

Sample Candidate Writing Scripts and Examiner Comments

Both the Academic and General Training Writing Modules consist of two tasks, Task 1 and Task 2. Each task is assessed independently. The assessment of Task 2 carries more weight in marking than Task 1.

Detailed performance descriptors have been developed which describe written performance at the 9 IELTS bands. These descriptors apply to both the Academic and General Training Modules.

Task 1 scripts are assessed on the following criteria:

- Task Achievement
- Coherence and Cohesion
- Lexical Resource
- Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Task 2 scripts are assessed on the following criteria:

- Task Response
- Coherence and Cohesion
- Lexical Resource
- Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Candidates should note that scripts will be penalised if they are a) under the minimum word length, b) partly or wholly plagiarised, c) not written as full, connected text (e.g. using bullet points in any part of the response, or note form, is not appropriate, etc.).

Task 1

Task Achievement

This criterion assesses how appropriately, accurately and relevantly the response fulfils the requirements set out in the task, using the minimum of 150 words.

Academic Writing Task 1 is a writing task which has a defined input and a largely predictable output. It is basically an information-transfer task which relates narrowly to the factual content of an input diagram and not to speculated explanations that lie outside the given data.

General Training Writing Task 1 is also a writing task with a largely predictable output in that each task sets out the context and purpose of the letter and the functions the candidate should cover in order to achieve this purpose.

Coherence and Cohesion

This criterion is concerned with the overall clarity and fluency of the message: how the response organises and links information, ideas and language. Coherence refers to the linking of ideas through logical sequencing. Cohesion refers to the varied and appropriate use of cohesive devices (for example, logical connectors, pronouns and conjunctions) to assist in making the conceptual and referential relationships between and within sentences clear.

Lexical Resource

This criterion refers to the range of vocabulary the candidate has used and the accuracy and appropriacy of that use in terms of the specific task.

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

This criterion refers to the range and accurate use of the candidate's grammatical resource as manifested in the candidate's writing at sentence level.

Task 2

Task Response

In both Academic and General Training Modules Task 2 requires the candidates to formulate and develop a position in relation to a given prompt in the form of a question or statement. Ideas should be supported by evidence, and examples may be drawn from the candidates' own experience. Responses must be at least 250 words in length.

Writing scripts are marked by trained and certificated IELTS examiners. Scores may be reported as whole bands or half-bands.

On the next 12 pages you will find candidates' answers to two sample Writing tests. There are two answers for each Writing task. Each answer has been awarded a band score and is accompanied by an examiner comment on the candidate's performance for that task.

The examiners' guidelines for marking the Writing scripts are very detailed. There are many different ways a candidate may achieve a particular band score. The candidates' answers that follow should not be regarded as definitive examples of any particular band score.

Academic Writing Sample Task 1A

Sample Script A

This is a bar chart of the number of men and women in further education in Britain in three periods. In 1970, most of men were studying part-time but from 1980, studying part-time was decreased and studying full-time was increased and in 1990, it was twice as many students as in 1970. On the other hand, women studying full-time were increased and not only full-time, part-time also were increased. In 1990, studying full-time was three times as many students as in 1970. If compare men and women, as you see, in 1970, men were studying more than women full-time or part-time but it changed from 1980 and then, in 1990, women were studying part-time more than men and studying full-time was same number. It shows you women has a high education now.

Examiner comment

Band 5

The length of the answer is just acceptable. There is a good attempt to describe the overall trends but the content would have been greatly improved if the candidate had included some reference to the figures given on the graph. Without these, the reader is lacking some important information. The answer is quite difficult to follow and there are some punctuation errors that cause confusion. The structures are fairly simple and efforts to produce more complex sentences are not successful.

Academic Writing Sample Task 1A

Sample Script B

According to this graph, the number of men and women in further education in Britain shows the following pattern.

In the case of male, the number of male has declined slightly from about 1000 thousands in 1970/71 to about 850 thousands in 1990/91. However, this figure rose back to about 850 thousands in 1990/91 from about 820 thousands in 1980/81. The proportion of full-time education has declined during this period. However, the proportion of part-time education has increased dramatically.

