



## I would like you to assess the following essay using the 2023 version of ielts writing band descriptors.

Topic:

These days, if people have health problems, many do not visit doctors. They try to get better at home by themselves.

Is this a positive or negative development?

Essay:

Nowadays, more and more individuals try to treat their health conditions on their own at home instead of visiting physicians and health professionals. I strongly believe this to be detrimental, especially to their health.

Unlike doctors who spend years studying medical sciences, including human anatomy, physiology, pathology and pharmacology, ordinary people have little up-to-date knowledge of the causes of each illness and the correct application of medicine. What they know is generally restricted to folk remedies, as well as myths and misinterpretations. This makes them prone to dire errors of judgement in their attempts at self-treatment. For example, they may make the wrong diagnosis or take the wrong drug or dosage, which could well result in the deterioration of their conditions or even prove fatal.

Let us not forget either that most serious and contagious conditions are not recognizable to the untrained eye. Headaches, fevers or coughs, though mostly harmless, may actually be symptoms of transmissible viral diseases like Ebola or Covid. Most ordinary people are either unaware of such diseases, or underestimate their symptoms with ignorant optimism. They infect others, each of whom then infect others, and a situation that could have been recognized and contained by medical professionals, develops into an epidemic or a global pandemic.

Some may argue that people save money when they treat their own illnesses at home, but I believe the costs that ensue their maltreatment would far outweigh such meager savings.

Therefore, I would still argue that the trend toward self-therapy and avoiding physicians is not to the benefit of individuals and global health.

**Estimated IELTS Writing Task 2 band: 7.5**

A reasonable criterion profile is **Task Response 8, Coherence & Cohesion 8, Lexical Resource 7, and Grammatical Range & Accuracy 7**. This is a strong, well-organised essay with a clear negative position, but a few overgeneralisations and awkward language choices probably prevent a secure Band 8 overall.

IELTS Task 2 is assessed equally on Task Response, Coherence and Cohesion, Lexical Resource, and Grammatical Range and Accuracy. Under the May 2023 descriptors, Band 8 requires a sufficiently addressed prompt, a clear well-developed position, well-supported ideas, well-managed cohesion, a wide and precise vocabulary, and a majority of error-free sentences. <sup>[1]</sup>

## Score breakdown

| Criterion                    | Estimated band | Assessment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Task Response                | 8              | The essay answers the question directly, maintains a clear negative stance throughout, and develops two relevant reasons: medical error and public-health risk. The counterargument about saving money is acknowledged and rejected.                                                                                                              |
| Coherence & Cohesion         | 8              | The four-paragraph structure is clear and logical: introduction, individual-health risk, public-health risk, and conclusion/counterargument. Ideas progress naturally and linking is controlled rather than mechanical.                                                                                                                           |
| Lexical Resource             | 7              | There is a strong range of precise topic vocabulary, but several word choices/collocations are unnatural or slightly inaccurate. This aligns more closely with Band 7's "awareness of style and collocation," with some inappropriacies, than Band 8's consistently skilful control. <sup>[1]</sup>                                               |
| Grammatical Range & Accuracy | 7              | You use a good variety of complex sentences accurately overall. However, there are a few errors or awkward constructions, notably in the final body paragraph, which make Band 8 less secure. Band 7 allows a variety of complex structures and frequent error-free sentences, with a few errors that do not impede communication. <sup>[1]</sup> |

## What works well

### Task Response: clear and sustained

Your position is immediate and unambiguous:

“I strongly believe this to be detrimental, especially to their health.”

The body paragraphs then support precisely that view. The first explains why self-treatment can harm the individual; the second extends the argument to society through infectious disease. This is good development rather than simply listing disadvantages.

The final paragraph also improves the response because it recognises a plausible benefit—lower cost—before explaining why it does not outweigh the risks:

“Some may argue that people save money when they treat their own illnesses at home...”

That helps the essay feel balanced while still directly answering the “positive or negative development” question.

### Organisation: very effective

The essay has a clear progression:

1. State the negative opinion.
2. Explain the danger of wrong diagnosis or medication.
3. Explain the wider danger of untreated contagious disease.
4. Address cost and restate the conclusion.

