Test 1 Training Reading and Use of English Part 6

Task information

- In Part 6, you have to read four short texts on the same topic, and answer four multiple-matching questions about the texts.
- The questions require you to read across the texts in order to find the answers.
- The questions will require you to find opinions in the texts.
- The questions will ask you to say which expert shares an opinion with or has a different opinion from another of the text(s).
- It is unlikely that there will be one answer for each of the texts – one of the texts will probably have two answers while another has none.

Approaching the task

Read the rubric carefully, as it will introduce you to the subject of the texts. The best way to approach the task is to make a note beside each question of the letters that could provide the answers to that question. For example, if the question asks *Which expert shares C's opinion about the quality of the main actor's performance in the film?*, then you would note down A, B, D, as clearly C cannot be the answer here. Then, as you read the texts, you can put a line through any of the letters that you are certain do not provide the required answer.

1 Read these questions and note down the letters for possible answers after each question.

Which expert

1 shares expert B's interest in the historical aspects of the issue?
2 shares expert A's opinion on the impact that the type of course that is chosen has?
3 holds a different view from expert B on the value of making more degree places available?
4 shares expert D's doubts about the financial benefits of taking a degree?

2 When you first read the texts, it can be useful to think about how you would summarise each of the expert's opinions. Read each of the four texts dealing with the question of the value of doing a university degree course (see page 30). Make notes on each text.

Tip! Getting a sense of the main points the expert is making will help you find the answers more quickly.

3 Now look at the texts again and choose your answers to the questions in Exercise 1.

Tip! As will often be the case in the exam, one of the texts is the answer to two of the questions.

4 Check the answers to the task by answering these questions.

1 Which phrases in the text that answers question 1 suggest a historical approach?
2 How does the writer of the text that answers question 2 make it clear that he or she believes that the choice of course is crucially important?
3 Which sentences give B's opinion on the value of degree courses, even in less vocational subjects?
4 Which sentences in the text that answers question 4 express a degree of scepticism about whether taking a degree is financially worthwhile?

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A

There is increasing divergence of views these days over the value, for the individual, of doing a degree course as opposed to going straight into work. In the past, the consensus was that attending university was always worthwhile for anyone who had the ability to gain a place. But this attitude has shifted in recent years, no doubt in part because of the steadily increasing cost of spending three or four years in higher education. However, it must be stressed that the potential advantage of university depends in large part on what any particular course offers in terms of providing practical experience, a sound theoretical understanding or specific transferable skills. The nature of the chosen discipline and the quality of the selected course are the key factors to be taken into account when a school leaver is considering whether a degree course will be worth the investment.

B

Since the 1980s, there has been an enormous increase in the number of institutions in the UK providing degree courses, as well as a steadily growing diversity in the range of courses available to students. As a result, a far higher proportion of young people are now graduates. Some have claimed that this has led to a decline in both the quality and the economic value of a degree. However, it remains a fact that graduates earn considerably more than non-graduates. Although a degree is no guarantee of wealth and success, figures show that it is significantly more likely to lead to a higher salary and a more prestigious job. This general tendency holds true even for graduates in subjects that have no obvious links with traditionally well-paid professions.

C

Many university students have reported that they believe that an increase in confidence and maturity was their main gain from the years they spent in higher education. Those who select a vocational degree, such as veterinary science or aeronautical engineering, invariably and unsurprisingly focus more on the importance of the knowledge and skills they acquired. The social side of university life tends to be appreciated by students in all disciplines, although medical, engineering and law students claim to have had insufficient leisure to enjoy this aspect of the experience. While the most advanced professional skills probably need to be learnt in a higher education institute, improved confidence can be achieved equally effectively and probably more rapidly while in salaried employment, and an exciting social life is similarly not the exclusive prerogative of university students.

D

The problem with providing university education to an increasingly large contingent of students is that it is unrealistic in the way that it raises young people's expectations of the kinds of career opportunities that will open up for them. There simply are not enough graduate posts available for those who believe – usually rightly – that they are qualified to take on such a role. The size of the competition they face is disheartening, as is the inevitable disappointment experienced by young graduates who either remain unemployed or take on a job that could be done equally well by someone who has only just left school. Were they to have gone straight into employment at the age of 16, they would have been earning rather than spending money on fees, and they would probably be better able to tolerate the humdrum aspects of a routine job.

