

II. Written Essay

Inspired by the example of Scotland where 16 and 17 year olds were allowed to vote in the recent historic referendum on independence, some young people in your country are starting a petition to demand that 16 and 17 year olds are allowed to vote here as well.

Write a letter to the editor of your newspaper of choice expressing your opinion on this issue. State in 175 to 200 words your reasons for or against allowing people to vote after they reach the age of 16. Pay particular attention to the following criteria:

- appropriate tone and style
- clearly organised and expressed ideas
- correct use of vocabulary
- correct use of grammar
- correct spelling and punctuation

Plan and organise your essay (use the rough paper provided). Write your definitive version in the space below, then read it carefully and make corrections if necessary.

Should we let 16 year-olds vote?

ENGLISH ENTRANCE EXAM: JUNE 20, 2017

Time allowed for this exam: 3 Hours

Before starting, please read the following carefully:

- ☞ All mobile phones must be turned off
- ☞ No internet devices are permitted.
- ☞ There are three parts to this exam:
 - I. Resum en català / Resumen en Castellano (50%)
 - II. Language Work (25%)
 - III. Written Essay (25%)
- ☞ Write all your answers in this exam booklet. Use the spaces provided.
- ☞ All rough paper will be collected after the exam.

POLITE WARNING!
ANY TALKING, COPYING OR USE OF NON-AUTHORISED DEVICES DURING THE EXAM
WILL MEAN AUTOMATIC AND IMMEDIATE DISQUALIFICATION

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| I. Resum en català / Resumen en castellano (50%) | _____ |
| II. Language Work (25%) | _____ |
| III. Written Essay (25%) | _____ |

Freedom of speech in New Zealand's universities under attack

1 A group of 27 high-profile New Zealanders have penned an open letter warning freedom of speech is under threat in the country's universities. The initiative was the brainchild of Auckland University of Technology's History Professor Paul Moon, and rejects "the forceful silencing of dissenting or unpopular views" on university campuses.

5 It also insists debate must not be suppressed because the ideas put forth are thought by some or even by most people to be offensive, unwise, immoral, or wrong-headed. The letter comes after a group called the European Students Association at Auckland University was closed down after threats to its members and accusations of racism. Its leaders had denied it was racist. In a scathing opinion article he wrote as soon as the decision was officially announced by the university, Paul Moon declared that the forced closure of this student club – and threats to their members' safety – “is a slippery slope we should all be wary of.”

10 According to Moon, the Education Act clearly asserts the right of academics to speak as critics and consciences of society – thus securing universities as bastions of independent thought and open expression, noticing also that freedom of speech was intimately connected with freedom of thought and was the foundation of a modern, diverse and democratic society.

15 Moon’s position on this issue is unequivocal: “There is no inalienable right not to be offended. It is dangerous and wrong to silence someone because you take offence or don't like what they say. Of course there are limits; that is why inciting hatred or violence is already a crime.” He goes on to warn us, however, that calls from the Police and the Human Right Commission to introduce hate-speech laws after recent attacks on ethnic communities will have the unintended consequence of suppressing free speech. Education, open debate and understanding will change racist and intolerant views – not censorship. Police Minister Paula Bennett seems to agree with Moon’s stance and has in fact

20 poured cold water on the idea of a new crime, saying hate speech can be an aggravating factor in sentencing but going further was not a Government priority.

The authors of the open letter do indeed accept that rights come with responsibilities: “Freedom of speech must have some constraints; that's why it is a crime to incite hatred and violence. And damaging someone's reputation – outside the privileged protection provided at universities and Parliament – can end in a defamation suit. Just as the courts

25 and the media must always jealously guard freedom of speech from state controls, so must our universities.”

They emphasise, however, that the pretext of avoiding offence is regularly presented as a justification to erect barriers to free speech on campuses. If a group is offended by an idea or argument, it is increasingly – and misguidedly – believed it is better to ban or "disinvite" the causers rather than ruffle sensitivities or risk the speaker being drowned out by vigorous protest. “This patronising sanctimony”, they observe, “continues to gain ground along with an absurd

30 notion that universities should provide intellectual safe-spaces.”

It is indeed paradoxical that those who clamour for such "safe spaces" often seem untroubled by the intimidation being used to shut down unpopular speech. According to the signers of the open letter, it is precisely these intellectually dangerous or subversive spaces that academics and students must enter and explore. Political dissent, artistic deviance and intellectual rebellion are at the heart of a healthy and progressive society, and universities have traditionally played a

35 leading role in challenging conventions and establishing new ways of thinking and doing. A vibrant society permits heretic views to be expressed. A country where the state – or universities for that matter – determines what is a permissible thought and what isn't is a dictatorship, not a modern democracy.

The following passage from Moon’s original article encapsulates very well the position of the authors of the open letter: “History shows that it is fear and intolerance that drives suppression of free speech, rather than free speech causing

40 fear and intolerance. Those who attempt to suppress free speech, tend to do so out of fear and intolerance. Censorship is the wrong tool to replace healthy counter-argument. That we think and believe different things is something to be promoted, not prevented, and different ideas and opinions are something to be welcomed. That is how we learn and progress. Universities teach people how, not what, to think. Now more than ever, they must protect the very core of their work – free expression”.

Adapted from: Whale Oil Beef Hooked Blog April 4, 2017.

I. Language Work

Explain briefly in English the meaning of the following words / phrases according to the context in which they appear in this article – use the space provided (5 points)

- 1. is a slippery slope (ls. 8-9)
- 2. poured cold water (l. 20)
- 3. ruffle sensitivities (l. 28)
- 4. drowned out (ls. 28-29)
- 5. gain ground (l. 29)

Find a synonym in the text for the following (4 points):

- 1. proposed
- 2. mistaken, inadequate
- 3. affirms, claims
- 4. limits, restrictions

What does the following word refer to? (1 point)

- 1. it (l. 4)



Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Facultat de Traducció i d'Interpretació

Name: _____

*Resumiu en **català i/o castellà** el contingut de l'article (aprox. 250 paraules). La versió definitiva en net l'heu d'escriure en aquest full.*

*Resumid en **catalán y/o castellano** el contenido del artículo (aprox. 250 palabras). Escribid la versión definitiva en limpio en esta hoja.*