**How to write an informal letter or email for International Exams.**

Sam Ling Gibson, 2018.


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In your IELTS (general English) task 1, and also FCE and other international exams, **replying to an informal email or letter is a common task.** In fact, for IELTS General English this is always the writing task 1.

This guide contains useful language and a structure that you can apply to your answer.

**Language style: informal language.**
- the tone, which is very warm, personal and friendly
- Use of first name
- Use contractions (I´m writing because...)
- Common phrasal verbs (I´m broke up with her because...)
- Colloquial expressions (you messed up)
- Writing as we think (Oh / by the way / anyway)
- Informal expressions (thanks / write soon)
- No addresses or dates needed

**Part 1) Let’s first look at a typical question:**

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

An English-speaking friend wants to spend a two-week holiday in your city next summer. Write a letter to your friend. In your letter,
- Give advice about what to do
- give information about what clothes to bring
- Offer for him to stay at your house

Write at least 150 Words. You do not need to write any address.

Begin your letter as follows:

Dear _________
Part 2: A typical response will need the following parts:

- Opening formula
- Introductory paragraph
- Subtask 1
- Subtask 2
- Subtask 3
- Closing paragraph
- Closing formulae
- Signature
Part 3: Now practice and use a variety of the following expressions and vocabulary to make your answer both relevant and demonstrate a variety in your informal language and writing skills. Try a variety of different example questions that can be found on the internet, for your particular exam.
**Replaying to a latter**
- Thank you very much for your last letter.
- I've just read your interesting letter.
- It was very nice to hear from you/get your letter.
- I hope that you and your family are well.

**Saying why you are writing**
- You asked me about my favourite TV programmes.
- You asked me for advice about travelling round my country.
- You asked me what I do at weekends...
- You want to know my opinion about...

**Good news /bad news**
I'm so happy because..
The good/bad news is that..
Unfortunately...

**Say when and where/ Give details**
There is /are...
It's at/starts at
You can get there by...

**Thank**
Thanks for
I'm really grateful for…

**Offer /Request**
- Would you like to ...?
- Can I...?/Could you ...?
- Would you mind if ...?

**Apologise**
- I really sorry but
- I'm afraid that

**Recommend and suggest**
- You should/ought to
- Why don't you ...
- How about ...

**Ending a letter**
- That's all for now.
- Write back soon and tell me all your news.
- I hope to hear from you soon.
- Love, / Lots of love, /Best wishes, / Cheers / Paul
Also you can add “P.S.” after your have ended the letter with any additional information that you forgot.

**Introductory paragraph**

**All to support your subtasks (depending on the task)**

**Closing paragraph**

**Closing formulae**

**Signature**

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For more information See ASK guides on:

- Email and letter writing guidelines (includes formal language as well):
  [http://repository.urosario.edu.co/bitstream/handle/10336/13377/WRITING%20EMAILS%20AND%20LETTERS.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](http://repository.urosario.edu.co/bitstream/handle/10336/13377/WRITING%20EMAILS%20AND%20LETTERS.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)