TUTORWOW

The Self-Marking Checklist

How to mark your own past paper against the band descriptors and actually lift



HSC ENGLISH

Finishing a past paper is the easy half. Most students check whether their answer is roughly right, feel fine, and move on. The marks come from marking your own answer against the band descriptors, finding the one thing the band above you does that you do not, and rewriting that paragraph.

01 The self-mark loop

Four moves after you finish

- **Finish** the response under exam time.
- **Compare** it against the marking guidelines and band descriptors for that paper.
- **Find** your band, and the one move the band above makes that yours does not.
- **Rewrite** just that one paragraph to hit the higher band.

02 Ask your own answer

- Is my thesis a claim about an idea, or a description of the text?
- Does every quote get analysed, with the effect on the reader named?
- Is each paragraph tied back to the exact words of the question?
- Did I develop one idea, or list several?
- Does the conclusion add a larger idea, or repeat the intro?

The first "no" is your fix. Rewrite that paragraph until the answer is "yes".

03 Checklist

- I marked against the published descriptors, not my own gut feeling.
- I named the single move the next band up requires.
- I rewrote one paragraph rather than starting a new paper.
- I kept the marked-up copy to check the same gap next time.

Watch out. Doing more papers without marking them. Ten finished papers you never checked move you less than one marked properly against the criteria and rewritten.

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