

How to use the online Aptis writing exams

by Jason Anderson

Before you try doing the online writing tasks, please read this quick guide. It will explain how to get the most out of the tasks.

A) How to do the writing tasks

Click on the link for a task:

click here first

[Writing Parts 1 & 2 - Practice Exam 1](#) - Go here to do the task.

[Writing Parts 1 & 2 - Practice Exam 1 - Answers Spreadsheet](#) - Go here to check your answers.

Do the task using your mobile phone to time yourself. Try to do it in the recommended time. Remember to complete all the 'fields' (*complete all the boxes*). If the Submit button doesn't work, check the fields at the top of the page are completed.

B) How to find an answer and save it in Word

Click on the link for the Answers Spreadsheet directly below the task you've just done.

click here afterwards

[Writing Parts 1 & 2 - Practice Exam 1](#) - Go here to do the task.

[Writing Parts 1 & 2 - Practice Exam 1 - Answers Spreadsheet](#) - Go here to check your answers.

This will open a spreadsheet. There may be many answers here. Locate the answer you need by scrolling down the spreadsheet. If you don't want anybody else to see your answer, you can cut it from here. If you don't mind others seeing it, you can copy it. Here's how to do it:

Double click in the box you want to copy. Then right click on your mouse and select 'Select All' (fig. 1).

Right click again and click 'Copy' (or 'Cut' if you want to remove the answer so others can't see it). (fig. 2)

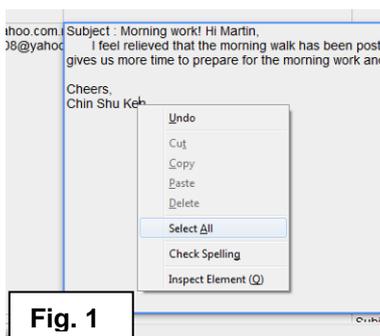


Fig. 1

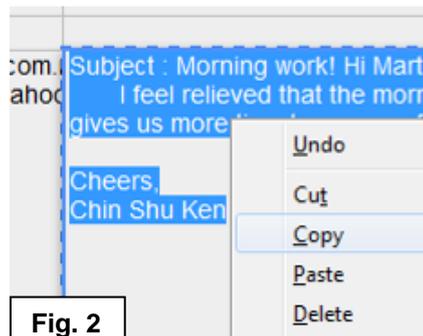


Fig. 2

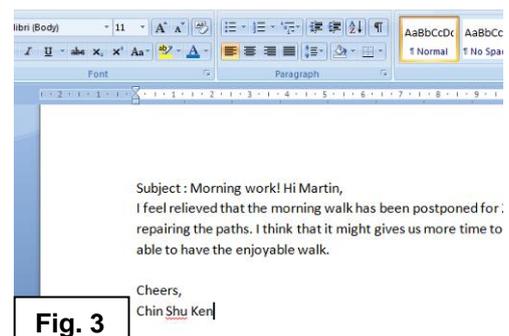


Fig. 3

Open Microsoft Word and paste the text. (fig. 3) Save the document.

C) How to evaluate an answer and correct mistakes

You can evaluate either your own answer or a colleague's answer. Here are some of the things you can do:

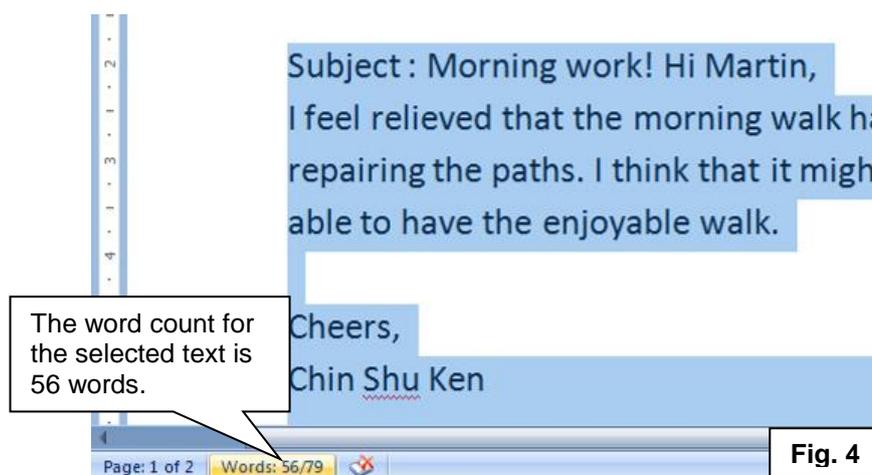
- check that the writer has answered the question correctly
- check the word count
- check the answer for errors (spelling, formatting, grammar, etc.)

