

LANGUAGE answer key

Copyediting questions (1–20)

- Marks awarded for each correct edit to a sentence are indicated for each question below.
- 0.25 marks are deducted for each error introduced into a sentence.
- Candidates should aim to make the minimum number of changes required to correct the errors in a sentence. Any sentence that is substantively rewritten such that it is impossible for the markers to tell whether the candidate understands the nature of the corrections required will be awarded 0 marks.

Q1

No sooner had Eva unpacked **that** she realised **several items missing** from her suitcase.

Marks: 2 × 0.5 marks. Each edit is worth 0.5 marks in this question.

0.5 marks for changing that to than
0.5 marks for inserting the auxiliary verb were before missing

SOLUTION:

No sooner had Eva unpacked than she realised several items were missing from her suitcase.

Alternative edit:

No sooner had Eva unpacked than she noticed several items missing from her suitcase.

Other edits may be possible.

Q2

Mel and Ali bought their **third floor** apartment several **year** ago.

Marks: 2 × 0.5 marks. Each edit is worth 0.5 marks in this question.

0.5 marks for inserting a hyphen in third floor
0.5 marks for adding s for years (plural)

SOLUTION:

Mel and Ali bought their third-floor apartment several years ago.

Q3

The **recently-announced** building program, includes an **over haul** of the Hardwick Memorial aquatic centre.

Marks: 4 × 0.25 marks. Each edit is worth 0.25 marks in this question.

0.25 marks for deleting the hyphen from recently-announced
0.25 marks for deleting the comma after program
0.25 marks for joining up over haul to make one word
0.25 marks for capitalising aquatic centre (no 0.25 mark if only one of the two words is capitalised)

SOLUTION:

The recently announced building program includes an overhaul of the Hardwick Memorial Aquatic Centre.

Q4

Although **there's less** sharks in our coastal waters, the number of shark attacks **seem** to be **more**.

Marks: 4 × 0.25 marks. Each edit is worth 0.25 marks in this question.

0.25 marks for changing there's to there are to agree with plural sharks
0.25 marks for changing less to fewer , since shark is a countable noun
0.25 marks for changing seem to seems to agree with singular number
0.25 marks for changing more to higher (or rising , or similar) to agree with the subject number

SOLUTION:

Although there are fewer sharks in our coastal waters, the number of shark attacks seems to be higher.

Other edits may be possible.

Q5

The light rail began operating in **2019, which stops** at the university on its way to the city.

Marks: 1 × 1 mark. Each edit is worth 1 mark in this question.

1 mark for moving the relative clause so that it clearly relates to the antecedent light rail
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SOLUTION:

The light rail, which stops at the university on its way to the city, began operating in 2019.

Alternative edits:

The light rail, which began operating in 2019, stops at the university on its way to the city.

The light rail began operating in 2019, and stops at the university on its way to the city.

Other edits may be possible.

Q6

25 minutes by **F**erry from Townsville **e** Magnetic Island offers beaches **s** hiking trails and lots of wildlife.

Marks: 4 × 0.25 marks. Each edit is worth 0.25 marks in this question.

0.25 marks for spelling out 25 at the start of the sentence (or moving its position to later in the sentence)
0.25 marks for changing Ferry to lower case
0.25 marks for inserting a comma after Townsville
0.25 marks for inserting a comma after beaches

SOLUTION:

Twenty-five minutes by ferry from Townsville, Magnetic Island offers beaches, hiking trails and lots of wildlife.

Alternative edit:

Magnetic Island, 25 minutes by ferry from Townsville, offers beaches, hiking trails and lots of wildlife.

Other edits may be possible.

Q7

Reza has a superb collection of **mid twentieth century** furniture.

Marks: 1 × 1 mark. Each edit is worth 1 mark in this question.

1 mark for inserting two hyphens into the compound adjective mid twentieth century

SOLUTION:

Reza has a superb collection of mid-twentieth-century furniture.

Alternative edit:

Reza has a superb collection of furniture from the mid twentieth century.

Q8

While the **minster** has made no secret of her views, details of the **G**overnment's proposed policy are **shrowded** in secrecy

Marks: 4 × 0.25 marks. Each edit is worth 0.25 marks in this question.

0.25 marks for correcting spelling of minster
0.25 marks for changing Government's to lower case
0.25 marks for correcting spelling of shrowded
0.25 marks for inserting a full stop at end of sentence

SOLUTION:

While the minister has made no secret of her views, details of the government's proposed policy are shrouded in secrecy.

Q9

If Maria's grandfather hadn't **have** missed that train he might never **of** met her grandmother.

Marks: 2 × 0.5 marks. Each edit is worth 0.5 marks in this question.

0.5 marks for deleting have from after hadn't
0.5 marks for changing of to have

SOLUTION:

If Maria's grandfather hadn't missed that train he might never have met her grandmother.

Insertion of a comma after "train" is neutral in terms of marking.

Q10

It's hard to predict **how** the final package will look **like**.

Marks: 1 × 1 mark. Each edit is worth 1 mark in this question.

1 mark for changing how to what or for deleting like .

SOLUTION:

It's hard to predict how the final package will look.

Alternative edit:

It's hard to predict what the final package will look like.

Q11

He's not as helpless as he **portends**.

Marks: 1 × 1 mark. Each edit is worth 1 mark in this question.

1 mark for changing portends to pretends .
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SOLUTION:

He's not as helpless as he pretends.

Q12

We'll introduce the changes **overcoming** weeks, but we're under no **allusion** **of** the resistance we'll encounter.

Marks: 4 × 0.25 marks. Each edit is worth 0.25 marks in this question.

