

## Tips for writing

### Preparing for your exam

The accuracy of your written work in the foreign language will be taken into account to some extent in comprehension papers, but it is in written paper(s) that the quality of your writing becomes very important.

As with the other papers, you should know exactly what is expected of you in written exams.

For each topic covered, make a list of vocabulary under the headings of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs and learn them. Remember to add to your list whenever you come across new vocabulary related to that topic.

Make a note of any expressions you find in your reading which will be useful for writing.

Even if you write flawlessly in the foreign language, your essay will not be a good one until it is clearly structured. Practise planning - without necessarily writing - essays from a range of titles.

Revise linking words and expressions which will guide the reader through your essay.

Revise ways of introducing a topic, giving examples, expressing contrasting arguments, making concessions, expressing your personal opinion and concluding.

Revise ways of avoiding repetition of certain words.

Revise any points of grammar you are unsure of.

### During the exam

Read the title carefully and make sure that your essay tackles it.

Make notes of any ideas you have connected to the title, and organise them into a plan.

Don't rush into writing: time spent planning at the start is time well spent. You can only write a good introduction if you know how your essay is going to develop.

Be selective in the material you use; do not try to put down everything you know about the topic.

Express your own ideas on the topic as well as stating the facts you know.

Illustrate and support the points you are making rather than making broad generalisations. Use the expressions you have learned sparingly. Putting too many in will be counter-productive.

Most importantly, you should keep some time at the end to re-read your essay carefully, paying particular attention to verb endings, agreements of adjectives and gender, as these are the mistakes that won't be forgiven!