complex sentences although compound sentences dominate with the use of coordinating conjunctions. The details in the letter are appropriate to the task and emphasise the difficulties of a disabled bus passenger. This would be placed at the top of this level.

9 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- Errors make reading more challenging, but the meaning can be followed.
- Simple words are spelled correctly.
- Some simple sentence level punctuation is correct.
- Grammatical errors make reading more challenging.

Examiner comments: SPaG

Although there are a few errors here, such as the grammatical error in ‘There was no seats’ (sic), at this level the response would still score very well. Use of question marks is commendable. Spelling is impressive with words such as ‘compensation’, ‘appointment’ and ‘unacceptable’ being spelt correctly. All of the descriptors above apply here and a maximum mark is justified.

9 marks awarded

Specimen paper 8725

Question 1

6 mark question

You have received the following email from your local council:

BRINGING PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY TOGETHER

We've received funding from the National Lottery to support local events.

We are looking for ideas for local events which would help to bring the community together. So anything that would get people out their houses, talking to each other and enjoying themselves together.

Send us ideas about what you think might work. Ideas could include food, music, dance, competitions, stalls – anything at all can be considered. Give us good reasons for your suggestions, to help us decide!

To contribute, send an email to Ashraf at: livelylocal@email.com

Write an email to Ashraf, responding to the council's request. Your email should be approximately 150 – 200 words.

Remember to:

- plan your answer
- use correct spelling, punctuation and grammar
- write clearly and effectively.

**6 marks
(+3 for SPAG)**

Student response 1 (low level)

Its grate to bring people together wich I totally support. That's no surprise because im that kind of person. So what ideas woud I have then firstly why not get some entertenment such as bands they can be very effective to bring all the people together I think it would be gud to see what everyone thinks so hold a servey to get people to say things on the survey it will also be a good thing to do to get some amusement arkades such as Judj Dredd splatterhouse and similar some things also for yoyung childres such as donkey kong also classics such as super Mario. Another think I woold do is find a way to get the different types of peple so they can met

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- A partial response to the task. No clear attempt to engage the reader.
- Limited, if any, attempt to control format, length or text structure.
- Some simple words are used correctly.
- No attempt to set/maintain an appropriate tone. Sentence structures convey little, if any, meaning.
- No attempt at logical sequencing and level of detail is inappropriate.

Examiner response: writing composition

This is only a partial response and there is no reference to the intended recipient. The candidate has compacted all content and therefore format and structure do not emerge. In addition, the length of response is outside advisory limits and quite inappropriate. Tone and sentence structures are rudimentary and meaning is neither clear nor particularly relevant. Detail is limited but some points about the candidate's interest in the topic at the beginning of the piece, do come across.

2 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- SPaG errors detract from meaning.
- A few examples of conventional spelling.
- Little evidence of correct punctuation.
- Numerous grammatical errors.

Examiner response: SPaG

This has all of the features of a bottom level response. Most spellings are incorrect and there is no punctuation that serves any purpose. Grammatical errors, such as subject/verb agreement are evident throughout.

1 mark awarded

Student response 2 (medium level)

Hi Ashraf,

It's really great news to hear that we've won the lottery to get money into our community. Although we need to think about what we should do with the money as you asked in your leaflet to us all which I received yesterday on my doormat.

These are a few ideas I've got.

First, what about a community food festival this would be fantastic for all the local people to have a chance to try the different foods.

Second, a good thing would be a summer festeval like a music festeval so young and old could get together. Bands and singers.

Third, I think we needs to get the youngsters to get interested, so what about a fairground with scary rides and safe rides as well?

Finally I think we also need a building where everyone could go to meet each other have a cup of coffee sandwiches and that kind of thing.

All the best, Emilé Sanko

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- An acceptable response, with some attempt to engage the reader, but little development. Attempts at setting an appropriate register (tone), but not always sustained.
- Acceptable (though not entirely correct) formatting.
- Simple words/phrases are used correctly.
- Some variety of sentence structures.
- Some attempt to sequence logically, though not consistently. Level of detail is not necessarily appropriate (too long/short).

Examiner response: writing composition

The writer attempts to engage the reader by addressing him by name. Some development of key ideas is present and some suggestions are made which are not really developed. There is a format to the piece and language is transparent without being ambitious. There is a variety of sentence structure deployed including complex sentences, involving relative clauses. Logical sequence is fairly clear with 'First', 'Second' and so on and there is some detail present although this is not really specific and therefore lacks some impact.

4 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- Most common/simple words are spelled correctly.
- Sentence demarcation is correct and other punctuation is sometimes correct, with some markers to support reading.
- Grammatical errors are present and some modality devices are incorrect.
- SPaG does not detract substantially from the general meaning being conveyed.