On the other hand, in the case of female, the number of both full-time education and part-time education has increased during this period.

From about 700 thousands in 1970/71, these figures rose to about 820 thousands in 1980/81, to about 1100 thousands in 1990/91.

In terms of full-time education, this figure rose by about 260 to about 900 in 1990/91.

On the other hand, with respect to part-time education, this figure rose dramatically between 1980/81 and 1990/91. However this figure rose slightly between 1970/71 and 1990/91.

Examiner comment

Band 6

The candidate has made a good attempt to describe the graphs looking at global trends and more detailed figures. There is, however, some information missing and the information is inaccurate in minor areas. The answer flows quite smoothly although connectives are overused or inappropriate, and some of the points do not link up well. The grammatical accuracy is quite good and the language used to describe the trends is well-handled. However, there are problems with expression and the appropriate choice of words and whilst there is good structural control, the complexity and variation in the sentences are limited.

Academic Writing Sample Task 2A

Sample Script A

THE SOLUTION OF OVERCROWDED TRAFFIC

Nowaday, there are alot of cars on British road and they have increased day to day. By the year 2000 there may be as many as 29 million vehicles on British roads. In this essay, I intend to examine about the solutions of these problems.

Firstly, the people living in Britain need to think about themselves. If they used the bus and train instead of their car, this problem would resolve a little. Because of this, the British Government should introduce to control car ownership and use. For example, the government can ban to enter the road by car in the sameday all family from a house.

Secondly, the buses and trains of government should be free for public population. Thus, the people would use these transport vehicles instead of their own car. After that, the roads in Britain would be ~~more~~ safer and more comfortable.

Lastly, ~~the export~~ the number of cars that are exported from another country should decrease, and the prices of car should increased ~~in~~ case they aren't overcrowded. For example, the prices of cigarettes increased and the consumption of cigarettes went down.

In conclusion, If these measures put into action the problem of traffic can be decreased in the British roads.

Examiner comment

Band 5

The answer is short at just over 200 words and thus loses marks for content. There are some relevant arguments but these are not very well developed and become unclear in places. The organisation of the answer is evident through the use of fairly simple connectives but there are problems for the reader in that there are many missing words and word order is often incorrect. The structures are quite ambitious but often faulty and vocabulary is kept quite simple.

Academic Writing Sample Task 2A

Sample Script B

The transport has been one of the most important problem for the last two centuries. The problems began with the development and the growing of the cities.

Before the eight century the people lived in small villages or towns and did not have necessity to go too far. The people did not worry about the time to arrive in some where.

Nowadays the situation changed. Many cars on the streets and many people need to go to any place. The numbers of car has increased and as a result ^{there are} many problems: pollution, noise, car accident, insufficient car park and petroleum problem.

On the other hand, people use car to go anywhere: to work, to travel, to spend holiday and to amusement. Meanwhile the car is important the cities must have another solution. It is important to organize its using and to meet alternative ways.

In big cities there are some alternatives like undergrounds (metro), coach, train and bicycles. In China and Cuba ^{for example} they use a lot of bicycles for substituting the cars or coaches. /---

It would be better to think about other different kinds of transport. In Brazil the government has talked about transport on the rivers. In this country there are many rivers where it is possible to go to different places. In general they are flat rivers.

Another kind of transport is car that uses solar energy. Probably they don't have pollution problem and it is cheaper than other car.

In conclusion, the transport is a social problem in big cities but its solution depends on new technologies, other kind of energy and political aspects.

Examiner comment

Band 6

There are quite a lot of ideas and while some of these are supported better than others, there is an overall coherence to the answer. The introduction is perhaps slightly long and more time could have been devoted to answering the question. The answer is fairly easy to follow and there is good punctuation. Organisational devices are evident although some areas of the answer become unclear and would benefit from more accurate use of connectives. There are some errors in the structures but there is also evidence of the production of complex sentence forms. Grammatical errors interfere slightly with comprehension.