

## Answers: Part 4

### 4.1 Formal letters and emails

#### 1 Letters

- (a) address of sender
- (b) address of recipient
- (c) sender's reference
- (d) date
- (e) greeting
- (f) subject headline
- (g) reason for writing
- (h) further details
- (i) request for response
- (j) ending
- (k) signature
- (l) writer's name and job title

#### 2 Practice A

(Example answer)

54 Sydney Road  
Rowborough RB1 6FD

Mr M. Bramble  
Administrative Assistant  
Central Admissions Office  
Wye House  
Park Campus  
University of Mercia  
Borchester BR3 5HT

5 May 2010

Dear Mr Bramble,

Informal Interview: Yr Ref: MB/373

Thank you for inviting me to interview on 21 May. I will be able to attend on that date, but it would be much more convenient if I could have the interview at 12, due to the train times from Rowborough.

Could you please let me know if this alteration is possible?

Yours sincerely,  
*P. Tan*

P. Tan

## 4 Practice B

Sender = student / recipient = teacher

Reply is unlikely, unless recipient needs to comment on the attached paper.

## 5 Practice C

(Example answers)

(a) Hi Mark,

We need to schedule a short meeting tomorrow. What time would suit you?

See you soon,

(b) Hello Tricia,

I'm looking for another source for this month's essay. Could you recommend something suitable?

Best wishes,

(c) Hi everyone,

It's only a week before the end of the course – what are we going to do to celebrate? Let me have your ideas – I'll pass them on and hopefully get something good fixed up for Sat 12th!

(d) Dear Tim Carey,

I've never had this book, so I can't return it. Can you check your records please?

## 4.2 Writing CVs

### 2 Practice A

The CV is well-organised but lacks detail. For example more information could be given about the BSc Psychology course. In some circumstances it might be helpful to add a section on 'Interests' providing these had some relevance to the position being applied for.

## 4.3 Reports, case studies and literature reviews

## 2 Essays and reports

(1) essay

(2) report

(3) report

(4) report

(5) essay

## 3 Case studies

A case study has the advantage of providing a concrete experience/ example.

The disadvantage is that it is limited in place and time.

| Topics                                     | Case studies   |
|--|--|
| Methods of teaching dyslexic children      | An experimental approach to reading difficulties with under-8s in Singapore            |
| Improving crop yields in semi-deserts      | Using solar power to operate irrigation pumps in Ethiopia                              |
| Reducing infant mortality                  | A programme to cut smoking among pregnant women in a Greek clinic.                     |
| Building earthquake-resistant bridges      | The lessons from Chile — how three structures withstood the 2010 quake                 |
| Dealing with re-offending among prisoners  | Work and learning — how a Brazilian scheme encouraged convicts to stay out of jail     |
| Improving re-cycling rates in large cities | The Berlin experiment: increasing public participation in collecting and sorting waste |

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## 4 Example case study

(Additional answers are possible here)

(a)

Store layouts match Chinese apartments.

Products linked to New Year celebrations.

Reduced prices by sourcing production locally.

Produces thinner but more frequent catalogues.

Uses local characters in adverts.

Attempts to provide better service.

(b)

Competition from rivals offering free delivery.

Some products, e.g. single beds not suited to Chinese tastes.

(c)

More financial details of IKEA's sales and profits in the Chinese market.

## 5 Literature reviews

(a) 2 (content and process)

(b) 7

(c) 5

(d) It is more convenient to use secondary sources in this kind of short literature review. If you were studying just one of these theorists, e.g. Herzberg, you might be expected to use primary sources.

## 4.4 Designing and reporting surveys

### 1 Conducting surveys

(Other suggestions possible/ in any order)

To test a hypothesis.

Get up-to-date data.

Collect information about the behaviour of a specific group, e.g. clients of a firm.

### 2 Questionnaire design

- (a) (ii) is less embarrassing for most people to answer.
- (b) (i) is an open question and has many possible answers.  
(ii) is a closed question with a limited range of responses.
- (c) For casual interviews ten is probably the maximum most interviewees will cope with.

### 3 Survey language

- (a) conducted
- (b) random
- (c) questionnaire
- (d) questioned
- (e) respondents/ interviewees

- (f) Interviewees/ Respondents
- (g) mentioned
- (h) majority
- (i) slightly
- (j) minority
- (k) questions
- (l) common
- (m) generally
- (n) sample

## 4 Question forms

(Example questions. 3–6 could use present tense)

- Q2 Why did you take a job?
- Q3 What effect did the work have on your studies?
- Q4 What kind of work did you do?
- Q5 What hours did you work?
- Q6 How much did you earn?
- Q7 Do you have any comments on your work?