Cohesive phrases such as “Unlike doctors,” “For example,” “Let us not forget either,” “Some may argue,” and “Therefore” are varied and generally well placed. The paragraphs each have a clear

central purpose, satisfying the higher-band requirement for logical sequencing and appropriate paragraphing. <sup>[1]</sup>

## Vocabulary: sophisticated and relevant

Strong phrases include:

- “human anatomy, physiology, pathology and pharmacology”
- “dire errors of judgement”
- “deterioration of their conditions”
- “untrained eye”
- “recognized and contained”
- “far outweigh such meager savings”

This vocabulary is relevant to health and public policy, and it conveys precise meanings. It is clearly above Band 6.

## What limits the score

### Overstatement weakens precision

The main Task Response issue is not relevance but **precision**. The Ebola/COVID example is rhetorically powerful, but it becomes too broad:

“Headaches, fevers or coughs, though mostly harmless, may actually be symptoms of transmissible viral diseases like Ebola or Covid.”

A headache, fever, or cough can occur in many conditions, but presenting these symptoms as a route from ordinary self-care to Ebola or a global pandemic risks sounding exaggerated. In IELTS, an example does not need to be academically sourced, but it should remain credible and proportionate. The official Band 7 descriptor specifically notes that stronger scripts can still show “a tendency to over-generalise” or lack precision in supporting material. <sup>[1]</sup>

A more convincing version would focus on common risks:

Persistent symptoms may indicate conditions such as pneumonia, diabetes, or high blood pressure, all of which require professional diagnosis and timely treatment.

This keeps the logic strong without relying on a dramatic scenario.

### A few lexical/collocational issues

The clearest problem is:

“the costs that ensue their maltreatment”

This is not natural English. **Ensure** generally does not take a direct object in this way. Better alternatives are:

- “the costs that ensue from improper treatment”
- “the costs resulting from inappropriate self-treatment”
- “the financial consequences of delayed or incorrect treatment”

Also, “**maltreatment**” usually means abuse or cruel treatment of a person, rather than incorrect medical self-treatment. “Improper treatment,” “mistreatment,” or “inappropriate self-medication” would be better.

A few other phrases could be improved:

| Original                                  | Better option                                                              | Why                                    |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| “detrimental, especially to their health” | “a negative development because it can seriously endanger people’s health” | More direct and natural                |
| “the causes of each illness”              | “the causes and symptoms of illnesses”                                     | “Each illness” is too absolute         |
| “ignorant optimism”                       | “misplaced optimism” or “false reassurance”                                | More natural academic collocation      |
| “global health”                           | “public health worldwide”                                                  | Slightly clearer in this context       |
| “Covid”                                   | “COVID-19”                                                                 | More formal and conventionally written |

## Grammar and sentence control

Your grammar is mostly strong, and complex structures are used successfully. However, this sentence is slightly overloaded:

“They infect others, each of whom then infect others, and a situation that could have been recognized and contained by medical professionals, develops into an epidemic or a global pandemic.”

It is understandable, but it would be clearer and more controlled as two sentences:

They may then infect others, who can transmit the disease further. A situation that medical professionals might have identified and contained can consequently develop into a wider outbreak.

This revision is more precise and avoids the repetitive “infect others” structure.

## How to improve it to Band 8

To make Band 8 more secure, keep the same structure but improve **precision, balance, and collocation**.

- Replace dramatic, broad claims with realistic examples of delayed diagnosis or medication misuse.
- Avoid absolute wording such as “each illness,” “most serious and contagious conditions,” or an implied direct path to a “global pandemic.”

- Use more accurate health-related expressions: “self-medication,” “delayed diagnosis,” “medical assessment,” “adverse drug reactions,” and “public-health consequences.”
- Correct collocations and verb patterns, especially “ensue from.”
- Briefly acknowledge that minor ailments can sometimes be managed at home, then explain that avoiding doctors for significant or persistent symptoms is harmful. This nuance would make the argument more balanced and precise.

## Band 8-style revision

Nowadays, many people attempt to manage health problems at home rather than consulting a doctor. Although self-care may be appropriate for minor ailments, I believe that avoiding medical professionals when symptoms are serious or persistent is a negative development because it can harm both individuals and the wider public.

First, people without medical training may misdiagnose their condition or use medicine incorrectly. Doctors spend years studying subjects such as anatomy, pathology and pharmacology, whereas most members of the public have limited knowledge of symptoms, drug interactions and appropriate dosages. As a result, they may rely on unreliable online advice, myths or unsuitable home remedies. For instance, a person who treats recurring chest pain as simple indigestion may delay seeking help for a potentially serious heart condition. Similarly, inappropriate self-medication can worsen an illness or cause harmful side effects.

