

## Midterm test

English II

20 April 2015

### A. Reading Comprehension (6 points)

Read the following text and answer the questions on page 3.

#### It is better to fire a wrong hire as fast as you can

Lucy Kellaway

1. If a mismatch is fundamental, there is no such thing as too quick

Ten days ago, a hitherto unknown Texan teenager by the name of Cella tapped out a tweet that read “Ew, I start this f\*\*\* a\*\* job tomorrow”, followed by half a dozen thumbs-down symbols. Someone showed the tweet to the manager of the pizza

5. parlour that had just hired her, who tweeted back: “And . . . no you don’t start that FA job today! I just fired you! Good luck with your no money, no job life!”

Judging by the response online, most people under 25 see Cella as a hero. She was exercising her right to freedom of speech. She did not mention the name of the restaurant so it was outrageous that she got fired for **it**. Most people over 25 took the

10. opposite view. They thought she had behaved like a spoiled brat and deserved what she got. Yet both sides agree that to get the sack before you even start a job is pretty remarkable. Twitter appears to have changed how we work forever. On closer inspection, Twitter has changed nothing — all it has done is speed things up a bit, which is a thoroughly good thing.

15. In the old days the girl would probably have been fired once she started snarling at customers. By ending the agony before it started, the company gained, as did Cella’s putative colleagues — as no one likes working with someone so dedicated to moaning that she has begun before she has anything to moan about. Even the girl herself gets something out of it (in addition to her brief celebrity), as she was relieved of a job she had decided to hate. The only thing wrong with the manager’s tweet was its rudeness. The situation was of his making. He hired the wrong person, and in getting rid of her he should have admitted **his mistake** and said sorry.

All managers, even experienced ones, often pick hopeless people. **That** is not surprising, given how hard it is to ever know what someone is like until they start.

25. What is surprising is how long it takes for the axe to fall on the misfits. Managers delay for three powerful reasons: they cling to the fond hope that the person will change (they almost never do); they are reluctant to admit to having made a dud choice; and they shrink from the unpleasantness of having to fire anyone.

30. Last week I met a big name ex-chief executive who is credited with having hired some of the most successful executives in the UK. He told me he was no better at selection than the next person — out of every five people he chose, one turned out great, three OK, and one awful. What he was good at, he boasted, was the speed with which he gave the duds the boot. His proudest moment was firing a senior executive after just one day in the job. Within hours of the man joining, a queue of people had
35. formed outside the chief executive’s office to complain about the newcomer’s abrasive style. By teatime the chief executive took action, told the man he had made a mistake, apologised, paid him some money and off he went. **Both sides** then pretended **it** had never happened. In those days there was no Twitter, no news story and no fuss.

40. When something is wrong, it is not just the employer who knows at once. An acquaintance of mine was recently headhunted to a new job on almost twice the money. By the end of the first day he had taken against the people, the atmosphere and the pressure they were under. On the morning of the second day he quit, and by

that afternoon he was heading back to his old employer.

- I am not saying everyone should leave a new job at the first hitch, nor that all
45. disappointing hires should be fired instantly. Just that when the mismatch is fundamental — which happens more often than you would think — there is no such thing as too quick. One man I know of was hired to a top job a couple of years ago. He was interviewed by half a dozen senior people, all of whom were impressed by his intelligence, his strategic thinking and his apparent conviviality. Yet he turned out to be
50. a disaster. He was arrogant, and loathed by all the people who reported to him. It took a year to get shot of him, but by then the damage to the business was prodigious. Had anyone consulted the chief executive's PA, who escorted him from reception to the interviews, things might have gone differently. When she took him up in the lift he did not meet her eye, and barely responded to her pleasantries. She knew it was never
55. going to work.

- To ask security guards, receptionists and PAs what they think of candidates makes every bit of sense. If 360 degree appraisals are a good idea, 360 degree interviews are a better one. In the former, fearful underlings shrink from telling the truth; in a 360 interview they would rush forward to prevent the rude, the overbearing
60. and the maladjusted from getting the job in the first place.

*The Financial Times*, February 15, 2015 12:23 pm

## B. Vocabulary (2 points)

The following sentences were taken from the business section of English language newspapers. Complete each space with a suitable word or expression. The first letter(s) and a paraphrase of the meaning are given. You will need to conjugate a verb, and/or you may need to add a preposition. Write your answers on your test answer sheet. (0.4 points each)

1. A man who **a**\_\_\_\_\_ more than 60 jobs in a fortnight while protesting against “draconian and demeaning” government policies has been sanctioned by his local jobcentre – for not searching for “broader” employment. (*requested to be considered an applicant for*)
2. The former France coach Raymond Domenech will ask an employment tribunal for €2.9m (£2.5m) in **s**\_\_\_\_\_ **p**\_\_\_\_\_ following his dismissal without compensation by the French football federation. (*money, exclusive of wages, back pay, etc., paid to an employee who has tenure and who is dismissed because of lack of work or other reasons beyond the employee's control*)
3. A factory **s**\_\_\_\_\_ was burned to death after being trapped in an industrial oven in a kayak factory, a court heard on Thursday. (*person in charge*)
4. The latest data from Kantar Worldpanel shows Tesco's **m**\_\_\_\_\_ **s**\_\_\_\_\_ dropped to 28.7% in the 12 weeks to 2 March. (*the percentage of an industry or market's total sales that is earned by a particular company over a specified time period*)
5. Embedding sustainability holistically depends on creating a high **p**\_\_\_\_\_ **c**\_\_\_\_\_ that motivates employees to be focused, engaged and creative for the long-term. (*an organizational culture where a critical mass of stakeholders agrees to and takes responsibility for the identified, targeted results of the organization*)

## C. Writing (12 points)

Write an application letter that would accompany your CV based on the job on page 4. The job was advertised in *The Guardian*, and Profiles Creative is a recruitment agency. Assume that the letter would be sent as a Word attachment and that you will complete your degree in 2015. Otherwise do not invent qualifications or experience that you have not had. (Max. 1½ page) Your letter will be marked on relevance of content, control of the genre, discourse management, appropriacy and range of structures and vocabulary, and grammatical accuracy.

