

## WRITING TASK 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

**People in your area are having problems with their internet connection.**

**Write a letter to the company which provides the connection. In your letter**

**• describe the problem;**

**• explain how they are affecting people**

**• say what the company should do to help**

**You do not need to write any addresses.**

**Begin your letter like this:**

**Dear Sir or Madam,**

Write at least 150 words.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to complain about serious Internet connectivity issues several customers, including myself, are experiencing in the Surrey central district.

I started having Internet **issues** last January. At first **it** was small connectivity interruptions, for example, I was browsing a website and the webpage would not finish loading. The Internet browser (in my case Firefox) would **complain** about loss of Internet connection. After these issues, I started experiencing **larger** connectivity losses, on average about 10 to 15 minutes. **This** now occurs every other day.

I have spoken with some of my neighbours and **some** relatives **which** live close by, and they are all experiencing these issues. This problem must be affecting thousands of your Internet access customers throughout this area.

The Internet is now an essential part of the lives of most people and businesses. These connectivity issues are totally unacceptable because they unnecessarily disrupt our leisure, our shopping and our **business** activities.

**You must** act without delay and investigate your fiber optic connections in this area to pinpoint the problem and solve it! I am sure that after speaking **with** some of your customers you will be able to troubleshoot the problem very quickly.

Yours sincerely,

## WRITING TASK 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task. Write about this topic.

**People should work a fixed number of hours per week, and employers should not ask anybody to work more than this.**

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience. Write at least 250 words.

The balance between work time and leisure/family time is a delicate one. Many employers are asking their employees to work longer hours than what was agreed, at the expense of the **employee's** leisure/family time. This is certainly a complex issue which cannot be **analyzed light-heartedly**.

In my opinion, if a person works for a firm, their monthly salary must correspond to a predefined number of hours. A problem may arise if the firm asks the employee to work longer hours. A firm **may** not offer additional compensation or it **may** offer additional compensation for the extra monthly hours.

In the former case the firm is being clearly abusive due to the fact that the hourly rate paid will be reduced proportionately to the extra number of hours worked. At the end of the month the employee is paid the usual sum, but his hourly rate has been downgraded. His hourly rate **can then be to that** of a lower skilled worker. The only situation where **this type** of requests can be acceptable is when they are very sporadic and the firm will compensate the employee at the end of the year (for example with an additional bonus).

In the latter case, an additional compensation may entice the employee to accept the offer of working extra hours, but in many cases the employee will not be content in spite of the monetary compensation. It is widely accepted that workers must have leisure time and more importantly a family life. If workers are deprived of these important segments in their life, their productivity will certainly suffer in the long term. Once again, this situation can be accepted as long as it is sporadic.

**As always** these situations should be analyzed on a case-by-case basis, but as a rule of **the** thumb, less leisure and family time will negatively affect a person's motivation and work productivity.

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## CORRECTIONS AND ANALYSIS

### Task one

#### **issues**

It is advisable not to repeat the same word in consecutive sentences as it sounds a little clumsy and by choosing a synonym you can display to the the examiners a wider range of vocabulary. Here you could use *problems* or *troubles*.

#### **it**

The word *it* refers directly to *internet issues* in your previous sentence. You therefore need a plural form, for example, *At first there were small connectivity interruptions ...*

### **complain**

We invariably use the word *complain* to refer to an expression of dissatisfaction, either verbal or in writing, by a human. We can't use it in connection with a machine or internet browser. Better would be *Firefox indicated a loss of....* or *Firefox signalled.....*

### **larger**

In terms of degrees of connectivity loss we can't use *larger*. We invariably use *large* and *larger* for physical objects we can see. It would be better here to use *greater*.

### **This**

The word *this* refers to something already mentioned or understood, in this case *connectivity losses* in the previous sentence. It therefore needs to be a plural - *These now occur every.....*

### **some**

The repetition of the word is unnecessary and would not be used by native speakers - *some of my neighbours and relatives* - is much better.

### **which**

Should be *who*

### **business**

To avoid repetition and to display more vocabulary I would replace with *commercial*.

### **You must**

There is nothing wrong with this grammatically but a very useful phrase to use in formal correspondence is, *I should be grateful if you would.....*

### **with**

Should be *speaking to*

## **Task two**

### **employee's**

It would be better to use *their* to avoid repetition. Also note that because the previous use of employees was in the plural you would need to use a plural possessive in the second occasion - *employees'*

### **analyzed**

A minor point in IELTS is that the examiners allow you to use either US or British English spellings but you must be consistent throughout. *Analyzed* is US but you used the British spelling of *neighbour* in the previous task. Therefore here you should use *analysed*.

*light-heartedly*

This means cheerful or carefree. What you mean is *half-heartedly*.

*may*

Here it would be much better to use *might*. *May* suggests an obligation in your sentence whereas I think you are indicating that there is a possibility that the employer won't pay extra.

*can then be to that*

This is slightly awkward. Better is *his hourly rate would then be that ...*

*this type*

needs to be plural - *these types* - because you later say *when they are very sporadic ....*

*As always*

It is always best to finish with *in conclusion....*

*the*

You will get credit for using idioms if they are appropriate but only if they are accurate! It is *rule of thumb*.

## **ANALYSIS**

### 1. Task response

You address the requirements of both tasks and the tone of the formal letter is appropriate. However it is important to read the questions carefully. In part two you are asked to include examples from your own knowledge or experience and you fail to do this. You don't necessarily have to have the experience – it's okay to invent it as long as you are convincing!

### 2. Coherence and cohesion

You arrange your information and arguments logically in both the letter and essay. The paragraphs are managed well and there are some good markers - *in the former/latter...*

### 3. Lexical resource

This is quite good and you certainly use a wide range of vocabulary. However there are errors of word choice and too many occasions where you repeat yourself unnecessarily.

#### 4. Grammatical range and accuracy

Generally good and you attempt to use a variety of complex structures with success. However you need to be careful with prepositions, e.g. speaking to, and in particular with some pronouns. Make sure you use singulars and plurals correctly.

Overall I am certain that you would obtain a grade of 6.5 to 7. Unfortunately for grade 7.5, which you need, you really can't be making as many errors as you have done, even though most are quite minor.

As far as the structure of your essay is concerned you don't have a problem – I didn't think you would - and the tone of the formal letter is correct.

I was pleased to see that you attempted idiomatic expressions even though it wasn't quite perfect, *rule of thumb*, and generally your range of vocabulary is sufficient for a grade 7.5. However, try to avoid vocabulary repetition which seems to be common to all of the tasks you have done for me.

As far as grammar is concerned you are not making any major errors but it would be good if you could incorporate some more complex structures. IELTS examiners like to see conditionals for example, mainly because most students avoid them.

In the first task, for example, you could use a second conditional:

*I need to Skype work colleagues regularly and if the connection failed I would miss important project deadlines.*

You could even use a third conditional:

*If the connection had failed during an important work related Skype conference last night I would have missed an important deadline.*

Phrasal verbs are also much favoured by examiners, again mainly because most students avoid them. In task one the most common phrasal verb in connection with malfunctioning computers is *go down*, for example, *the connection went down three times last night.*

Overall, however, it's not grammar, or lack of it which is your major problem. It's generally just the minor errors which I'm sure you will correct by the time of your next exam.