Examiner response: SPaG

Spelling is generally accurate although challenging words such as ‘sandwiches’ (sic) and ‘althought’ (sic) prove problematic. Generally sentences are sound, with the occasional missed full stop and a subordinate clause in the first paragraph stands alone. Sentences do not always read well and some commas are missing in lists. Some inaccuracy in grammar such as ‘we needs’.

2 marks awarded

Student response 3 (top level)

Dear Ashraf,

It is really welcome news to hear that our local community is able to benefit from public funds in this way. I know the lottery has backed some excellent projects across the country so this can only be seen as a real boost locally.

I do have a number of concrete suggestions.

The diversity of people within our community need to be both recognised and celebrated, so I think there is room for a restaurant that would include dishes from all aspects of our community, from East Asian to Australian, from Caribbean to Calabrian.

Another idea I think would work would be a community fashion show, with clothing designed and made locally. This would then be followed by a community gathering/party.

We should also think about a way of involving the young and very young so I would suggest a summer nursery and children's play group for local people, based in our park.

I hope you are able to follow up some of these suggestions.

Yours sincerely,

Dahlia McIver.

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- Fit-for-purpose response, with an appropriate level of development to engage the reader. Appropriate register (tone).
- Appropriate formatting and length.
- A range of simple and complex words/phrases are used correctly.
- Variety of sentence structures, including complex sentences used correctly.
- Clear and logical sequencing of points in text. Appropriate level of detail for the purpose.

Examiner response: writing composition

This is a strong response with a confident opening and a clear sense of readership. The piece ends politely and optimistically, anticipating some response or action. Points are developed well, with some interesting detail such as the references to world food. It is well formatted with each point being addressed in a separate paragraph and it is well within the advisory limits. Vocabulary is relevant and ambitious within well-constructed sentences eg 'The diversity... ...Calabrian'. The sequence is logical, covering different elements of the community and detail is well placed.

6 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- Quality of SPaG supports clear meaning.
- Spelling, including some specialist words, is sufficiently correct to convey meaning.
- Sentence demarcation is correct and a range of other punctuation is mostly correct. Markers to ensure smooth and efficient reading are provided.
- Few grammatical errors and modality devices are used appropriately.

Examiner response: SPaG

A nearly error-free response and one that matches all points in the mark scheme very closely. It should be noted that a perfectly accurate response is not expected in order to gain full marks. In the shorter Q1 answer, it is possible that there might be a greater occurrence of very accurate answers of this sort.

3 marks awarded

Specimen paper 8725

Question 2 12 mark question

You are a reporter from the Wickby Post, a local newspaper.

You have visited Carroll's Fitness Centre and Gym and made the following notes:

Carroll's Fitness Centre and Gym
6 Colwyn Park Terrace, Wickby
Manager: Gina Carroll (gina@Fitness.co.uk)

Safe Environment
Trained staff
Classes
Latest equipment
Swimming pools
Steam room

Prices: Single visit £5
Monthly membership: £20 per month
Annual membership: £180 (so £15 per month)

Write an article for the local newspaper about the new Fitness Centre and Gym, including any strengths and weaknesses you found.

Remember to:

- plan your answer
- use correct spelling, punctuation and grammar
- write accurately in sentences and paragraphs.

Student response 1 (low level)

So i got the job being a reporte for the local newspaper and the editor has asked me to make a report being from my vsist to the Carrolls gym which is a fantastick place take it form me I can tell tthat what do you think? Anyway, first thing is the place is like its clean but there were water in the main enterance so I slipped on the floor which I got a hedeche from so I don think it's a safety hazard but I did fall over so i think it could be a safety hased the swimming pool is grate tho becas there is a deep end thats for good swimmers like I said before you need to be able to swim god to get into the deep end in case you have some ttrouble.Summof the equiptments is need to improve so that I can use them such as the bke machine which I sat on but the peddles was too hard to turn round so that it were too hard to use the bike machine I wud give this a mark of three half stars for the Carrolls gym.

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- An attempt to respond to the task, but little, if any, awareness of audience/purpose.
- Little, if any, attempt at formatting.
- Simple words are used and specialist words might be present, but not used meaningfully.
- Little evidence of control of tone.
- Little, if any, logical sequencing or paragraphing.

Examiner response: writing composition

This clearly attempts to cover the main aspects of the task as the candidate writes about their role as a reporter. Formatting is no-existent and the sense of an article is simply not there. The language is basic with few challenging words. Although there is some sequence in terms of the way the candidate samples aspects of the gym, the overall impression is one of writing things as they came into the candidate's head. However, there are some features, such as the positive and negative comments which take this to the top end of the level.