In addition, refusing professional treatment can create wider public-health risks. Some infectious diseases initially resemble ordinary illnesses, and individuals may not realise that they need testing, isolation or medical advice. If they continue attending work, school or social events, they may pass an infection to others before it is identified. Medical professionals can not only diagnose such cases but also provide guidance that helps prevent further transmission.

Admittedly, treating minor problems at home can save both time and money. However, these short-term benefits are outweighed by the potential cost of delayed diagnosis, incorrect treatment and avoidable spread of disease. Therefore, the tendency to avoid doctors and rely entirely on self-treatment is, in my view, a negative development for both personal and public health.

As for the TR issue you raised, the third paragraph is justifying the risk of a medical catastrophe when people do not check their symptoms with medical professionals. That is why it says "THOUGH MOSTLY HARMLESS" and "MAY ACTUALLY BE", so there is basically no overgeneralisation here. The idea is that even the smallest risk of a pandemic is still a significant issue when considered on the global scale, so people should not downplay the even the most basic and ordinary symptoms and have them checked.

You are right to challenge that point. On a close reading, your paragraph does not claim that ordinary symptoms usually signal Ebola, COVID-19, or another severe communicable disease. The qualifiers “though mostly harmless” and “may actually be” explicitly establish that the risk is exceptional rather than typical.

### Revised TR judgement

I would therefore withdraw “overgeneralisation” as a substantial Task Response criticism. Your intended argument is logically valid:

1. Some apparently minor symptoms can occasionally indicate a serious or infectious illness.
2. A non-specialist may fail to recognise that possibility.
3. Delayed professional assessment can allow the condition to worsen or, in infectious cases, spread.
4. The potential consequences can be large enough that the trend of avoiding doctors is negative.

That is a relevant and appropriately developed line of reasoning for this question. IELTS does not require factual citations, and candidates may support ideas with examples from general knowledge or personal experience. Task Response assesses how fully and relevantly you answer the prompt and how adequately you extend and support your main ideas.<sup>[5]</sup> <sup>[6]</sup>

On that basis, I would keep Task Response at Band 8, rather than suggesting that this paragraph brings it down.

### The distinction I meant

My concern should have been framed as a matter of rhetorical calibration, not a logical defect or a failure of Task Response.

The sentence moves rapidly from symptoms such as headaches, fever, and coughs to:

“transmissible viral diseases like Ebola or Covid”

and then to:

“an epidemic or a global pandemic.”

That escalation is possible within your argument, but it is dramatic. An examiner is unlikely to penalise it merely because the example is ambitious, especially given your qualifying language. However, a more restrained example might sound more academically measured and be harder for a reader to question.

In other words:

| Point                              | My revised view                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Is the idea relevant?              | Yes—directly relevant to why avoiding medical consultation may be harmful                         |
| Is it developed?                   | Yes—the paragraph explains both missed recognition and onward transmission                        |
| Is it overgeneralised?             | Not in the strict sense, because “mostly harmless” and “may” qualify the claim                    |
| Could it be stylistically refined? | Yes—the Ebola/pandemic chain is more dramatic than necessary, but this is not a major TR weakness |

### One point worth refining

The phrase “most serious and contagious conditions are not recognizable to the untrained eye” is broader and less carefully qualified than the later “may actually be” claim. Not every serious or contagious illness is difficult for a layperson to recognise as potentially serious; some have obvious warning signs. This wording could be softened without changing your point:

“Some serious or infectious conditions may not be recognisable to an untrained person, particularly in their early stages.”

This is more precise and still fully supports the argument.

Likewise, your key claim can be made more explicitly:

“Although most headaches, fevers and coughs are harmless, such symptoms can occasionally indicate a serious infectious disease. Without medical advice, people may underestimate the risk, delay testing or isolation, and unintentionally transmit the illness to others.”

That version preserves your exact reasoning: **low probability does not mean negligible public-health risk when potential consequences are severe.**

## Updated assessment

Your defence strengthens the original scoring rationale:

- **Task Response:** 8 — secure. The stance is clear, maintained, and supported by two developed arguments plus a brief counterargument.
- **Coherence and Cohesion:** 8 — secure.
- **Lexical Resource:** 7 — chiefly because of issues such as “the costs that ensue their maltreatment,” where “ensue from inappropriate self-treatment” would be more natural.
- **Grammatical Range and Accuracy:** 7–8 — strong range and control, with a small number of awkward constructions.

