Shrewsbury School

SHREWSBURY SCHOOL

SIXTH FORM ENTRANCE EXAMINATION
2025 ENTRY

ENGLISH: Linguistic Competence

(45 minutes)

Instructions to candidates:

- The quality of your answer and therefore your close reading of the printed extract will be assessed: you should think carefully before writing and perhaps briefly plan your answer.
- In answering the question, you should pay close attention to spelling, punctuation, grammar and presentation.
- It is advised that you should spend around 15 minutes reading the extract and planning your essay and 30 minutes writing your actual answer. Make sure also that you have read the question carefully before you begin.
- Answer on lined paper.

QUESTION:

Read the attached **NON-FICTION TEXTS; Text A: Can the world be saved from over-tourism?** and **Text B – an extract from a magazine article about living in a famous tourist destination.**

Write an article for young people, advising them what they need to consider when deciding on a holiday destination.

In your article you should:

- evaluate the ideas, opinions and attitudes in both texts
- suggest what young people should consider in order to make a responsible decision

Base your article on what you have read in both texts, but be careful to use your own words.

Address both of the bullet points.

Write about 250 to 350 words.

Pay careful attention to the accuracy and presentation of your writing.

[30 marks]

Text A: Can the world be saved from over-tourism?

We've officially entered the era of too much tourism. Sand has been removed by tourists from famous beaches and some cities impose fines on weary tourists just for sitting down in crowded hotspots. As local people fear being priced out of their towns and cities, stringent rules and limitations are imposed on holiday rentals. In Thailand, one popular destination has been closed indefinitely to allow its ecosystem to recover from the millions of tourists who have visited over recent years. Tourism taxes are becoming more common and, in some areas, are being used to restrict access to all but the wealthier clientele.

In a recent forum, tourism experts said that over-tourism was real: 'The overcrowding on the streets, the rising rents, the hostility of residents – they can't be denied.'

Over-tourism takes different forms in different places. In European cities, the over-crowding and pressure on resources, such as energy, water and health services, are obvious, but in many countries across the globe too many people are trying to gain access to fragile landscapes, buildings and ancient monuments.

In Iceland, the situation is different. 'The growth has been very fast,' explained the country's head of tourism. She was quick to clarify there are advantages to this tourism boom. Iceland's economy has been transformed. 'It's improved our lives. We enjoy a wider range of services and we can fly to more destinations.'

But pressure on popular tourist sites leaves environmental damage and changes people's attitudes. Social media plays a role and brings challenges and opportunities. Iceland's landscape attracts attention, with hot springs and dramatic landscapes. 'Some celebrity puts out a selfie and suddenly hundreds start visiting some remote waterfall that isn't ready for the numbers. It can be difficult to manage expectations.'

Over-tourism impacts housing and the lives of local people and does not always bring benefits. Tourists in big groups visit some of the oldest places in the world, using companies that don't share their wealth with local communities. That creates conflict with the population because they consider that tourist hotspot to be theirs. 'That's their own culture, their own ancestors and they get no benefit,' said one expert

Text B is taken from a magazine article about living in a famous tourist destination.

In the summer, Paolo Santini shares his hometown with three million temporary residents. A cultured man, Paolo has worked for 40 years in the city's museum, curating the region's ancient treasures exhibited for the visitors. Indeed, the day I interviewed him the museum was packed with weary families wandering aimlessly through Paolo's beloved artefacts.

'I was born here,' he says, 'in what was a rural backwater a few miles away. My father had a small farm and eked out a living, but it was tourism that gave me my profession and a decent standard of living. A lot of money has gone into making this city a popular destination.'

He owns a modest house on the outskirts of the city, in what used to be a fishing village where his ancestors sold their catch on the beach. It's become a popular area in recent years for summer homes for those who live elsewhere most of the year. Paolo says the summers are difficult for locals. The traffic is suffocating, and the pavements are crowded and hot. 'At least the city's facilities are open all year now. Everything used to close in the winter. Most of the cultural events and festivals are still organised around the visitors. We've spent decades "improving the visitor experience", as they say.' Paolo betrays only a hint of irony.

The city's central squares are lined with cramped, packed cafes and restaurants, which make me question the visitors' experience. Local shops have been bought up and converted to cafes and souvenir shops. 'There are no chemists or butchers left in the centre now and the rents are sky high,' says Paolo. His adult son lives at home, unable to afford his own house. There are rumblings of more organised discontent, with residents' groups resisting further incursions of tourism or the rising costs of living in a city they no longer recognise as theirs.

Paolo is ambivalent: 'This city has given me a good life, better than I could have expected as a child. In my line of work, cultural exchange between people is good and tourism can expand all our horizons. But I hope we know how and when to put the brakes on it.'