3 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- SPaG errors detract from meaning.
- A few examples of conventional spelling.
- Little evidence of correct punctuation.
- Numerous grammatical errors.

Examiner comments: SPaG

Some aspects of basic spelling are correct, but many polysyllabic words are incorrect. Punctuation is generally absent although there is a question mark functioning appropriately. Grammatical errors are present throughout, with subject/verb agreement being perhaps the most obvious. Some meaning can be gleaned so this is middle of the level.

2 marks awarded

Student response 2 (lower-middle level)

I was going to go to Carrolls gym and I was asked to write something about it for the local newspaper the Wickby Post. The editor said I need to written something about the gym for the readers whos are going to read about it in the local newspaper.

First thing is the people are very freindly they say hallow when I cam into the gym and showed me around so that I could get a idea about what the gym is and what things they are able to offer.

First was the swimm pool which were a bit small beacuase it was only 25 metres that means that its not really that big, but big enough the water was not so cold so it was quite good to have a swim in it because it wasn't too long. I enjoyed trying the swimming but it wasnt that good.

Then I went into the area with the exsersise machines so that you could build up your body. That was not bad as well becuase the staff helped me to find the best way to work the machines. When I went to the restraint the food was good there was tea and coffee with toast and stuff like that but the was also some proper meals like pizza and rice also chips and soft drinks.

I tjhink the carols gym is a really good place to go to and I think its worth the visit what do you think

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- Meaning is conveyed, but not clearly fitting the purpose of the task.
- Format is clear, but not necessarily appropriate. Might be too long/short.
- Uses a range of words and phrases, with some attempt to use specialist ones – but sometimes incorrectly.
- Some awareness of appropriate tone.
- Some attempt at paragraphing/sequencing of ideas, but not sustained.
- Key points are not clear.

Examiner response: writing composition

The response provides meaning that is not entirely fitted to the task, although the sense of purpose/audience is there. There is a format which is pushing towards clarity in the way the various aspects of the gym are dealt with (swimming pool, restaurant) although length is inadequate. Language is simple, the choice of vocabulary unambitious and repetitive phrasing makes for dull reading. Paragraphing is present but it doesn't follow the sequence of ideas within the narrative report and some points are difficult to follow.

5 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- SPaG does not detract substantially from the general meaning being conveyed.
- Most common/simple words are spelled correctly.
- Sentence demarcation is correct and other punctuation is sometimes correct, with some markers to support reading.
- Grammatical errors are present and some modality devices are incorrect.

Examiner response: SPaG

Basic spelling is adequate with some longer words ('swimming' 'coffee') spelt correctly but not always consistently. Sentence demarcation is generally correct although other aspects of accurate punctuation, such as apostrophes and question marks, are not evident. There are a number of grammatical errors such as incorrect past participles and subject/verb agreement.

4 marks awarded

Student response 3 (upper middle level)

I was asked to write something about Carroll's Gym for our local newspaper, the Wickby Post. The editor said I need to write something about the gym for the readers so that readers could get a good picture about Carroll's Gym for the readers.

First thing is the people are very friendly I was greeted by the manager when I came in. Then he asked one of the coaches to show me around so that I could get an idea about what the gym is and what things they able to offer.

First was the swimming pool. Really great! This was a bit small because it was only 25 metres which means that its not really that big. However, there was room for the people that were there when I went. If there was more then it might be a bit crowded. The water was a nice temperature, not to hot or cold but quite good to have a swim in it. I enjoyed trying the swimming.

Then I went into the area with the exercise machines which help people to keep fit that was not bad as well because the staff helped me. They told me how to find the best way to work the machines.

When I went to the restaurant the food was good there was tea and coffee, of course with toast and stuff like that. There was also some more filling meals like soup, pizza, stew, pies with chips and rice and soft drinks as well.

I think that Carroll's gym would be a really good place to go to and I would say, yes go along and visit.

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- Adequate for purpose and audience.
- Acceptable format, though possibly slightly too long/short.
- Appropriate sentence structures.
- Uses a range of appropriate words and phrases, including specialist ones, generally correctly.
- Tone not consistently appropriate.
- Paragraphs are used to support clarity, but not necessarily for overall effect.
- Appropriate level of detail to convey key points.