So I would still estimate the essay at **Band 7.5 overall**, but I would no longer identify the pandemic paragraph as a meaningful Task Response weakness. Your more persuasive route to a Band 8 overall is to polish collocations and a few sentence-level constructions, not to replace that core public-health argument.



The problem with your reasoning is that you are considering criteria not found within the band descriptors. "That escalation is possible within your argument, but it is dramatic" means an IELTS examiner would be looking for instances of dramatic reasoning, which is not in the band descriptors, unlike many other justification errors stated there. Apart from that, a pandemic is quite justifiably a "catastrophe" which is inherently "dramatic". Discussing the risk of a "catastrophe" which results from underestimating a medical condition would certainly end up sounding "dramatic" to some people anyway. That should not stop the essay from looking at it in a serious way, and push it to use muted language.

You are correct. “Dramatic” is not an IELTS Task Response criterion, and I should not have introduced it as a reason to qualify the paragraph. That was an evaluative preference rather than a descriptor-based judgement.

Under the 2023 Task 2 descriptors, the relevant questions are whether the idea is *relevant*, *well extended*, *supported*, and whether there is a tendency to *over-generalise* or a lack of *focus and*

*precision* in support. Your paragraph does not fail those tests merely because it considers a low-probability, high-consequence outcome. <sup>[15]</sup>

## Why your paragraph meets TR

Your reasoning has a coherent conditional structure:

“Headaches, fevers or coughs, **though mostly harmless, may actually** be symptoms of transmissible viral diseases...”

Those two qualifiers matter. They expressly deny that minor symptoms are normally signs of a catastrophic disease. Rather, the paragraph argues that:

- common symptoms are usually benign;
- they can sometimes signal a contagious illness;
- untrained people may underestimate that possibility;
- failure to seek medical advice can permit transmission; and
- in exceptional cases, the cumulative consequences can be very serious.

That is not overgeneralisation. It is an argument from **risk and consequence**: an event may be unlikely but still justify caution if its possible harm is sufficiently serious.

The subsequent reference to “an epidemic or a global pandemic” is also logically connected to the public-health claim. You are not saying that every untreated cough causes a pandemic; you are identifying the possible social consequence of widespread dismissal of potentially infectious symptoms. The use of “could have been recognised and contained” preserves that conditional logic.

## What the descriptors actually permit

For Band 8 Task Response, IELTS requires:

“A clear and well-developed position” and ideas that are “relevant, well extended and supported.”

It permits “occasional omissions or lapses in content,” but none is necessarily present in your third paragraph. <sup>[15]</sup>

For Band 7, the relevant limiting wording is:

“Main ideas are extended and supported but there may be a tendency to over-generalise or there may be a lack of focus and precision in supporting ideas/material.”

Your writing does not show a **tendency** to overgeneralise here. The paragraph remains focused on one clear point: self-treatment and avoidance of medical consultation can create a public-health risk. It develops that point through symptom recognition, underestimation, transmission, and outbreak control. <sup>[15]</sup>

Nor does the descriptor say that a writer should avoid serious, catastrophic, emotionally weighty, or “dramatic” consequences. A pandemic is, by nature, a severe public-health event.

An IELTS examiner should not downgrade an argument because its subject matter is grave or because it describes grave consequences in correspondingly serious language.

### Correction to my assessment

The accurate descriptor-based conclusion is:

- Your third paragraph is **relevant** to the question.
- It is **adequately extended and supported**.
- Its conditional wording protects it from an overgeneralisation criticism.
- Its escalation from individual symptoms to public-health consequences is a logical development of the argument, not an off-task digression.
- Therefore, it supports—not limits—a **Band 8 Task Response** judgement.

The only potential wording-level observation I would retain is not about Task Response, but perhaps **Lexical Resource**: “ignorant optimism” is understandable but slightly less natural than “misplaced optimism” or “false reassurance.” That is a word-choice/collocation matter, entirely separate from whether the medical-catastrophe argument is valid, relevant, or appropriately developed.

So yes: I accept your criticism. My earlier suggestion that the paragraph should be made “less dramatic” was not grounded in the official descriptors and should not have been presented as a scoring concern.

✱✱

**Now I would like to know how this essay would have fulfilled the requirements for TR band 9? Are there any aspects of the argument that could have been explained more "fully" for the development to move from "sufficient" to "full"?**

Your essay is already very close to Band 9 in Task Response, and it could plausibly receive Band 9 TR from an examiner who regards its two causal arguments as fully developed. There is no fixed requirement to add more paragraphs, more examples, a more balanced opinion, or less severe consequences; the distinction between Bands 8 and 9 is holistic rather than a checklist.

