

## **NEU/ IELTS FOUNDATION 2/ MID-TERM TEST/ READING**

### **SECTION 1:**

#### **QUESTIONS 1-5**

**Complete each sentence with the correct ending A-I.**

1. Students' views are likely to be taken seriously if there are .....
2. Rules related to uniform are most likely to be discussed at .....
3. Year councils may get involved in .....
4. In the Year 8 council that is mentioned, teachers make sure that students are .....  
.....
5. Those in power are .....

- A** bullying and fundraising.
- B** more likely to bully others.
- C** not always the best listeners.
- D** not left on their own.
- E** organizing events.
- F** representative from the different year groups.
- G** school and year councils as well as peer mentoring schemes.
- H** school councils.
- I** teachers and parents of older students.

## **School community**

### **Participating in the school community**

It is important that students' feelings, opinions and suggestions are listened to, taken into account, and that the right action is taken. There are a number of ways that this can be achieved, i.e. school councils, year councils and peer mentoring.

#### **School councils**

Most schools have a school council which exists to let the teachers and head teacher know what students' opinions are on a range of school issues. The school council usually consists of two or three elected representatives from each year group.

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A school council might meet once or twice a month to discuss issues such as the dress code, the use of social areas, charity fundraising and bullying.

### **Year councils**

Because school councils are sometimes dominated by older students, some schools have introduced year councils. The aim of a year council is to give students the opportunity to express opinions on matters of importance to that particular year group. The following is an example of the rules relating to a school's council for year 8 (pupils aged 12-13).

1. The council's purpose is to act as a forum for discussion of school issues relevant to Year 8, and to let the teachers and head teacher know what student opinion is on these issues. The council will also take responsibility for cooperating with year staff in the organization of one social event per term for Year 8.
2. Membership of the council will consist of three representatives from each class, elected on a termly basis.
3. Meetings will be held once a fortnight. The council members will elect a chair to control the meetings and a secretary who will be responsible for circulating the agenda for each meeting and taking and circulating minutes of meetings.
4. The class representatives will be responsible for giving a report of the council's meetings to their class. Agenda and minutes of meetings will be put up in each classroom.
5. The Year 8 council will elect two of its members to be members of the school council, with responsibility for raising issues on behalf of Year 8 students at school council meetings.
6. The chair, secretary and school council representatives will be responsible for taking up matters raised at council meetings with the year head and other teachers, and for reporting back on such matters to the Year 8 council.
7. The head of year will attend all council meetings as an observer and both they and the other year staff will be available as required to offer support and advice to council members and to assist in the settlement of disputes.

### **Peer mentoring**

There are other ways in which students' voices can be heard. One of the most popular schemes involves peer mentoring. Those who express an interest receive training to become mentors so that they are better equipped to help others. This starts from primary school age, when the mentors may get involved in issues related to conflict resolution. At secondary school and at university, mentors are likely to deal with a larger variety of issues, such as educational and health-related matters.

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The underlying belief in schemes like these is that being heard by your peers can be more effective and helpful as fellow students may have more time and understanding than teachers or others in authority.

### **SECTION 2: QUESTIONS 6-11**

***The passage below has nine paragraphs A-I. Which paragraphs mention the following information? You may use any letter more than once.***

6. physical and mental problems that a business owner can face .....
7. leadership and team improvement ideas .....
8. the advantage of not expanding in business .....
9. individuals and larger groups that are available to help people who are new to business .....
  
10. the reasons why the more basic jobs in a small company should not be not be carried out by employers .....
  
11. external reasons why companies should try to keep their employees' knowledge and expertise up-to-date .....

## **Setting up in business**

(A) It takes a considerable commitment to set up and run a small business. Owners must be able to do all the tasks necessary to run the business or have sufficient funds to buy in appropriate external help, and even then they must be able to check the quality of the service they are receiving.

(B) Anyone planning to start a business must be realistic about what can be achieved, and in what time frame. Entrepreneurs often work extremely long hours, not just during 'trading' hours, but also after hours doing all the associated paperwork. If entrepreneurs overwork, they will find it difficult to make good decisions and will lack the energy to analyse and evaluate marketing and finance data. If an entrepreneur becomes over tired and over anxious, they can undermine their businesses



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by giving the impression that things are bad and the business is just about to close down.

