

# ESOL Skills for Life (QCF)

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## Level 2 – Reading

### Past paper 2



Time allowed: 60 minutes

Please answer **all** questions. Circle your answers in pen, **not** pencil, **on the separate answer sheet**. You may **not** use dictionaries. You may **not** use correction fluid.

**Task 1**

Questions 1-6 test your ability to read a text quickly for the general idea, and to scan it for key words and phrases. You are advised to read the questions **before** you read the text.

**Questions 1-4**

The text on page 3 has six paragraphs. Each paragraph has a purpose. Choose the letter of the paragraph which best matches the purposes below. Circle the letter **on your answer sheet**. You do not need to use all of the paragraphs.

Example: to introduce the topic of the text

.....A.....

1. to outline the cuckoo's nesting behaviour .....  
.....
2. to speculate about why the cuckoo population is falling .....  
.....
3. to explain the significance of hearing the first cuckoo of the year .....  
.....
4. to describe the appearance of the cuckoo .....  
.....

**Questions 5-6**

Choose the letter of the best answer and circle it **on your answer sheet**.

5. Female cuckoos
  - A share their nests with other varieties of bird
  - B rely on other birds to raise their young for them
  - C destroy eggs that have been laid by other birds
  
6. The writer
  - A describes some beliefs
  - B explains what he believes
  - C criticises some legends

## The Cuckoo

### Paragraph A

The cuckoo (*cuculus canorus*) is one of Britain's best-loved birds. A summer visitor with unusual nesting habits, it features in many poems, songs and folk tales.

### Paragraph B

The cuckoo is a shy bird and is more easily heard than seen. It is about the size of a dove and has blue-grey upper parts and a white chest with dark bars. During the winter it lives in Africa.

### Paragraph C

Cuckoos usually arrive in the UK in April or May and their familiar two-note song is often said to herald the arrival of spring. In the past, people wrote excited letters to newspapers saying they had heard the first cuckoo; these days the news is more likely to spread via the Internet. Many years ago, the bird's arrival would be celebrated with a cuckoo festival.

### Paragraph D

Cuckoos are also well-known for not building nests. Instead, the female lays her eggs in the nest of another species of bird and leaves that bird to rear her young. When the egg hatches, the young cuckoo (nestling) pushes the other eggs and nestlings out of the nest. Amazingly, the young cuckoo is even able to imitate the begging calls of the host bird's nestlings.

### Paragraph E

Many centuries ago, it was thought that cuckoos could see into the future and predict how many years a person would live and how many children they would have. On some Scottish islands it was thought that if you heard a cuckoo when you were hungry, you would have bad luck; however the opposite was true if you heard it after a meal.

### Paragraph F

The cuckoo is an important feature of British life, legend and folk tale, which makes it all the more upsetting that its numbers are in serious decline. Numbers have dropped by 65% since the 1980s. Nobody is sure why this has happened but it is most likely due to climate change. As temperatures alter, the birds that usually host cuckoo eggs are building their nests earlier and earlier and it is possible that cuckoos now arrive too late to take advantage of them.

Turn over page

**Task 2****Questions 7-10**

Five sentences are missing from the text on page 5. Look at the following sentences and decide which one best fits each gap. Circle the letter of your answer **on your answer sheet**. There is an example (F). There is one sentence you do not need.

- A While wearable technology is expanding in the leisure and fashion industries, it is also revolutionising the workplace.
- B The cost of this technology makes it inaccessible for most people.
- C Preventing misuse of technology at work is nowhere near as difficult as it might seem.
- D However, wearable technology is not as recent an invention as many people believe.
- E The main issue is that this technology poses a potential threat to personal security and privacy.
- F (Example) *Today, wearable technology is an expanding business which is predicted to be worth over £11 billion by 2020.*

**Questions 11-13**

Choose the letter of the best answer and circle it **on your answer sheet**.

- 11. What does the writer mean by writing 'smart' in inverted commas in paragraph two?
  - A the writer is impressed by the Chinese invention of the tiny abacus on a ring
  - B to show that the writer is quoting the words spoken by somebody else
  - C the use of the term 'smart' to describe accessories did not exist in those days
- 12. According to paragraph three
  - A consumers can buy sports clothing which lights up in response to movement
  - B the designers are already inventing wearable technology to be sold in 2020
  - C the industry is worth £11 billion and is still expanding
- 13. According to paragraph seven, the writer believes that
  - A wearable technology is only beneficial in our home lives
  - B experts in the area can tell us about future possibilities of wearable technology
  - C wearable technology will have a similar impact on our lives as mobile phones

**Questions 14-16**

Choose the letter of the answer which best matches the meaning of each word as it is used in the text. Circle the letter **on your answer sheet**.