Check the writer has answered the question correctly

Read the question instructions. Underline any important part of the question. Read through the answer and see if these important elements are included.

Check the word count

Check the word count by highlighting the answer and looking at the bottom left corner of the screen (fig. 4). The figure before the / symbol is your word count (56 words in the example). If you've gone over the recommended word count, think about which sentences you could leave out of your answer.



Check the answer for errors

Now you can check your text for any mistakes. If your version of Microsoft Word has a Review tab, click on it and press the Track Changes button (fig. 5).

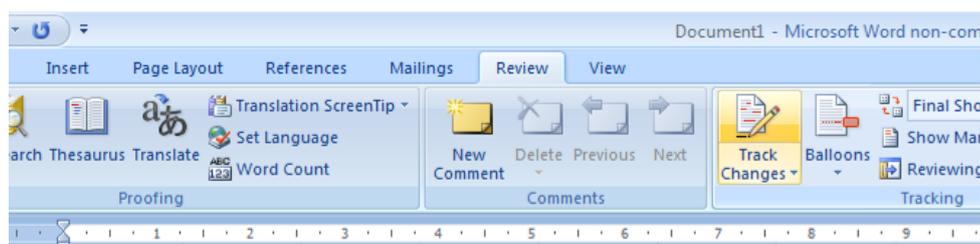


Fig. 5

This will mean that any changes you make will appear in red text (fig. 6 below)

If your version of Word doesn't have 'Track Changes', you can just use a different colour to correct your mistakes. Make a note of any errors that you made while doing the exam task under timed conditions on your computer. Look especially for:

- spelling mistakes (underlined in red)
- forgetting to use capital letters for proper nouns (names, places, months, etc.)

- simple errors caused by time pressure (e.g. wrong tense, omission of the verb 'to be' or 3rd person 's')
- formatting mistakes, such as forgetting to separate your text into paragraphs or forgetting to start a new line when appropriate
- genre mistakes (applies mainly to task 4 – informal and formal emails), such as using an informal valediction (ending) in a formal email ('Cheers, Ahmed') or using the wrong part of someone's name in the salutation ('Dear Mr. David').

See fig. 6 for an example of how to do this.