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Action plan

1 Read the introduction to the texts, noticing the topic.
2 Read the questions to get an idea of what you are looking out for.
3 Read each of the texts, thinking about the writer's opinions as you do so.
4 Read each question carefully and underline any key words or phrases in it.
5 Write the letters of the texts that might provide the answer next to the question.
6 Go back to each of the relevant texts and think about whether it is the answer or not. If not, put a line through that letter next to the question. If you are not sure, put a question mark next to that letter.
7 Before finally choosing your answer, check that you have been focusing on the correct attitude, for example a shared opinion rather than a differing opinion.

Follow the exam instructions, using the advice to help you.

You are going to read four reviews of a work of art on show at the Museum of Modern Art PS1 (MoMA PS1) in New York. For questions **37–40**, choose from the reviews **A–D**. The reviews may be chosen more than once.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Review of a work of art

A

Olafur Eliasson's installation at the Museum of Modern Art PS1 in New York, *Your Waste of Time*, consists of broken chunks of Iceland's Vatnajökull, Europe's largest glacier. The museum had to turn one of their main galleries into a walk-in freezer to be able to display them, a costly exercise but one that is justifiable in terms of its powerful impact. According to the museum, the pieces of ice chosen for the project are about 800 years old. That sounds about right to Ted Scambos, lead scientist at the National Snow and Ice Data Center. Scambos speculates that the ice came from the 'Little Ice Age', the period between the 16th and 19th centuries during which glaciers grew larger than they ever have since – and advanced quickly. 'These glaciers bear testimony to our history – being suspended and frozen for thousands of years – and now they are melting away, as if our whole history is fading,' said Eliasson. Stunning to look at, sad message.

B

Deep in the basement of MoMA PS1, there's a freezing cold room. This contains a number of large chunks of bluish-white ice brought together by the controversial artist Olafur Eliasson. The installation is called *Your Waste of Time* and its lesson would appear to be that global warming is having a devastating impact on our world. But that's hardly news. Ironically, the piece is itself contributing not inconsiderably to the problem, as an extraordinary amount of electricity is required to stop the installation from melting over the floor of the basement gallery. It's a curious piece with a carbon footprint that seems hard to justify on artistic grounds. It lacks beauty, and the skills involved in the installation's creation would seem to be less those of the artist whose name is on the gallery wall than of the technical staff who transported the ice blocks from the Arctic to New York. Are they in fact the people who have been wasting their time?

See next page

LIVEWORKSHEETS

C

More and more artists are beginning to tackle the causes and consequences of global warming, particularly the rapidly retreating polar ice caps. Thus, when the artist Olafur Eliasson produced his latest installation, *Your Waste of Time*, his Icelandic background (notable, of course, for having numerous glaciers) may have contributed to the sense of irony conveyed by this thought-provoking, infuriating, but at the same time elegantly crafted exposé on the dangers of glacial extinction. He even brought some of that background with him for the installation itself, constructed using Icelandic glacial ice which must be kept below freezing for the duration of the exhibition, at a cost of, arguably, a little of that Icelandic background in years to come in terms of the power needed to maintain such an icy temperature for four weeks. Despite Eliasson's positive environmental message, the irony of the manner of this installation's construction is not lost on the observer.

D

The very notion of a glacier is one of an unmoving edifice against the sands of time, a frozen state standing firm against the fluidity and pace of the modern world. Yet, through our best (or worst) efforts, the reality of the impact of global warming on these last remnants of the ancient world is now regularly beginning to feature in the art of those who live in the shadow of such edifices, a shadow that Eliasson is surely aware is getting smaller by the day. While his portfolio contains a variety of photographs and other works focused on this appealing icy subject, when regarding his new installation, *Your Waste of Time*, it then begs the question that if preserving the ice used in this installation at temperatures below freezing for four weeks is not of the utmost irony, then how does he reconcile the power needed to preserve his installation at the cost of preserving his own cultural and environmental heritage? Whose time has been wasted here?

Which reviewer

shares reviewer A's view that *Your Waste of Time* is visually attractive?	37 ☐
shares reviewer D's interest in reflecting on the title of the installation?	38 ☐
has the same opinion as reviewer D about the attraction that glaciers possess for artists?	39 ☐
has a different opinion from the other reviewers on the environmental contradictions of the installation?	40 ☐

Advice

37 Which words could be synonyms for 'visually attractive'?

38 What is the installation called?

39 First check exactly what reviewer D says about the appeal of glaciers as subject matter for the artist.

40 What exactly is the environmental contradiction of the installation?

Follow-up

Is there anything you would now like to add to or modify in the Action plan?

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