(C) Many organizations provide support networks for entrepreneurs running small businesses. These networks provide training and access to experienced business mentors for little or no charge. The Business Link network, funded by Department of Trade and Industry, is one source of this kind of support. If entrepreneurs are under 30 years of age, the Prince's Trust also provides training and mentoring for business start-ups. There are various other privately run business networking groups which can be both fun and mutually supportive.

(D) Owners need to consider four key issues: training, leadership and team development, delegation and management systems.

(E) Investment in training is necessary to ensure that staff have the skills to do their jobs efficiently and they can meet the requirements of current legislation such as health and safety. Staff may also need training to develop skills to meet internationally recognized quality standards for products and service delivery. Research shows that small and medium-sized firms often find it very difficult to organize effective training.

(F) Ideally, workplace teams should be happy, creative working groups of individuals who support each other, work to each other's strengths and work towards the business's goals. This might require the owners to undertake self-assessment and target-setting reviews to ensure that the business is staying focused on its objectives. Team development can be fostered by organizing events such as team lunches and days out walking together.

(G) Owners should delegate and employ appropriate people to do the tasks that they cannot do or do not have time to do. By freeing themselves from some of the easier day-to-day tasks of the business, owners can spend their time monitoring the overall business and thinking about where the business should be going. Certainly if the owners are passionate about the business, they need time to step back and focus on the long-term goals and vision of the organization. They also need time to network, to build up sales leads and to explore further investment opportunities for the business.

(H) In time, owners need to be able to let go of control of some aspects of the business and to develop more formal management systems. This is probably the most difficult task for any entrepreneur. Many entrepreneurs find it very difficult to trust paid employees to run their businesses.

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(I) At this stage in their development, without outside help and guidance, many businesses simply reach their 'natural' capacity and they do not develop or grow any further. Entrepreneurs need to decide whether they want to keep their business small - so that they retain control of all decisions - or whether they want to go on growing their business and therefore accept that this will necessarily change their role in the business.

### **SECTION 3: QUESTIONS 12-20**

***Complete summary with words from the corresponding passages below. Use NO MORE THAN ONE WORD for each answer.***

There should be a small number of (12) ..... at meetings and there needs to be a (13) ..... for any meeting, which will include a clear agenda. During the meeting there needs to be good (14) ..... management and clarity about what the meeting should hopefully (15) ..... At the end, there should be a summary and agreement about (16) ..... action.

Working with other people is not always easy, but it is (17) ..... for the role of managers that they have interpersonal skills that are (18) ..... Their (19) ..... may need encouragement and help with (20) ..... and solving problems between colleagues.

## ***COMMUNICATION***

One criticism of UK managers is that relatively few speak a second language fluently. This can cause obvious problems for businesses that trade in a global market. Research suggests that UK companies lose around 13 per cent of the international deals they try to complete due to 'communication problems'. Managers also need effective written skills if they are to carry out their jobs effectively. The ability to quickly summarize key points in the form of a report for others in the business is of real value. So is the skill of reading a report written by someone else and being able to draw out the important elements. As well as their own staff, managers have to work with other people too. They interact with customers, more senior managers, suppliers, trade union officials, government officials and the local community. Managers need to be comfortable in the company of diverse groups,

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and they need to be able to communicate formally when required and to engage in informal small talk.

Managers need a range of communication skills to carry out their jobs effectively. They need to be able to articulate their ideas and vision and to convey enthusiasm. Good managers may, at times, need to be able to argue points cogently and to persuade people to their point of view. However, good managers appreciate that communication is a two-way process, and that listening is an important element of communication. Listening to the views of others can help to test ideas as well as to develop new products and methods of production.

The most common forum in which managers are required to communicate are meetings. It is important for managers to plan for meetings, whether with a single person or with a group. Managers should not invite too many participants to keep numbers to a minimum. They should have a clear agenda for discussion and should exercise tight time controls to prevent meetings dragging on. Managers should enter each meeting with a clear idea of what they want it to achieve. At the end of a meeting it is good practice to summarize what has been agreed and what needs to happen in the future.

Communication skills should not be taken for granted. Many managers require training in written and oral communication skills and many businesses would benefit from employing managers who speak at least one other language.

Interpersonal skills are also necessary if a manager is to work successfully with other people. If managers lack interpersonal skills, then they are likely to be of limited effectiveness in their role. Managers with effective interpersonal skills can motivate others and can coordinate the work of their employees. To do this, managers may need to coach and encourage employees as well as solving disputes and, perhaps more importantly, preventing conflict.

***Good luck!***