## 5 Using tenses

- (a) past tense
- (b) present tense (the survey is completed but the results are still valid)

## 4.5 Writing longer essays

### 2 Example essay

- (a) The writer appears to be in favour of nuclear energy.
- (b) The writer presents the arguments against nuclear power and attempts to show their weakness. In the conclusion the writer summarises his/ her position ('nuclear energy can be seen . . . fossil fuels').

### 3 Revision

(Example answers)

- (a) See Paragraph 1.
- (b) 'This essay attempts to assess the risks of using nuclear power, in comparison with other sources of energy'.
- (c) 'The main arguments for employing nuclear energy are first considered, followed by an examination of the safety issues around this source of power, including the safety and security concerns connected with nuclear waste'.
- (d) ' . . . alternative energy sources to fossil fuels, i.e. oil, gas and coal . . . '
- (e) 'Wind energy and solar power are frequently presented as alternative energy sources to fossil fuels'.
- (f) 'Mtoe (million tons of oil equivalent)'
- (g) ' . . . since the Chernobyl accident in 1986 there has been persistent concern . . . '
- (h) 'As a result, the demand for total primary energy, which will accompany the population growth, is projected to increase . . . '

(i) power

(j) 'If this increase occurs the total global stock of oil and gas would only be adequate for 250 years ...'

(k) 'It is estimated that in 2003, in the USA, nuclear energy prevented the release of 680 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> ...'

(l) 'However, its opponents argue that it can damage the environment by creating radioactive waste'.

(m) Bodansky (2004)

(n) 'Lillington (2004) suggests that the cost of purchasing fuel for nuclear energy is likely to remain low compared to other energy sources ...'

# Self-assessment exercises

## 1 Describing a process

- (a) stage/ part/ step
- (b) the/ its
- (c) for
- (d) Secondly/ Then
- (e) and
- (f) critically/ rigorously/ carefully
- (g) which
- (h) skills/ techniques
- (i) answer
- (j) be
- (k) taking
- (l) you
- (m) checking/ ensuring
- (n) After
- (o) maximum
- (p) to
- (q) tables/ graphs/ figures
- (r) should/ must

## 2 Summarising a report

The summary should contain the following key points:

- scientists/ Oxford University/ researching crow behaviour
- showed that crows can make simple tools — not only primates
- experiment — meat in glass tube + wire
- birds shaped wire to make hook/ extract meat
- researchers saw them do similar in native environment

(Example summary)

Recent research by scientists at Oxford University has demonstrated that crows have the ability to produce simple tools from materials not found in their natural surroundings. In the experiment, which was devised after observing similar behaviour in their habitat, the birds bent a length of wire into a hook to pull a piece of meat from inside a glass tube. Chimpanzees are known to use ‘tools’ in this way, but this is the first time that birds have been shown to have such abilities. (84 words)

### 3 Problems and solutions

(Example answer)

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Problem</b>        | Fair and accurate assessment of students’ performance has always been a difficult task. Coursework and examinations have both been used to grade student work.  |
| <b>Benefits of A</b>  | The benefits of assessment through coursework are the inclusion of all a student’s work over the period, as well as the encouragement to work consistently. In addition, it provides students, to some degree, with a choice of topics.                               |
| <b>Drawbacks of A</b> | However, there are concerns that plagiarism of coursework is quite easy, and it also requires good time-management skills. The greater volume of work may also make it harder for teachers to assess everything fairly.   |
| <b>Benefits of B</b>  | Examinations, however, make plagiarism much more difficult, and also provide an incentive for thorough revision of the semester’s work. It is also claimed that all students have to compete on equal terms, answering the same questions in the same amount of time. |
| <b>Drawbacks of B</b> | Critics of exams point out that some students become too nervous to perform well, and that only a restricted range of topics can be assessed. Non-native speakers are also likely to be disadvantaged.  |

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
|                   |  |
| <b>Conclusion</b> | Because of the powerful arguments on both sides of this debate, most courses are actually assessed by a combination of both methods, and this seems to be the most satisfactory situation. |

# Answers Self-assessment exercises

*These exercises are included to allow students to assess their progress in academic writing. The first, Describing a process, is a test of accuracy, the second, Summarising a report, tests summary writing, while the third, Building an argument, tests the ability to write a problem-solution paragraph.*

## 1 Describing a process: writing an essay

- (a) stage/ part/ step
- (b) the/ its
- (c) for
- (d) Secondly/ Then
- (e) and
- (f) critically/ rigorously/ carefully
- (g) which
- (h) skills/ techniques
- (i) answer
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### Model summary

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(84 words)

## 3. Problems and solutions

Model answer

|                |  |
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| <b>Drawbacks of B</b> | Critics of exams point out that some students become too nervous to perform well, and that only a restricted range of topics can be assessed. Non-native speakers are also likely to be disadvantaged.  |
| <b>Conclusion</b>     | Because of the powerful arguments on both sides of this debate, most courses are actually assessed by a combination of both methods, and this seems to be the most satisfactory situation.  |