

Candidate 1

Assignment writing title: An e peanas a th' ann am Prìosan?

The candidate was awarded **16 marks**. The candidate begins by clearly stating the purpose of the piece of writing: a discussion on whether a prison sentence is an effective form of punishment for crime. Paragraph 1 is a brief paragraph. This is very appropriate in terms of stating the purpose of the essay and also enabling the candidate to give a personal opinion on the matter. “Tha mi an dòchas . . . nach eil sinn a’ cur nam mortairean ann an Alba gu àite coltach ri taigh-òsta.”

The candidate goes on to argue that prison is a successful punishment for criminals who wish to improve their own lives but that it is not successful for others who are not willing to make an effort themselves. The arguments are stated clearly and logically. There is evidence of appropriate research and specific examples are cited to support the argument. There is also evidence of research with regard to the reference to capital punishment. The candidate’s personal opinions are again presented in a clear and sequenced way.

The concluding paragraph is weaker than the rest of the essay. Although this paragraph contains a good argument and strong supporting statistical evidence, it is not entirely clear what the candidate’s conclusion actually is, other than that a prison sentence is an unpleasant experience. The candidate writes “Tha e dearbhte dhomhsa gu bheil dòigh eile air piseach fhaighinn air seo.” but does not really state what that “dòigh eile” is.

Overall, the piece is well written. There are no impediments to the understanding of the essay on first reading. There are some spelling errors and some grammatical errors but they do not hinder understanding. There is a clear line of thought presented in a logical way. Personal opinions are also expressed and are supported well by examples. However, it is felt that the structure of the piece and the conclusions arrived at would need to be developed further to achieve the highest band of marks (i.e. 17 – 20 marks). Consequently, this piece was awarded the highest mark in the 14 – 16 mark band.

Candidate 2

Assignment writing title: An Caraid as fheàrr

The candidate was awarded **14 marks**. This piece of writing is about man's best friend: the dog. (An caraid as fheàrr). The candidate produces an interesting piece of writing, which details some of the history of how dogs became domesticated, how dogs can be of assistance to people in their daily lives and the personal benefits the candidate themselves have gained from owning a dog.

Unfortunately, the opening sentence is structurally deficient and could have a negative impact on the reader from the outset. "Tha iad ag radh gur e madadh-allaidh a bh' anns ach thàinig e a-staigh dhan teine far an robh na daoine ann an tìr na cloiche." This sentence could have a number of interpretations, particularly the phrase 'thàinig e a-staigh dhan teine far an robh na daoine'. It is important for the opening sentence to be clear and unambiguous in order to make an initial positive impact on the reader.

The remainder of the essay is well structured and well sequenced. References to dogs in history are given at the beginning, as are references to dogs in literature. The candidate then details how they came to acquire a dog as a pet ('Ghèill mo mhàthair mu dheireadh thall'.) and gives a detailed description of the dog. The candidate then details some of the tasks that dogs can undertake in order to help humans. At the end of the essay, the candidate addresses the reader and recommends that the reader should acquire a dog.

Overall, this is a good piece of writing. It is well structured and consistently relevant to the task. There is good evidence of research and some factual information is provided. There are lapses in linguistic construction throughout the piece but these do not detract from overall intelligibility. Although it is a simplistic topic, which does not require much detailed argument. Nevertheless, it makes for very interesting reading.

This piece of writing was awarded the lowest mark in the 14 – 16 mark band.

Candidate 3

Assignment writing title: Mar a tha botail plastaig a' sgrios na h- à rainneachd againn

The candidate was awarded **16 marks**. This is a comprehensive and detailed piece of writing on a very topical subject: how plastic bottles are having a negative impact on our environment.

The candidate begins directly addressing a number of specific questions to the reader. This immediately grasps the reader's attention and gets the reader involved in the topic.

It is obvious from the outset that the candidate has undertaken considerable research and the argument that is presented at the beginning is sustained to the end. There is statistical evidence used throughout the essay to support the arguments that are made.

Throughout the essay, there are lapses in spelling accuracy and in grammatical accuracy. However, these do not detract from the overall understanding or from the overall effect of the piece of writing.

The candidate identifies many negative effects of plastic bottles at a local and national level. The candidate also introduces personal experiences with regard to the negative influence of plastic on the natural environment. This shows that their argument is wide-ranging and relevant. The line of reasoning is consistent throughout the essay and is presented in a clearly sequenced manner.

Overall, this piece of writing is well structured and appropriate to the purpose of the task. The candidate engages well with the reader at the outset and this engagement is sustained throughout the essay. There is an appropriate conclusion, which again is addressed directly to the reader.

Slight deficiencies in linguistic control (for example, sìos chun a' chuan agus a faigh uisge air feadh mi fhèin agus mo aodach; cha toir botail plastaig buaidh air dìreach thu fhèin agus mise ach ar sinnsirean cuideachd) result in this piece not being allocated a mark in the highest band (17 – 20 marks). Consequently, it is awarded the highest mark in the 14 – 16 mark band.

Candidate 4

Assignment writing title: Drugaichean ann an luth-chleasachd

The candidate was awarded **14 marks**. This piece of writing is about the misuse of drugs in sport. The candidate outlines the purpose of the piece of writing at the outset and states why this topic is of particular relevance to them: they participate in sport a lot.

The candidate goes on to outline the different effects that different drugs can have on athletes. Potential benefits include: some can enhance speed; others enhance strength; others enhance stamina; etc. Potential disadvantages include: risks to health; the danger of being banned from participation in sport if found to be taking illegal drugs; etc. There is evidence of research here and the findings are presented in a clear and structured way.

A detailed account is given of specific examples of athletes being banned from sport for the mis-use of drugs. The experience of Tyson Gay in 2012 and the experience of the Russian team in 2015. This again shows evidence of research and adds further quality to the essay.

Towards the end of the essay, the candidate gives their own reasons for being opposed to the use of drugs in sport. There is some repetition here of what has already been stated at the beginning of the essay.

This piece of writing is well written and well structured. It deals with a subject which is topical and which is often discussed in the press. The candidate has a particular interest in the topic and is therefore able to relate well to the topic.

Throughout the piece there are inaccuracies in spelling and in grammatical accuracy. However, these do not detract from the intelligibility of the essay.

Overall, the piece is relevant to purpose and audience and the writer's arguments are presented clearly. The piece was allocated a mark in the 14 -16 marks band. However, due to spelling & grammatical errors and incidents of repetition, it is awarded the lowest mark in that band.