

## Question

**How far do you agree that internet shopping will eventually replace traditional shops and markets?**

**Cambridge Mark Scheme: Cambridge believes a well-written response should have ideas like this within the essay.**

Key words are ‘How far do you agree ...?’ and ‘internet shopping’ and ‘eventually replace’ and ‘traditional shops and markets’.

- Recently, internet shopping in the UK has grown substantially from year to year.
- This increase is largely due to web prices undercutting shop prices substantially.
- Large UK companies such as Comet send emails urging customers to buy from their website and save money although they have large stores in most towns.
- Many consumers enjoy shopping (retail therapy) and many enjoy ‘window shopping’ as a leisure pursuit.
- For many, seeing and handling the goods is preferable to pictures on a website.
- Markets appeal to many as shoppers can barter and enjoy the sight and appetising smells of a food market.
- Internet shopping will probably gain a bigger market share if prices remain considerably lower for branded products, but it is doubtful if it will ever replace traditional shops and markets.

## Cambridge Examiner Comments - Grade: A

The introduction is very useful because it sets the scene for the main body of the essay. The topic of internet shopping is introduced by a brief overview of the rapid advances in the availability and affordability of computers and internet services for home use. A clear and well-reasoned account then demonstrates convincingly how lower personnel and favourable warehousing costs can lower prices to the consumer, which is one of the main reasons for the success of internet shopping.

The fact that ordering goods and services by computer has distinct time-saving advantages over sitting in traffic jams and standing in long checkout queues is highly relevant and well explained. The desirability of enjoying a wide range of choice from all over the world then follows the first two main points already mentioned. This point is strengthened by the appropriate example of being able to customise and personalise an online purchase.

The candidate then balances the analysis by admitting the absence of the ‘personal touch’ and the lack of ‘purchasing advice’ from knowledgeable sales staff which is available in traditional retailing. The short illustration regarding the selection of vegetables is valid but could be enhanced by including further products where ‘feel’, together with personal assessment of quality is important to the buyer. The question of various types of cyber fraud is quite rightly raised and fairly handled showing how some websites are better protected than others.

The conclusion offers a realistic appraisal of how far online shopping has changed traditional shopping habits and gives a well-reasoned estimate of the market share of online/traditional retailing in the future.

This answer never wanders from the set question.

This script is very fluent and very accurate with good, clear expression. It contains just a few minor slips, e.g. ‘frauds’ and ‘vulnerabilities’ and ‘on the long term’. There is just one grammatical error of subject/verb agreement which, given the high standard of the script, is probably due to a moment of carelessness rather than a lack of knowledge.