- 14. **productivity** (paragraph four)
  - A efficiency
  - B happiness
  - C profits
- 15. **vigilantly** (paragraph six)
  - A sparingly
  - B carefully
  - C thoughtfully
- 16. **irrevocably** (paragraph seven)
  - A completely
  - B questionably
  - C perfectly

## Wearable Technology

### Paragraph one

'Wearable technology' is a modern term to describe clothes and accessories which have computers and electronic technologies built into them. These include a wide range of items such as smartwatches which are also computers, smart headbands which play music and smart shoes which tell you how far you have walked or run.

### Paragraph two

7. Researchers have discovered that the earliest 'smart' ring was invented in the 17th century by a famous Chinese mathematician, Cheng Dawei. The ring was a tiny abacus, a calculating device used by traders to count their money. The first wristwatch was worn by the Queen of Naples in 1810.

### Paragraph three

F (Example). Different companies are continually inventing more technological clothes and accessories for the leisure and fashion industries. Currently, consumers can purchase sports clothing which monitors the wearer's heart rate or which lights up as the wearer moves around.

### Paragraph four

8. In the retail industry, for example, sales assistants in department stores can use wearable wrist displays to find out if items are in stock instead of going to a stockroom or a computer terminal. Overall, the application of wearable technology in the workplace has been estimated to increase **productivity** by 8.5% and increase employee satisfaction by 3.5%.

### Paragraph five

9. People are concerned that hackers could record and sell sensitive information. Individuals using wearable technology in public areas could unknowingly have a wealth of personal information accessed by criminals.

### Paragraph six

10. Employers simply need to institute new rules and regulations concerning the use of technology in the workplace; for example by stipulating where and when wearable technology can be used; and employees need to use their devices **vigilantly**.

### Paragraph seven

No one can predict exactly what the future holds for wearable technology, even scientists at the forefront of developmental research, but there is no doubt that it is having a significant impact on society and will **irrevocably** change the way we live, work and spend our leisure time. We only have to think about the way mobile phones have radically changed our lives in the last few years to realise that the future holds very exciting possibilities.

Turn over page

**Task 3**

Texts A-E on pages 8-11 are all related to each other. You need to use all five texts to answer the following questions.

**Questions 17-19**

There are five texts, A-E. Decide which text matches each of the purposes below and circle the letter of the text **on your answer sheet**. One of the texts does not have a purpose listed below.

Example: to describe a service **and** encourage clients to use this service

.....A.....

17. to inform about an event **and** make a polite request

.....

18. to complain about an event **and** make a suggestion

.....

19. to ask for an opinion **and** give reasons for an idea

.....

**Questions 20-22**

Choose the letter of the best answer and circle it **on your answer sheet**.

20. What can you learn about Wei Zhang from the texts B, C and D?

A he does not get on well with the Managing Director

B he is well respected by members of staff

C he is not sensitive about complaints

21. Jonas Webb

A was not as well-known as CONFEX claimed

B had strong motivational skills

C was hired directly by Wei Zhang

22. Feedback forms

A are an essential part of the complaints procedure

B were filled in by only a few members of staff

C were part of the service provided by CONFEX

**Questions 23-27**

Text A has six paragraphs with missing headings. Choose the best paragraph for each of the following headings and circle the letter **on your answer sheet**. You do not need to use all the paragraphs. There is an example.

Example: Why CONFEX?        A  

23. The right place      .....

24. The perfect menu      .....

25. The personal touch      .....

Choose the letter of the best answer and circle it **on your answer sheet**.

26. In text E, how does Tom Paine construct his letter of complaint?

- A he complains about the role of the CONFEX special adviser, describes the causes for complaint and requests action to be taken
- B he outlines the main problems, describes some aspects that were satisfactory and proposes a course of action
- C he expresses his disappointment with the situation, describes the causes for complaint and demands a course of action

27. Text C tells us that

- A the company is expecting to be busy at conference time
- B the company had doubts about CONFEX's efficiency
- C the employees enjoyed organising the conference

**Questions 28-30**

Choose the letter of the answer that **best** matches the meaning of each word as it is used in the text. Circle the letter **on your answer sheet**.