Examiner response: writing composition

The response shows a diligent approach to the task with a sense of purpose and audience present. Some repetition and wordiness does not detract from an acceptable format and sentence structures are generally sound with some subordination in relative clauses, for example (First sentence, fourth paragraph). Appropriate words and phrases ('exercise machines', 'restaurant') are used effectively. Whilst the tone is appropriate for this kind of writing there is an unevenness which detracts slightly eg third paragraph. Detail is fine although not particularly focused on the world of gyms and fitness.

8 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- SPaG does not detract substantially from the general meaning being conveyed.
- Most common/simple words are spelled correctly.
- Sentence demarcation is correct and other punctuation is sometimes correct, with some markers to support reading.
- Grammatical errors are present and some modality devices are incorrect.

Examiner response: SPaG

Basic spelling is adequate with some longer words ('temperature', 'exercise') spelt correctly but not always consistently ('manger' [sic]). Sentence demarcation is generally correct although there are a couple of occasions when full stops are missing such as the opening of the second paragraph. Such inconsistency is likely to pin responses to this second level. Occasional grammatical lapses ('more fillinger' [sic]) occur as well.

5 marks awarded

Student response 4 (top level)

Well, as the office fitness freak, it was no surprise that I was asked to write something about Carroll's Gym for the Wickby Post. As it is the only serious local paper, the editor said I needed to write something about the gym for our readers so that they could get a good picture of what Carroll's has to offer.

The first impression is very positive. The staff are very friendly which is a huge bonus for someone coming along for the first time. I was greeted by Gina Carroll, the manager, when I came in. Shortly after, she asked Andy, one of the coaches, to show me around so that I could get a clear and unbiased picture of the gym and what they are able to offer.

First was the swimming pool. This seemed to be somewhat restricted because it was only 25 metres which means that it's not really that big and certainly not for competitive events of any sort. However, to be fair, there was room for all of the customers that were using it at the time. I took the opportunity to bang off 20 lengths as part of my daily fitness regime and I had no complaints. The water was a pleasant temperature, not too hot or cold, and certainly clean. Strong, but guarded, positive for the pool then.

Then I went into the gym itself. There were plenty of state-of-the-art machines: bench press, chest fly, rowing machines, cycling machines with video coaching, and a boxing fitness area. This is an excellent facility to help people to keep fit and with coaching staff on hand there was much here to praise.

I visited the steam room after my workout in the gym and spent 20 minutes wallowing in a relaxing steam bath which opened up the pores on my skin and set my body aglow. After a shower, I felt absolutely wonderful!

With regards to the restaurant, the food was good but not at Master Chef level and certainly not the place for a night out. There was tea and coffee, of course, with toast, cakes and biscuits. There were also some more filling items such as soup (minestrone on the day I went), a selection of pizzas, stew, pies with chips, and soft drinks as well.

I think that Carroll's gym is a really good place to go to build up your fitness and with the pricing plans, you could get a very good deal.

Mark scheme descriptors: writing composition

- Clearly fit-for-purpose and audience.
- Appropriate format and length.
- Precise use of a range of sentence structures, including complex sentences.
- Precise use of a range of appropriate words and phrases, including specialist ones.
- Appropriate tone is set and maintained.
- Logically sequenced, with each paragraph contributing to overall impact.
- Sufficient detail to give the reader the information s/he needs, whilst maintaining the reader's attention.

Examiner response: writing composition

This response covers the same territory as the previous upper-middle level response but does it with some flair, targeting the local community reader very effectively with a well thought out format and length. Sentence structure is inventive with the occasional Dickensian sentence lacking the main verb, such as ‘Strong, but guarded, positive for the pool then.’ This type of flexibility with sentences matches the journalistic genre very well. Words and phrases are ambitious, interesting and challenging, while the use of specialist terms in relation to the gym is noticeable. The tone of the article is just right, with a mix of serious comment and the beginnings of humour. Sequence is perfectly suited to task, providing impact and there is sufficient detail to satisfy more than just the general reader without losing its captivating qualities.

12 marks awarded

Mark scheme descriptors: SPaG

- SPaG does not detract substantially from the general meaning being conveyed.
- Spelling – including some specialist words – is sufficiently correct to convey meaning.
- Sentence demarcation is correct and a range of other punctuation is mostly correct. Markers to ensure smooth and efficient reading are provided.
- Few grammatical errors and modality devices are used appropriately.

Examiner response: SPaG

This response is not perfect, yet is able to achieve a maximum mark. Spelling is accurate although a couple of simple errors on more difficult words don't detract. Sentence demarcation is maintained throughout and other punctuation is correct, such as brackets, exclamation mark and colon. Markers to enable reading, eg ‘With regards to’ are used effectively. Grammar and modality (such as the ‘could’ in the last sentence) are deployed carefully, with no errors.

9 marks awarded

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