

# Writing

## Task 2

### Sample Answer

Much could be said about different ways of testing or checking students at schools or universities. The most popular ones have always ~~caused~~ been causing very exciting discussions and debates around the world. We all do realise that teachers need to have a system that helps them to test their students knowledge, so they can see how effective their teaching methods are. The question is do we really need to put so much pressure on these features? Are they really so effective?

The first thing about tests and exams is, that they do check the level of information the students managed to learn from the lectures. The questions usually cover the area that has been thought at school, so if students can answer them correctly it means that the teaching was successful.

The other, equally important aspect is, that due to the tests or exams that students are facing at school they get motivated to study more, in order to get better marks and to improve their knowledge. Sometimes it might be just the fact that it is called an exam, that makes students get together and study harder.

On the other hand, some students might feel discouraged by the same fact that makes the others motivated what of course results in low marks in the actual exam. They also think that the results are very often not relevant to their efforts they put into studying. Because the marking system is not fair, they just do not feel like studying more for the exam.

Furthermore, many students find the exams of different kinds very stressful, especially the school ones. They often think that there could be another way of testing, less stressful, that should be introduced in schools or universities. The supporters of this opinion often bring out the fact, that most of students start smoking actually because of the stress they are exposed to at school. And that is definitely not beneficial for you or your health.

To put things together, is there really such a big need for exams at schools? Is there really no other way to check how ~~students~~ effective are the teaching methods? That is of course not that easy, but still, I am deeply convinced that things can be changed. It requires all the involved sides to think and come up with new ideas that could later be put into schools and that wouldn't be that stressful anymore, so students can actually start enjoying them.

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### Commentary

#### Task Response

The writer responds to the task appropriately, and generally remains focused on the question to be addressed. Benefits and disadvantages are considered, and the writer finally adopts a position, as required.

Despite the overall relevance of this answer, some improvements could be achieved. The first paragraph approaches the topic rather indirectly, and lacks a clearly defined focus, which weakens the impact of the introduction. Some of its content is, perhaps, not strictly relevant. The final paragraph suffers from the same problem, though to a slightly lesser extent. The crux of the piece, the writer's own conclusion, is in the middle of the paragraph ( ... *I am deeply convinced that* ... ), rather than being positioned prominently. Perhaps the writing would benefit from adopting a more assertive tone.

At 411 words the piece is over the length required.

#### Coherence and Cohesion

This writer uses her linguistic knowledge to the full to guide the reader successfully through the answer.

The organisation of information is commendably clear and progresses from introduction, through benefits and disadvantages, to conclusion. Appropriate paragraphing supports this structure.

Pronouns and articles are generally used to good effect to signal relationships within and between sentences, and paragraphs are linked with a well-chosen linking device.

#### Lexical Resource

A wide range of lexis is used, with a high degree of accuracy. The writer shows knowledge of idiomatic phrasing, such as *The other, equally important aspect is ...* . Occasionally it is evident that the writer has some limitations, for example *supporters ... often bring out the fact that ...* or *To put things together ...* . However, in these cases the writer successfully paraphrases, and these infrequent lapses barely affect the reader's progress. Spelling is almost flawless.

#### Grammatical Range and Accuracy

The writer's command of grammar, as with lexis, conveys the impression of fluency. A wide range of structures is attempted, with a good degree of accuracy. For example, *The first good thing about tests or exams is that they do check the level of ...* , is a difficult structure used perfectly accurately here. Occasionally there are errors with complex structures, such as *... some students might feel discouraged by the same fact that makes the others motivated ...* , but there is no interference with comprehension whatsoever. Simpler and more frequent structures rarely exhibit errors, and punctuation is practically error-free.

### Marks

This answer would probably receive a **Band 7** or **Band 8**.