28. **delegates** (texts A and B)

- A customers
- B attendees
- C employers

29. **fruitful** (text C)

- A amusing
- B acceptable
- C productive

30. **extortionate** (text E)

- A varied
- B expensive
- C preferable

**Turn over page**

## Text A

## Forget your Conference Worries with CONFEX

### A (Example)

Is your company too busy to organise the annual conference? Why don't you leave it all to us? We offer a complete package to make your conference happen and go according to plan, with on-site support to ensure success. We are experts in organising any size of conference from small-scale meetings to international events.

### B

You will be assigned your own adviser, who will be on hand to help you at every step of the way. You will agree a conference plan with your adviser and you will be able to keep track of progress and liaise with him or her if there are any unexpected problems. Our advisers are trained to act calmly and efficiently in all circumstances.

### C

Using CONFEX to organise your conference will allow you to relax on the day. We are experienced in arranging all of the details involved in a conference: location, catering, speakers, registration and so on. We guarantee that your stress levels will fall when you no longer have to focus on all of these tasks.

### D

You may well have been disappointed with previous conference venues. You need no longer worry about that. We will find you the best location for the event. We will compare available locations and present you with a shortlist. We will outline the pros and cons of each venue and make a recommendation as to which one would be best for your purposes.

### E

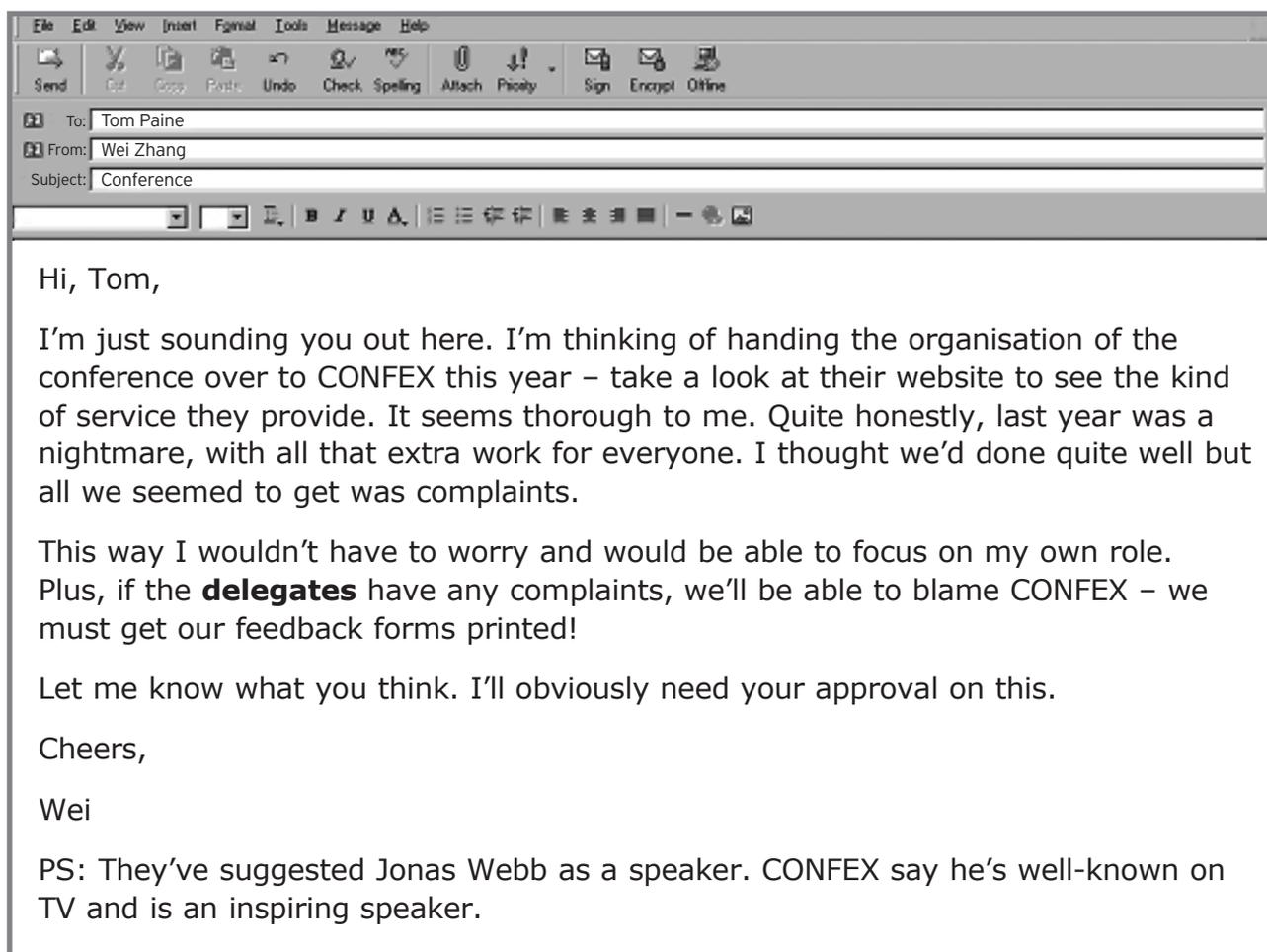
As you are aware, any successful conference needs to offer good quality food, an area that is often cut back on at conferences and criticised by **delegates**. We have a list of tried and tested providers who will cater for your event. We can arrange anything from sit-down meals to buffets and afternoon tea.