The official 2023 wording moves from Band 8’s “clear and well-developed position” with “relevant, well extended and supported” ideas to Band 9’s “clear and fully developed position” with ideas that are “relevant, fully extended and well supported.” The descriptors do not define a numerical threshold for “fully,” so the question is not “What information is missing?” so much as “Has every important causal link needed to establish this position been made convincingly clear?” <sup>[16]</sup>

## Your present TR level

Your response fully answers the task in the basic sense:

- It identifies the trend as **negative**.
- It maintains that position consistently.
- It gives two distinct, relevant grounds: individual medical harm and wider public-health harm.
- It includes a counterargument about saving money and rejects it.
- It ends with a direct conclusion applying to both individuals and public health.

Nothing in the prompt obliges you to discuss both positive and negative effects equally. Since the task asks whether the development is positive or negative, a clearly justified one-sided position is entirely appropriate.

More importantly, your pandemic argument is not merely an assertion. It contains a causal sequence:

ordinary symptoms → missed warning signs → no consultation → infection of others → potent

The qualifying language—“though mostly harmless,” “may actually be,” “could have been,” and “develops into”—means this remains a conditional risk argument. It is not invalidated by the fact that the adverse outcome is serious.

## Where fuller development is possible

The best way to move from a secure Band 8 to an unmistakable Band 9 is not to dilute the argument. It is to make the **most important links in each argument more explicit**, especially where the essay presently moves quickly from cause to major consequence.

| Part of essay               | Current development                                                                          | What could make it more fully developed                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Introduction                | Clear position, but broad                                                                    | Define the scope: minor, short-lived conditions may be managed at home, but replacing professional assessment for potentially serious conditions is harmful. This makes the judgement more exact without weakening it.     |
| Individual-health paragraph | Strong chain from limited knowledge to wrong diagnosis, medication, deterioration, and death | Explain why the error matters beyond a wrong choice of medicine: self-treatment can create false reassurance and delay the diagnosis of a condition that becomes harder to treat over time.                                |
| Public-health paragraph     | Strongest and most extended paragraph                                                        | Explain what medical professionals actually contribute to containment: diagnosis, testing, advice on isolation, and early treatment. This completes the contrast between lay self-treatment and professional intervention. |
| Cost counterargument        | Relevant but compressed                                                                      | Explain <i>why</i> the financial saving is false economy: delayed treatment may require more extensive care, while preventable transmission may create costs for others as well as the patient.                            |

The final paragraph is the most obvious place for additional development. At present, this claim is asserted rather than demonstrated:

“the costs that ensue their maltreatment would far outweigh such meager savings.”

The conclusion is sensible, but a Band 9-level treatment would briefly establish the mechanism behind the conclusion. For example:

Although treating minor ailments at home may reduce immediate spending, delayed diagnosis can turn manageable illnesses into more serious conditions that require longer and more expensive treatment. In cases of infectious disease, the costs extend beyond the individual because transmission can place an avoidable burden on other people and on healthcare services.

This is not necessary for a clear response, but it makes the rebuttal more fully extended and supported.

### **Full does not mean exhaustive**

A Band 9 Task Response does not require you to:

- Prove medical claims with research or statistics.
- Mention every possible advantage of home treatment.
- Add a third body paragraph.
- Avoid serious examples such as epidemics or pandemics.
- Use cautious language merely to make the discussion sound less forceful.
- Explain every possible route by which an illness spreads.

“Fully developed” means that the reader does not have to supply a crucial piece of reasoning for themselves. In your present essay, the reader can follow the individual-health and public-health arguments easily. The only relatively compressed element is the economic rebuttal, and perhaps the practical mechanism by which professional intervention prevents the larger outbreak.

### **A Band 9-oriented version**

Here is a version that preserves your argument, including the catastrophic-risk point, while making the causal development more explicit:

Nowadays, more and more individuals attempt to treat health problems at home rather than consulting doctors or other medical professionals. Although self-care may be reasonable for minor and short-lived ailments, I believe that the broader tendency to avoid professional medical advice is a negative development because it can endanger both individuals and the public.

Unlike doctors, who spend years studying anatomy, physiology, pathology and pharmacology, ordinary people are rarely equipped to identify the cause of an illness or select an appropriate treatment. Their knowledge may be limited to folk remedies, misleading online advice and incomplete personal experience. Consequently, they may misdiagnose a condition, take the wrong medication or use an incorrect dosage. The danger is not only that such treatment may be ineffective: it can also create false reassurance and delay the diagnosis of a serious condition until it becomes more difficult to manage.