**A. Reading comprehension**

Reference, substitution and ellipsis

What do the following expressions (highlighted in the text) refer to? (0.4 points each)

1. it (line 9)
2. his mistake (line 22)
3. That (line 23)
4. Both sides (line 37)
5. it (line 37)

Decide whether each statement is TRUE (T) or FALSE (F) according to the text. Write your answer in the box. (0.5 points each)

6. The purpose of the article is to explain a problem brought about by new technology such as Twitter.
7. Kellaway believes that the pizza parlour manager did the right thing but in the wrong way.
8. The manager of the pizza parlour admitted that he had made a mistake in hiring Cella.
9. Managers tend not to fire inadequate newly hired employees because they don't want to say they made a mistake.
10. Just as a manager might misjudge the suitability of an applicant, an applicant might misjudge the suitability of a company.
11. The article implies that a fundamental mismatch stems from the inability of the newly hired person to fit into the organisational culture of the company.
12. It is better to fire newly hired recruits in case they do damage to the company.
13. Kellaway advocates that personal assessment should start from the moment the candidate walks into the company premises.

## Administrator - Advertising Festival



Recruiter [PROFILES CREATIVE](#)

Location London

Salary £10.00 per hour

Posted 19 Mar 2015

Closes 16 May 2015

Ref Festival

Contact Liza Morgan

Industry [Marketing & PR](#), [Advertising Agency](#), [Conferences & events](#), [PR](#), [Media](#), [Advertising](#), [Creative](#)

Job Function [Administration](#)

Job Level [Entry Level](#)

Hours [Full Time](#)

Contract [Temp](#)

Listing Type [Job vacancy](#)

Education Level [Undergraduate degree \(or equivalent\)](#)

### Creative Administrators for Advertising Awards Festival

Working for the biggest and most prestigious advertising and communication festival in the world. Creative campaign material is entered to the London office, which will go through a very thorough processing system in preparation for judging in October. This is an amazing opportunity which will give you exposure to some of the best creative campaigns in the world. We will be recruiting several roles ASAP and spaces are limited.

You must be able available to start work in July and August and commit to work through to 27 October 2015. Based on your work performance you might be asked to work at the festival which is based in Europe. Due to the nature of the contract you will be expected to commit and take no holiday/days off through-out this period Monday - Friday. There will be some late nights and possible weekend work in September and October.

#### Role

\* Entry processing to the highest standard - this is an administrative role and will involve receiving creative entry material that has been submitted by global advertising, communication, creative agencies, checking that it has been entered correctly.

\* Handling creative entry material, queries and correspondence for one of the following advertising, creative, categories - TV, Cinema, Digital, Mobile, Design, Press, PR, Outdoor, Direct Marketing, Sales Promotion, Media Buying, Radio, Brand Entertainment.

\* Any problem entry material will be supported via email/phone to ensure each entry follows guidelines and all material must be logged and coded on to a database.

#### Skills and experience

\* Proven admin and database experience

\* Experience through education or work experience or a genuine interest in the creative, advertising, PR, design, media buying, marketing, digital, communication industry - ideal but by no means essential

\* Proven accuracy and attention to detail

\* Plenty of Initiative, flexibility and self-motivation.

\* Confidence, diligence, and approachability

\* A second language welcome - French, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish ideal but not essential

\* No visa restrictions

Due to the amount of applications we are only able to reply to suitable candidates. Please apply with an up to date CV via this portal or to [liza@profilescreative.com](mailto:liza@profilescreative.com) (state - Entry Processor in subject field)

## Answers

### A. Reading comprehension

Reference, substitution & ellipsis (0.4 points each)

1. exercising her right to the freedom of speech
2. that he had hired the wrong person
3. the fact that all managers, even experienced ones, often pick hopeless people
4. the chief executive and the senior executive he had recently hired
5. that the chief executive had hired the senior executive

True / false (0.5 points each)

6. False
7. True
8. False
9. True
10. True
11. True
12. False
13. True

### B. Vocabulary (0.4 points each)

1. applied for
2. severance pay
3. supervisor
4. market share
5. performance culture

### C. Writing (12 points)

The letter will follow the conventions for an application letter, using appropriate organisation/layout, structures and vocabulary. The register will be objective sounding. It will explain how the candidate developed the skills, qualities, knowledge and experience. Information flow will be fluent and logical and there will be few grammatical mistakes. Essential information includes: reference: Festival; job title, where & when the ad was posted; that the applicant is available and legally able to work at the time stipulated, that the applicant has knowledge of how to work with databases, is independent, flexible, motivated, etc.; speaks a foreign language; is interested in advertising; and shows attention to detail.