

KAPLAN REVISED WRITING EXAMINATION DESCRIPTORS (September 2019)

NB. Please select “THE BEST FIT” in each category; it is not necessary for all aspects to be present.

GRADE	Task Achievement	Language Range	Language Accuracy	Cohesion & Coherence
<b>KIC Band 90</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>smoothly flowing, sophisticated, persuasive and convincing response to the question which <b>precisely</b> addresses the nuances of the task</li> <li>all content is pertinent, clearly explained and discussed <b>fully</b></li> <li>numerous <b>precise</b> examples are skilfully synthesised with own opinions to support the argument</li> <li>a <b>complex</b>, detailed, effective discursive text</li> <li>number of words is optimal; comprehensive yet succinct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>flexible <b>mastery</b> of very broad range of complex structures and vocabulary <b>indistinguishable from that of an educated first-language user in an HE context</b></li> <li>sustained use of less common vocabulary, collocations, idiomatic or <b>subject-specific lexis</b></li> <li>very wide variety of language sufficient to <b>eliminate any ambiguity &amp; differentiate finer shades of meaning</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consistently maintains a very high degree of grammatical accuracy, even with complex language</li> <li>word choice is <b>precise in all contexts</b>, including academic, subject-specific, idiomatic or technical usage</li> <li><b>may appear error free</b></li> <li>tone and register are <b>fully</b> appropriate for the task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>essay structure is <b>highly effective and logical with skilful organisation which helps the reader to focus on the most significant points</b></li> <li>skilful use of a <b>very</b> broad range of more complex cohesive devices; linguistic referencing is accurate, sophisticated and appropriate throughout</li> <li>key points are skilfully and succinctly drawn together in a clear <b>and convincing</b> conclusion</li> </ul>
<b>KIC Band 85</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sophisticated, persuasive and convincing response to the question <b>which addresses the nuances of the task</b></li> <li>content is pertinent &amp; <b>clearly explained</b></li> <li>information &amp; examples are skilfully synthesised with own opinions to support the argument</li> <li>a <b>detailed</b> and effective discursive text</li> <li>number of words is optimal to present argument clearly, comprehensively &amp; succinctly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>flexible use of complex language, almost like that of an educated first-language user in an HE context</b></li> <li>very broad range of complex structures</li> <li>very broad repertoire of vocabulary</li> <li>sustained use of less common vocabulary, collocations or idiomatic phrases</li> <li><b>very wide</b> variety of language sufficient to <b>formulate thoughts precisely with no sign of</b> having to restrict content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consistently maintains a very high degree of grammatical accuracy, <b>even with complex language</b></li> <li>word choice is correct in <b>academic, subject-specific, idiomatic or technical usage</b></li> <li>errors are rare and <b>difficult to spot</b></li> <li>tone and register are appropriate for the task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>essay is very well structured &amp; sub-themes are <b>skilfully</b> integrated; the reader can follow with ease throughout</li> <li>skilful use of broad range of more complex cohesive devices; linguistic referencing is accurate, sophisticated and appropriate <b>throughout</b></li> <li>key points are skilfully and succinctly drawn together in a clear conclusion</li> </ul>
<b>KIC Band 80</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>sophisticated</b>, persuasive and <b>convincing</b> argument which <b>clearly</b> addresses the task</li> <li>content is pertinent, salient issues are emphasised &amp; clarified so that the reader can follow the argument</li> <li>information &amp; examples are <b>skilfully</b> synthesised with own opinions to support the argument</li> <li>a <b>very</b> effective discursive text</li> <li>number of words is <b>optimal</b> to present argument clearly, comprehensively &amp; <b>succinctly without overelaboration</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>very broad</b> range of complex structures</li> <li><b>very broad</b> repertoire of vocabulary</li> <li>sustained use of less common vocabulary, collocations or idiomatic phrases</li> <li>variety of language sufficient to express views clearly without having to restrict content</li> <li><b>range of complex</b> hedging and tentative language qualifies statements with precision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>consistently maintains a very high degree of grammatical accuracy</b></li> <li>word choice is correct in <b>some academic, subject specific, idiomatic or technical usage</b></li> <li><b>errors are rare, and only occur in complex language</b></li> <li><b>tone and register are appropriate for the task</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>essay is <b>very</b> well structured &amp; sub-themes are integrated; the reader can follow with ease <b>throughout</b></li> <li>skilful use of a <b>broad range</b> of more complex cohesive devices; linguistic referencing is accurate, <b>sophisticated</b> and appropriate</li> <li>key points are <b>skilfully</b> and succinctly drawn together in a clear conclusion</li> </ul>
<b>KIC Band 75</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strong &amp; <b>persuasive</b> argument which addresses the task</li> <li>content is pertinent, salient issues are emphasised &amp; <b>clarified</b> so that the reader can follow the argument</li> <li>information &amp; examples are <b>effectively</b> synthesised with own opinions to support argument</li> <li>an effective discursive text</li> <li>number of words is appropriate to <b>present</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>broad range of complex structures</li> <li><b>broad</b> repertoire of vocabulary</li> <li><b>sustained use of</b> less common vocabulary, collocations or idiomatic phrases</li> <li>variety of language <b>sufficient to express views clearly without having to restrict content</b></li> <li>hedging and tentative language qualifies statements <b>with precision</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>maintains very good grammatical control &amp; accuracy so that meaning is clear throughout</b></li> <li>word choice correct <b>throughout</b></li> <li><b>very few mistakes, usually only in complex language</b></li> <li>tone and register are generally appropriate, with at most occasional, minor inappropriacies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>essay is well structured, ideas are ordered logically &amp; sub-themes are integrated so that the reader can follow <b>with ease</b></li> <li><b>skilful use of</b> more complex cohesive devices, e.g. linguistic referencing is accurate and appropriate</li> <li>draws main ideas together in <b>clear &amp; succinct</b> conclusion</li> </ul>