### F

We can also accommodate any special requests, for example, our technicians are experienced at providing any audio-visual equipment you might need. And if you want a keynote speaker to make your conference go with a swing, we have a number of professional speakers on our books, so we can recommend one to suit your company.

CONFEX THINKS OF EVERYTHING!

## Text B



The image shows a screenshot of an email client window. The title bar reads "File Edit View Insert Format Tools Message Help". The menu bar includes "Send", "Cut", "Copy", "Paste", "Undo", "Check Spelling", "Attach", "Priority", "Sign", "Encrypt", and "Offline". The email header shows "To: Tom Paine", "From: Wei Zhang", and "Subject: Conference". The main body of the email contains the following text:

Hi, Tom,

I'm just sounding you out here. I'm thinking of handing the organisation of the conference over to CONFEX this year – take a look at their website to see the kind of service they provide. It seems thorough to me. Quite honestly, last year was a nightmare, with all that extra work for everyone. I thought we'd done quite well but all we seemed to get was complaints.

This way I wouldn't have to worry and would be able to focus on my own role. Plus, if the **delegates** have any complaints, we'll be able to blame CONFEX – we must get our feedback forms printed!

Let me know what you think. I'll obviously need your approval on this.

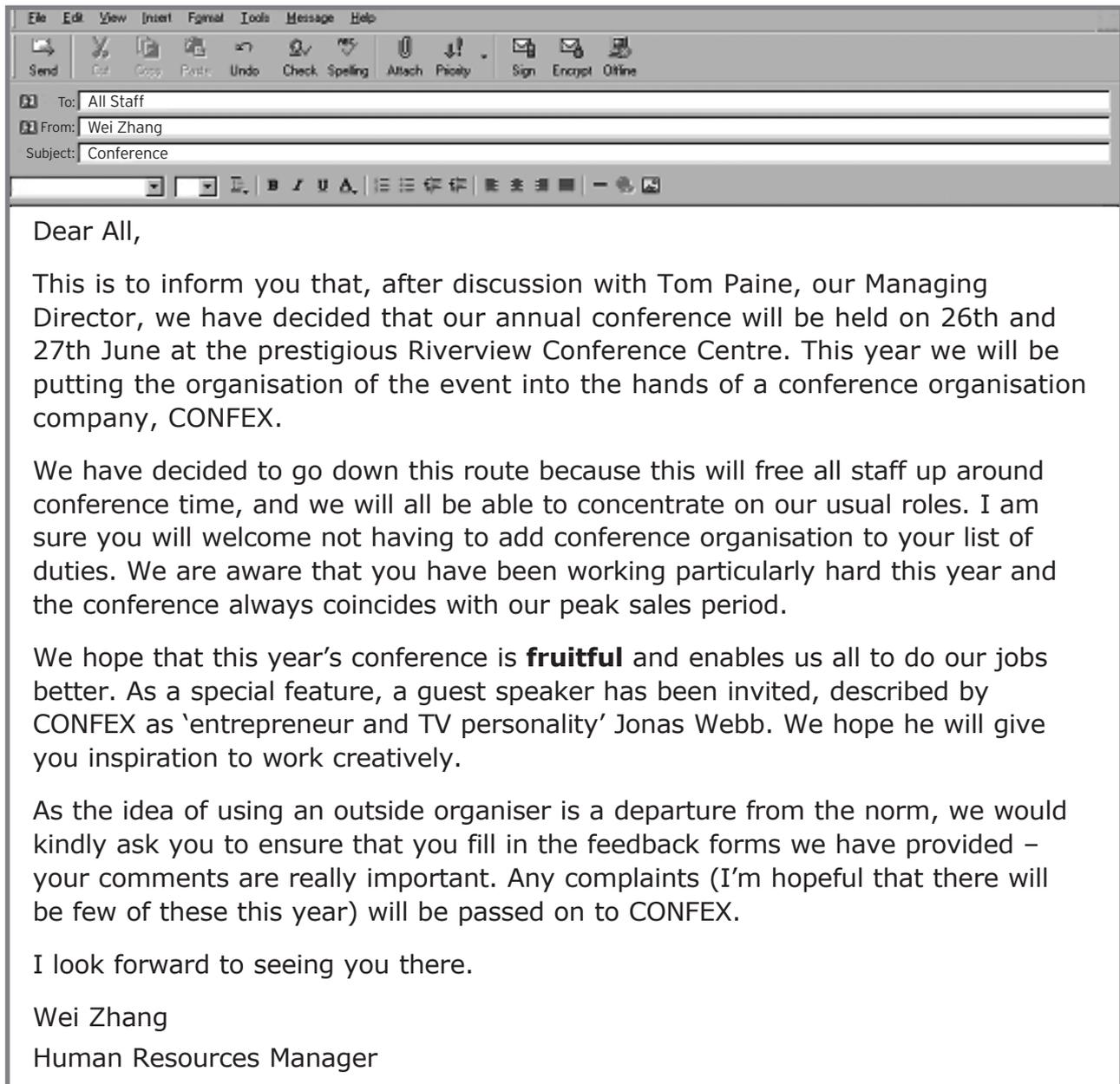
Cheers,

Wei

PS: They've suggested Jonas Webb as a speaker. CONFEX say he's well-known on TV and is an inspiring speaker.

Turn over page

## Text C



The image shows a screenshot of an email client window. The title bar reads 'File Edit View Insert Format Tools Message Help'. The menu bar includes 'Send', 'Cut', 'Copy', 'Paste', 'Undo', 'Check Spelling', 'Attach', 'Privacy', 'Sign', 'Encrypt', and 'Offline'. The email header shows 'To: All Staff', 'From: Wei Zhang', and 'Subject: Conference'. The main body of the email contains the following text:

Dear All,

This is to inform you that, after discussion with Tom Paine, our Managing Director, we have decided that our annual conference will be held on 26th and 27th June at the prestigious Riverview Conference Centre. This year we will be putting the organisation of the event into the hands of a conference organisation company, CONFEX.

