E-MAILS and LETTERS

E-mails are written in response to the situation outlined in the input information.

Candidates can expect to write to: a college principal, an English-speaking friend or colleague.

Letters can be written to: a potential employer (for a part-time or vacation job), a college principal, a magazine editor or English-speaking friend or colleague.

A good letter or e-mail should consist of:

• an appropriate greeting.

• An introduction clearly stating the REASON for writing.

• A main body in which the subject is developed. Begin a new paragraph for each point.

• A final paragraph in which you sum up the topic or express your wish for something to be done

• An appropriate ending.

TRANSACTIONAL LETTERS are letters which respond to writing input (advertisements, other letters, notes, invitations, etc). They can be either formal or informal.

Remember to include all the relevant factual information given in the rubric, using your own words.

Each paragraph should deal with only one topic.

Characteristics of formal letters:

– The greeting.

– Frequent use of the passive voice

– formal language (complex sentences)

– no abbreviated forms

– A formal ending

Characteristics of informal letters:

– Informal greeting

– informal language and style (idioms, colloquial English, phrasal verbs)

– abbreviated forms, pronouns omitted.

– Informal ending.

– Use of Present Perfect and Past Simple to give news.

Letters asking for / giving advice.

They can be sent to a friend, a consultant or an advice column in a magazine. Details of the problem should be mentioned. A letter giving advice should contain suggestions introduced with appropriate language.

Asking for advice

Paragraph 1: Reason(s) for writing

Paragraphs 2-3: Description of the problem

Conclusion: Closing remarks

(full) name

Giving advice

Paragraph 1: Thanks for letter/express understanding of problem

Paragraphs 2-3: Suggestions and reasons

Conclusion: Closing remarks

(full) name

Letters of Complaint

• They are normally FORMAL.

• Mild or strong language can be used depending on the feeling of the writer or the seriousness of the complaint, but abusive language must never be used.

• Start a new paragraph for each different aspect of the topic

• You should state the reason for the complaint in the first paragraph.

• Any complaints you make should be supported with justification.

• Complaints and justification can be linked together with: 'although, in spite of/despite the fact that, however, nevertheless, etc’.

– Paragraph 1: Reason for writing

– Paragraphs 2-3: Complaint(s) and justification)

– Final paragraph: suggested action to be taken

– Closing remarks

– Full Name

Letters of apology

They can be formal or informal.

– Paragraph 1: Reason for writing

– Paragraphs 2-3: Reason to explain the inconvenience caused

– Final paragraph: Express understanding/regret or promise to make up for the situation.

Letters of invitation

P 1: reasons for writing (to invite)

P 2 – 3: details /directions

Final paragraph: closing remarks & (full) name

ACCEPTING AN INVITATION

P 1: Thanks for invitation

P 2 – 3: acceptance of invitation, further comments

REFUSING AN INVITATION

P 1: Thanks for invitation

p 2-3: Refusal of invitation, giving reasons.