

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Duration : 1 ½ hours

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS

1. This paper contains ONE question and comprises SEVEN printed pages, excluding the cover page.
2. You are not allowed to bring in materials or a dictionary to the examination.
3. You may use page 3 to plan and organise your ideas for the essay.
4. Write your essay on the lined pages provided in this booklet.
5. Use a pen for this test. You are not allowed to use a pencil.

Name of Student: _____

Identity Card /
Passport number: _____

Examination venue: _____ Seat number: _____

Examiner's use only	
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This examination assesses your ability to summarise and write in response to a prompt based on the given text.

Write an **essay** of about **500-600 words** to a university lecturer in response to the following prompt:

Diabetes is a serious health problem which may result in premature death. You are to summarise the problem and its causes given in the text in about 150-200 words, and provide suggestions on how to solve the problem in 350-400 words.

Use information from the text, your knowledge and experience to support your point of view. You are required to use **your own words** when you summarise the text. When you use information from the text for the solutions, paraphrase and **do not copy the text**. You are to acknowledge information taken from the text using proper academic conventions.

You will be assessed on:

- Content
 - Fulfillment of task
 - Sophistication and sufficiency of ideas
 - Successful integration of relevant ideas from the reading text in the essay
- Organisation
 - Clarity of overall structure, e.g. effective use of thesis statement, topic sentences and cohesive devices
 - Logical development of ideas
- Language
 - Accuracy: grammar, punctuation and spelling
 - Fluency and complexity: all types of well-formed sentences and a wide range of precise and appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions
 - Academic tone

Text: War on diabetes

The number of people with diabetes worldwide has more than doubled during the past 20 years. Diabetes mellitus, commonly referred to as diabetes, is a long-term illness characterised by a high sugar (or glucose) level in the blood. Someone with diabetes is either producing too little insulin or is unable to respond well to the insulin produced. There are three main types of diabetes: type 1 diabetes which is usually inherited and cannot be prevented; type 2 diabetes, the most prevalent and preventable type of diabetes; and gestational diabetes which happens during pregnancy.

In Singapore, about 440,000 Singapore residents who were 18 years and above had diabetes in 2014 and the number is estimated to grow to 1,000,000 in 2050. Indians and Malays consistently had higher prevalence of diabetes compared to the Chinese across the years. One in three diabetics was unaware that he or she had diabetes. Among the diabetics who were aware of their disease, one in three had poor control over his or her condition.

The experts explained that there is no one isolated reason that increases the risk of diabetes but a whole host of factors that stack up, making it a complex disease to deal with. These stem from weight, high blood pressure and cholesterol, activity level, genetics and age. Although younger people think they are invincible and dismiss their diabetes risk as they think they are fully active with an ideal body weight, they ought to be careful, warned Associate Professor Subramaniam Tavintharan, who is a senior consultant endocrinologist at Khoo Teck Puat Hospital. He sees a very heterogeneous group of patients, including those who actively exercise and are not obese. It is not true that only fat and lazy people develop diabetes.

Despite the growing number of diabetics, medical experts say there is a sense of apathy and complacency towards the disease among the Singapore general population. The problem has become so serious that Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong painted a stark picture of the diabetes situation in Singapore during his National Day Rally speech in August 2017. Mr Lee stated that one in nine Singaporeans has diabetes, while three in ten over the age of 60 have diabetes. In terms of race, it is 25 per cent of Chinese over 60 years old who have the disease, 50 per cent of Malays over 60 years old, and 60 per cent of Indians over that age. In particular, diabetes is a health crisis for Malays and Indians, Mr Lee said. In his Malay speech, Mr Lee said alarmingly, 17 per cent of Malays in Singapore have diabetes. One possible reason for this is obesity, which is more prevalent among Malays. He also warned that people, especially children, who consume packaged drinks with high sugar content, are at risk. He highlighted the consequences of having diabetes. Diabetes can lead to blindness, heart failure and kidney failure, and may require patients to amputate their limbs to save their lives. Mr Lee said in his Mandarin speech that an average of about 1,200 diabetics undergo amputation every year in Singapore.

Mr Lee, who has a family history of the disease, said winning the war against diabetes often starts with the little things. The government alone cannot solve this problem. Mr Lee said it is a matter of personal responsibility. He suggested solutions for Singaporeans to live healthier. He urged them to get regular medical check-ups to find out if they have diabetes or are at risk. He also encouraged citizens to exercise more and eat healthier.

Recently, the government has been considering several measures to reduce Singaporeans' sugar intake, especially from sugar-sweetened beverages. The Ministry of Health has invited public feedback on four options – a total ban on pre-packed high-sugar drinks; single or tiered taxes on high-sugar drinks; mandatory front-of-pack labelling on sugar/nutrition content; and a ban on advertisements of high-sugar drinks on all platforms – to reduce Singaporeans' consumption of sugary drinks in its ongoing war against diabetes. However, these proposed measures are seen as rather drastic and some believe, may not be practical and ethical.

Adapted from

Jalelah, A.B. (2018, November 2017). Singapore's approach to war on diabetes. Retrieved from <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/singapore-diabetes-right-direction-gan-kim-yong-10974220>

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