0.25 marks for breaking overcoming into two words
0.25 marks for changing allusion to illusion
0.25 marks for changing of to as to ; or for changing of to about if illusions is made plural
0.25 marks for changing comma to a full stop

SOLUTION:

We'll introduce the changes over coming weeks, but we're under no illusion as to the resistance we'll encounter.

Alternative edit:

We'll introduce the changes over coming weeks, but we're under no illusions about the resistance we'll encounter.

Insertion of "the" before "coming" is neutral in terms of marking; deleting the comma after "weeks" is also neutral.

Q13

Joey shouted, 'Catch me if you can, suckers!'; jumped up and darted out of the room.

Marks: 1 × 1 mark.

1 mark for selecting OK to show that no change is needed

SOLUTION:

OK

Q14

These two factors, seemingly discrete, are in fact **interrelated**.

Marks: 2 × 0.5 marks. Each edit is worth 0.5 marks in this question.

0.5 marks for inserting a comma after discrete
0.5 for correcting spelling of interrelated

SOLUTION:

These two factors, seemingly discrete, are in fact interrelated.

Q15

Unfortunately, I'd left my new, walking boots behind in the hotel.

Marks: 1 × 1 mark. Each edit is worth 1 mark in this question.

1 mark for deleting the comma after new .
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SOLUTION:

Unfortunately, I'd left my new walking boots behind in the hotel.

Deletion of "behind" is neutral (no mark; no deduction).

Q16

It's clear that most residents favour to widen the highway to a duel carriageway.

Marks: 2 × 0.5 marks. Each edit is worth 0.5 marks in this question.

0.5 marks for changing to widen to widening

0.5 marks for changing duel to dual

SOLUTION:

It's clear that most residents favour widening the highway to a dual carriageway.

Q17

Dates are delicious but contain lots of sugar, so hence why I use them sparingly.

Marks: 1 × 1 mark. Each edit is worth 1 mark in this question.

1 mark for changing so hence to which is (or other solution that resolves the redundancy)

SOLUTION:

Dates are delicious but contain lots of sugar, which is why I use them sparingly.

Alternative edit:

Dates are delicious but contain lots of sugar, so I use them sparingly.

Other edits may be possible.

Q18

Sweet, virtually seedless and easy to peel, Doug recommends the Imperial as the ideal mandarin variety to grow in the backyard.

Marks: 1 × 1 mark. Each edit is worth 1 mark in this question.

1 mark for fixing the misplaced modifier
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SOLUTION:

Doug recommends the Imperial as the ideal mandarin variety to grow in the backyard. Imperials are sweet, virtually seedless and easy to peel.

Alternative edit:

Sweet, virtually seedless and easy to peel – the Imperial is recommended by Doug as the ideal mandarin variety to grow in the backyard.

Other edits may be possible.

Q19

The Seekers achieved major success in the 1960's; there were numerous reunions of the group in the following decades.

Marks: 2 × 0.5 marks. Each edit is worth 0.5 marks in this question.

0.5 marks for deleting the apostrophe from 1960's
0.5 marks for fixing the comma splice

SOLUTION:

The Seekers achieved major success in the 1960s. There were numerous reunions of the group in the following decades.

Alternative edit:

The Seekers achieved major success in the 1960s; there were numerous reunions of the group in the following decades.

Other edits may be possible.

Q20

In the alpine areas of New Zealand's South Island, temperatures can go as low as –10 °C in winter.

Marks: 1 × 1 mark.

1 mark for selecting OK to show that no change is needed

SOLUTION:

OK

Multiple-choice questions (21–24)

Marks: Each correct choice is worth 1 mark. Correct answers are **highlighted**.

Q21

The following 2 sentences have the same grammatical flaw.

Sitting in the bowl like a mass of fish spawn, I just couldn't face the sago pudding.

Stepping out of my front door, the sky looked ominous.

What is the flaw?

- A dangling modifier**
- B incomplete comparatives
- C non-parallel structure
- D sentence fragment

EXPLANATION:

In the first sentence, the modifying phrase "Sitting in the bowl" describes the pudding, but the subject of the main clause is "I". In the second sentence, "Stepping out of my front door" describes a person (presumably the speaker), but the subject of the main clause is "the sky". Both are dangling: they are not clearly connected to their intended subject.

Note: Dangling modifiers that contain verb participles, like these ("Sitting", "Stepping"), can also be called dangling participles.

Q22

Select the sentence that contains a passive verb.

- A It's really regrettable that these mistakes occurred.
- B More than fifty people have died in the flu outbreak.
- C Management has decided to axe the incentive program.
- D She's never won an Oscar, though she's been nominated four times.**

EXPLANATION:

D is the correct answer because "has been nominated" is a passive verb, made up of the auxiliary verb "be" (here in the form "has been") and the past participle of "nominate". Somebody nominated her (who did the nominating is unknown, making this an agentless passive).

Q23

Select the sentence that contains a spelling error.

- A The mayor's incumbency has been beset by controversy from the beginning.
- B There have been embarrassing allegations of staff harassment and favouritism.**
- C Now there's an overseas trip with lavish accommodation and exorbitant restaurant bills.
- D It was a wanton display of sheer profligacy and arrogance!

EXPLANATION:

B is the correct answer because "favouritism" is a spelling error. The correct spelling is "favouritism".

Q24

Select the sentence that does NOT contain an adverb.

- A "If you want my honest opinion, it was a mean, spiteful thing to do," Sienna declared.**
- B Construction work on the Eastern Bridge is almost complete.
- C The Treasurer was unable to attend, so the Minister for Finance went instead.
- D "I have my sources," he replied frostily.

EXPLANATION:

A is the correct answer because there are no adverbs (the words "honest", "mean" and "spiteful" are all adjectives).

B, C and D are incorrect answers because "almost", "instead" and "frostily" are adverbs.