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	argument comprehensively			
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KIC Band 70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strong argument with clearly defined position which addresses the task</li> <li>content is pertinent, some salient issues are emphasised &amp; explained clearly so the reader can follow the argument</li> <li>relevant information &amp; examples are synthesised with own opinions to support argument</li> <li>an effective discursive text</li> <li>number of words is appropriate to present ideas clearly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>broad range of complex structures</li> <li>repertoire of vocabulary is sufficient to write at length with precision &amp; detail</li> <li>frequent use of less common vocabulary, collocations or idiomatic phrases</li> <li>variety of language to emphasise salient points, describe, evaluate ideas, hypothesise, express abstract ideas and views precisely</li> <li>hedging and tentative language qualifies statements with precision at times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple structures consistently correct</li> <li>many complex structures correct</li> <li>word choice is correct even in more complex stretches of language</li> <li>few mistakes, generally in more complex language, but meaning is clear</li> <li>tone and register are generally appropriate, with at most occasional, minor inappropriacies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>essay is well structured, ideas are ordered logically &amp; sub-themes are integrated so the reader can follow</li> <li>relationship between ideas effectively marked &amp; significant points are highlighted with precise and flexible use of a variety of linking words</li> <li>effective use of more complex cohesive devices, e.g. linguistic referencing is accurate and appropriate</li> <li>draws main ideas together in clear conclusion</li> </ul>
KIC Band 65	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>argument is systematically developed with a stated position which addresses the task</li> <li>content is mostly pertinent</li> <li>highlights significant points &amp; relevant supporting details; the reader can mostly follow the argument</li> <li>some information &amp; examples are synthesised with own opinions</li> <li>different viewpoints are represented with some clarity, but may lack evaluation</li> <li>number of words is appropriate but may over- or under-elaborate certain points</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>broad range of basic and some complex structures</li> <li>enough vocabulary to write at length with precision at times</li> <li>some less common vocabulary or collocations</li> <li>enough language to describe, hypothesise, evaluate and express abstract ideas and views, but not always clearly</li> <li>basic and complex hedging and tentative language is used to qualify statements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>most simple structures correct</li> <li>some complex structures correct</li> <li>word choice is often correct even in more complex stretches of language</li> <li>some mistakes, but meaning is clear</li> <li>tone and register are generally appropriate, with at most occasional inappropriacies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>essay is clearly structured; ideas are ordered &amp; paragraphed logically so that the content develops and makes sense</li> <li>attempts to mark relationship between ideas &amp; highlight significant points with a variety of linking words beyond the most basic forms</li> <li>uses range of cohesive devices, e.g. various forms of linguistic reference</li> <li>draws main ideas together in conclusion</li> </ul>
KIC Band 60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>response contains a clearly discernible argument which addresses the task</li> <li>stated position is mainly clear</li> <li>some pertinent points</li> <li>some relevant examples</li> <li>some relevant information is synthesised with own opinions</li> <li>discussion of different viewpoints</li> <li>may be some repetition or over-long explanation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>range of basic and some complex structures</li> <li>enough vocabulary to convey the main message with sufficient precision for the reader to follow</li> <li>attempts less common vocabulary or collocations</li> <li>enough language to describe, express abstract ideas and views, but not in much detail</li> <li>uses basic and some complex hedging or tentative language to qualify statements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>most simple structures correct</li> <li>some complex structures correct</li> <li>word choice is mostly correct</li> <li>errors with more complex language may detract from clarity of message</li> <li>errors with simple language do not affect understanding</li> <li>tone and register are generally appropriate, but there may be a few inappropriacies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>essay is clearly structured; ideas are mainly ordered &amp; paragraphed logically so that the content develops and makes sense</li> <li>variety of linking words beyond the most basic forms</li> <li>uses other cohesive devices, e.g. various forms of linguistic reference</li> <li>attempts to draw main ideas together in conclusion</li> </ul>