We have decided to go down this route because this will free all staff up around conference time, and we will all be able to concentrate on our usual roles. I am sure you will welcome not having to add conference organisation to your list of duties. We are aware that you have been working particularly hard this year and the conference always coincides with our peak sales period.

We hope that this year's conference is **fruitful** and enables us all to do our jobs better. As a special feature, a guest speaker has been invited, described by CONFEX as 'entrepreneur and TV personality' Jonas Webb. We hope he will give you inspiration to work creatively.

As the idea of using an outside organiser is a departure from the norm, we would kindly ask you to ensure that you fill in the feedback forms we have provided – your comments are really important. Any complaints (I'm hopeful that there will be few of these this year) will be passed on to CONFEX.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Wei Zhang  
Human Resources Manager

**Text D**

Hi, J, what do you think of the conference so far? D

Not that great, is it? Much better when Wei organised it! J

Yeah, Wei's great, everyone thinks so, though he doesn't realise. D

What about the speaker? That Jonas guy? J

Load of rubbish! Hasn't motivated me at all!  
Where did they drag him up from?! D

Who knows? Never heard of him! Why not pick up a feedback form? J

Good idea! See you later – if I can find you! D

**Text E**

Dear Ms Palmer,

I would like to express my extreme disappointment with the service provided by CONFEX at our recent conference, although I have been happy with the contact I have had with you personally. I must confess I was rather shocked by the sheer quantity of complaints I received via our feedback forms.

The main cause for complaint was the size of the venue. You had assured my Human Resources Manager that the larger room would be available and that there would be ample seating for all of our staff. In fact, this was not the case. Not only that, but the restaurant was extremely cramped. Some staff complained that they were not able to reach the buffet table, and had to order their own food from the **extortionate** café menu.

Unfortunately, I have also had nothing but complaints about the so-called 'keynote' speaker. I will not repeat here how some members of staff have described him!

You will understand that with such grave shortcomings, I feel that we should not be charged the full amount for your service, so I request that you immediately refund 50% of the money which we paid upfront.

Yours sincerely,

*Tom Paine*

**End of exam**