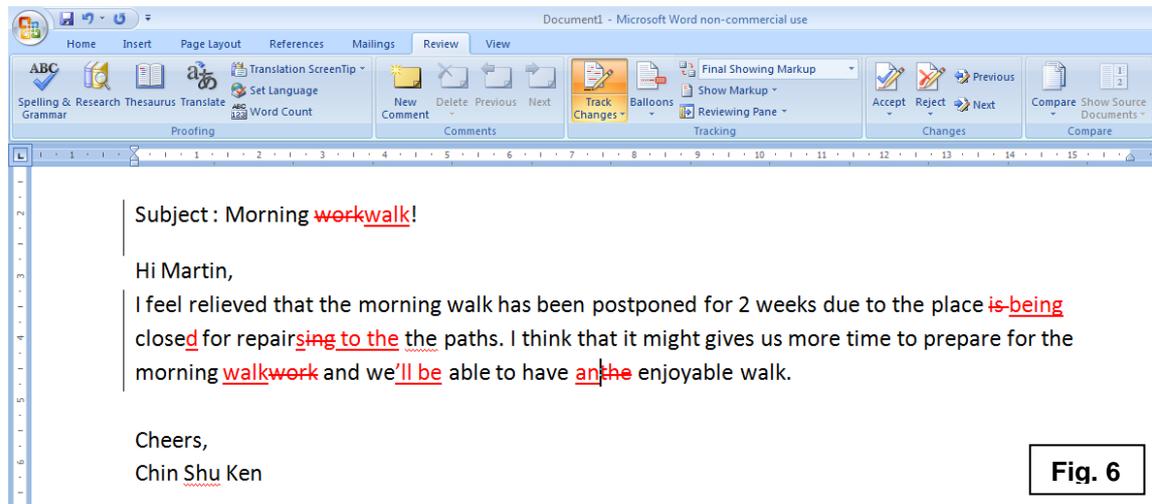


Fig. 6

D) Learning from your mistakes

Mistakes or errors are only one part of an exam task, but it's very important to make as few of them as possible to improve your mark. The best way to do this is to keep an Error Correction Log (ECL) in your notebook. By writing down the error and the correction, you're helping your brain to recognise it and avoid it in the future. It will also help you to identify any possible areas where you need to improve your English, so you can study these online or ask your trainer. See fig. 7 for two examples of Error Correction Logs.

Original sentences	The correction sentences
Have you read the email from the Keungau Council about the tele phone network	Have you read the email from Keungau Council about the telephone network .
It's annoyed ^{ing} .	It is annoying.
I taught ^{thought} the problem is only for land lines but also for the mobile phones.	I thought the problem is only for land lines but also for mobile phones.
It s sounds ridiculous.	It sounds ridiculous.

Fig. 7

ECL	
Original Sentence	The Corrected Sentence
1. what more overdue fine ^{which} is \$5 are stupid	Furthermore overdue fine which is \$5 is stupid
2. Update a Library Regulation.	update the ^{of} Library Regulation.
3/I am writing to show my feeling of unhappiness with the update ^{update} Library Regulations.	I am writing to express my feeling of unhappiness with the updated Library Regulations.

E) Other things to do with the answers

Save all the answers to your computer

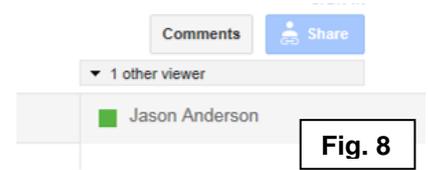
Click on the file menu at the top left. Find 'Download as> You can choose Microsoft Excel or Open Document Format. If you open the answers in Excel, remember to make the boxes bigger so that you can read them.

Choose your favourite answer.

If there are several answers to a question, you can choose your favourite one. You can copy this one to Word and save it if you want to keep it! You can also leave a note for the writer and tell him/her why you like it! Right click on the answer, and 'Add Comment'. If you're signed in to Google, your name will appear by your comment. If not, it will be anonymous, and you can add your name at the bottom. **Tip: Don't double click on an answer, this will lead to you editing it.**

Chat with other people also looking at the answers

This option only works well if all the viewers sign into Google (You'll need to create an account with Gmail to do this). In the top right corner of your screen it will tell you how many other viewers of the document there are (No other viewers, 3 other viewers, etc.). Click on a viewer to share a comment. You might want to tell them what you think of their answer or invite their opinion on your answer (see fig. 8)



Learn useful vocabulary and expressions

If there are several answers to a question, you can use them to learn vocabulary or expressions that are useful for the task. This is especially useful after you've tried the task. Look through the other answers and make a note of any language that you would find useful if you did the task again. Check any language that you don't understand with your trainer.

Create an error correction worksheet

If there are several answers to a question, you can check through all the answers for errors and copy them to a Word document. On the next page, write the corrections and check any that you are unsure about with your trainer. Save the document and give it to your colleagues (print or email) to correct.