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KIC Band 55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>response contains an argument which generally addresses the task</li> <li>argument or position is present but may lack clarity at times</li> <li>some pertinent points</li> <li>some relevant examples</li> <li>may be some minor irrelevance</li> <li>simple discussion of different viewpoints</li> <li>discussion is generally clear enough to follow</li> <li>may be some repetition or over-long explanation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>range of basic grammatical structures</li> <li>attempts some complex structures</li> <li>enough vocabulary to convey most of the main points to the reader</li> <li>may attempt some less common vocabulary or collocations</li> <li>enough language to express views simply on some abstract and cultural topics, but not in much detail</li> <li>uses basic hedging or tentative language to qualify statements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>many simple structures correct</li> <li>some complex structures may be correct</li> <li>word choice is often correct</li> <li>mistakes are present but meaning is mostly conveyed</li> <li>some inappropriacies of tone and register</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas appear in an ordered sequence with logical development which mainly makes sense to the reader</li> <li>paragraphs are clearly and appropriately distinct with a central topic</li> <li>uses some linking words beyond the most basic forms (e.g. with regard to, however, in addition, if, while, on the other hand etc)</li> <li>uses a few forms of linguistic reference, e.g. preparatory it/this, substitution, relative pronouns</li> </ul>
KIC Band 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses the topic(s)</li> <li>partially addresses the task(s)</li> <li>argument or position is present but may not be completely clear</li> <li>some relevant points, opinions &amp; examples</li> <li>some irrelevances or repetition</li> <li>limited discussion of different viewpoints</li> <li>discussion can mostly be followed, with some effort at times</li> <li>number of words is sufficient for the task(s) but may include some repetition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>range of basic grammatical structures</li> <li>may attempt a few complex structures</li> <li>enough vocabulary to write about some aspects of the topic(s) but detail may be lacking</li> <li>just enough language to express views simply on some unfamiliar topics</li> <li>attempts to use basic hedging or tentative language to qualify statements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>many simple structures correct</li> <li>word choice is often correct</li> <li>word order in basic and compound sentences is mostly correct</li> <li>frequent mistakes but main message is mostly conveyed</li> <li>attempts to use appropriate tone and register, but not always with success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas are mainly ordered to create the effect of an organised sequence of points with some development and linking; the reader can follow, although some effort may be required in places</li> <li>paragraphing is mostly appropriate</li> <li>variety of basic linking words and other cohesive devices</li> </ul>
KIC Band 45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses the topic(s)</li> <li>task(s) addressed, in a limited fashion</li> <li>a few relevant points &amp; examples; not clearly explained</li> <li>evident irrelevances or omissions</li> <li>discussion may be unclear &amp; hard to follow</li> <li>very limited discussion of different viewpoints</li> <li>number of words may be insufficient to present views clearly or may include too much repetition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>limited variety of basic grammatical structures</li> <li>just enough vocabulary to write descriptively about the topic(s) with limited detail</li> <li>just enough language to express views very simply on some familiar topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some simple structures correct</li> <li>word choice is mostly correct with familiar words &amp; phrases</li> <li>word order in basic and compound sentences is often correct</li> <li>systematically makes basic mistakes but main message is often conveyed</li> <li>tone and register frequently not appropriate for the task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas are ordered to create the effect of a simple sequence of points with limited development; the reader can follow the main message with some effort</li> <li>paragraphs generally have clear topic/purpose</li> <li>phrases are joined with basic, high-frequency linking words</li> </ul>
KIC Band 40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attempts to address the topic(s)</li> <li>evident misunderstanding of the task(s)</li> <li>very limited relevant content</li> <li>content may be underdeveloped</li> <li>evident irrelevances &amp; omissions</li> <li>discussion may be unclear or lacking</li> <li>number of words may be insufficient for the task(s) or may include too much repetition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>limited or repetitive use of basic grammatical structures &amp; sentence patterns</li> <li>just enough vocabulary for basic descriptions of everyday, concrete and familiar aspects of the topic(s) but without any detail</li> <li>just enough language to convey some simple points &amp; opinions but not with any clarity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some simple structures correct</li> <li>word choice is often correct with familiar words &amp; phrases</li> <li>word order in simple language is often correct</li> <li>systematically makes basic mistakes, e.g. choice of tenses, lack of agreement; errors often affect understanding</li> <li>tone and register generally not appropriate for the task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideas may not be organised clearly, but the reader can just about make sense of the main message with considerable effort</li> <li>paragraphs may be used but are not always clear in topic/purpose or are distinct</li> <li>phrases are joined with basic, high-frequency linking words</li> </ul>

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KIC Band 35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ may address the topic(s) minimally</li> <li>▪ many irrelevances or evident misunderstanding of the task(s)</li> <li>▪ response is unclear or does not meet task requirements</li> <li>▪ content is minimally developed and lacks clarity</li> <li>▪ number of words clearly inappropriate for the task(s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ very limited or repetitive use of basic grammatical structures &amp; sentence patterns</li> <li>▪ insufficient vocabulary to begin to address the topic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ a few simple structures correct</li> <li>▪ word choice is sometimes correct with familiar words &amp; phrases</li> <li>▪ word order in very simple language is sometimes correct</li> <li>▪ frequent basic mistakes often make meaning unclear and affect understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ideas are not organised clearly so the reader cannot always make sense of the message, even with considerable effort</li> <li>▪ paragraphs may not be used or they may be unclear in topic/purpose or are indistinct</li> <li>▪ some use of basic, high-frequency linking words (e.g. <i>and, but, then</i>)</li> </ul>