

Exercise walk-through

Structure and useful language ■ 3.2

eXercise

You must be able to

- open and close an email appropriately
- use one paragraph per content point
- use a range of natural informal expressions accurately

Method — The shape of an informal email

- 1 **Greeting** — *Hi Mei, / Hello Ana, / Dear Sam,*
- 2 **Opening line** — react to their news or apologise for the delay: *Sorry it has taken me so long to reply.*
- 3 **One paragraph per content point**
- 4 **Closing move** — an invitation, a question or a promise: *Let me know what you think.*
- 5 **Sign-off** — *Love, / Best wishes, / See you soon,* then your name

Method — Useful language you can prepare

- **Opening:** *Thanks for your message. / It was great to hear from you. / Sorry for the slow reply.*
- **Giving news:** *Guess what — / You will not believe this, but / The big news is that*
- **Reacting:** *That sounds amazing. / I am so sorry to hear that. / How annoying!*
- **Inviting:** *Why don't you come and stay? / Any chance you could visit in the holidays?*
- **Closing:** *Write back soon. / Say hello to your family from me. / Can't wait to hear from you.*

Learning six of these properly is worth more than trying to invent them under pressure.

Method — What weakens an email

- Starting straight into the content with no greeting or opening line.
- Repeating *and then... and then...* instead of varying the connectives.
- A formal sign-off such as *Yours faithfully* on an email to a friend.

Practice 2.1 ■ 1 mark

Write a suitable opening line for each situation.

- (a) Your friend has just passed an important exam.
- (b) You have not replied to your friend for a month.

Solution 2.1

Method: What weakens an email

Worked steps

(a) Any natural congratulation, e.g. “Congratulations — I knew you would do it!” **B1**. (b) Any natural apology, e.g. “Sorry it has taken me so long to write back; things have been busy here.” **B1**

Practice 2.2 ■ 1 mark

Rewrite these sentences so they sound natural in an informal email.

(a) "I wish to inform you that I shall be visiting in July."

(b) "I request that you respond at your earliest convenience."

Solution 2.2

Method: The shape of an informal email

Worked steps

(a) “Good news — I’m coming to visit in July!” **B1** (b) “Let me know as soon as you can.” **B1**

Practice 2.3 ■ 1 mark

Put these parts of an email in the correct order: sign-off, greeting, content paragraphs, opening line, closing move.

Solution 2.3

Method: The shape of an informal email

Worked steps

greeting, opening line, content paragraphs, closing move, sign-off **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 8 marks

Your friend has asked for advice about choosing subjects for next year. Write an email replying. Say which subjects you chose and why, warn them about one difficulty, and offer to talk it over. Write about 120 words.

Solution 3.1

Worked steps

Content (4 marks): the three points covered and developed. Language (4 marks): consistently informal, varied and accurate expressions, clear paragraphs, appropriate greeting and sign-off, roughly within the limit.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 2 marks

A student ends an email to a friend with “Yours faithfully, Chen Wei”. Explain what is wrong and give two suitable alternatives.

Solution 3.2

Method: What weakens an email

Worked steps

“Yours faithfully” is a formal sign-off used in a letter to someone whose name you do not know, so it does not match an email to a friend **B1**. Suitable alternatives: “Love”, “Best wishes”, “See you soon”, “Take care” — any two **B1**.