Avoiding medical advice can also have consequences beyond the individual. Most headaches, fevers and coughs are harmless, but they may occasionally be early signs of an infectious disease. People who dismiss such symptoms may continue their normal routines and unknowingly transmit an illness to others. Medical professionals, by contrast, can identify warning signs, arrange appropriate tests and advise patients to isolate when necessary. Therefore, a case that might otherwise have been recognised and contained can spread through a community and, in extreme circumstances, contribute to a wider epidemic.

Admittedly, treating minor illnesses at home can save time and money in the short term. However, these savings are often outweighed by the cost of delayed diagnosis and more intensive treatment later. Moreover, when infectious diseases are involved, the consequences may affect not only the patient but also other people and healthcare systems. Therefore, the trend towards self-treatment and the avoidance of medical professionals is a negative development for both individuals and public health.

### Bottom line

I would describe the original as **Band 8 TR with a credible case for Band 9 TR**. The argument itself—particularly the public-health paragraph—is not what prevents Band 9. To make Band 9 more secure, develop the economic rebuttal and make the professional-containment mechanism explicit. That would turn an already well-developed position into one that is more clearly fully developed under the official descriptor. <sup>[16]</sup>



## Thank you. Let's move to CC. What exact issues limit your assessment of coherence and cohesion here?

There are no substantial Coherence and Cohesion faults in this essay, and nothing that would justify Band 7 for CC. My Band 8 assessment is conservative: the essay clearly meets Band 8's requirements for logical sequencing, well-managed cohesion, and sufficient, appropriate paragraphing; the only question is whether it reaches Band 9's more demanding standard of an

*effortlessly* followed message, cohesion that *very rarely attracts attention*, and *skilfully managed* paragraphing. <sup>[18]</sup>

## What is already strong

The macro-organisation is highly effective:

| Essay section         | Organisational function                                            | CC judgement                                     |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Introduction          | Rephrases the issue and establishes a negative position            | Clear opening and direction                      |
| First body paragraph  | Explains individual medical risk                                   | One focused central idea, logically developed    |
| Second body paragraph | Expands from individual consequences to public-health consequences | Strong progression in scale and argument         |
| Final paragraph       | Acknowledges cost savings, rebuts them, and concludes              | Logical counterargument-and-conclusion structure |

The progression is especially good:

self-treatment → individual harm → public-health harm → cost rebuttal → negative conclusion

This is a clear, purposeful sequence. The official CC guidance assesses logical organisation, progression of the argument, paragraphing, the sequencing of ideas within and across paragraphs, reference, and the use of discourse markers. Your essay performs well in all of these areas. <sup>[19]</sup>

Your cohesive devices are also controlled and meaningful:

- “Unlike doctors...” establishes contrast.
- “For example...” introduces illustration.
- “Let us not forget either...” signals an additional major reason.
- “Some may argue...” introduces a concession.
- “but...” marks the rebuttal.
- “Therefore...” signals the conclusion.

None is mechanically repeated, misused, or overused. That is clearly above Band 7, where the descriptor identifies possible inaccuracies or overuse/underuse of cohesive devices. <sup>[18]</sup>

## Exact Band 9 reservations

The following are **minor observations only**. They are not serious errors, and an examiner could still decide that the script merits Band 9 for CC. However, they are the clearest textual reasons for placing it at Band 8 rather than confidently at Band 9.

## 1. One transition is overtly signposted

“Let us not forget either that most serious and contagious conditions are not recognizable to the untrained eye.”

This is a valid and natural transition. It is not inaccurate or excessive. However, it is an explicit rhetorical signal that draws attention to the organisation of the essay.

That matters only because the Band 9 descriptor sets a very high standard:

“Cohesion is used in such a way that it very rarely attracts attention.”

By contrast, Band 8 says that cohesion is “well managed,” which this sentence certainly satisfies. <sup>[18]</sup>

To be clear, I am not saying that discourse markers should be muted or avoided. IELTS explicitly assesses appropriate discourse markers. The point is only that Band 9 cohesion often feels almost invisible because the connection between paragraphs is embedded naturally in the development of the argument.

A slightly less overt version would be:

A further concern is that serious and contagious conditions may not be recognisable to an untrained person.

But this is a stylistic refinement, not a necessary correction.

## 2. The transmission chain becomes slightly dense

This is the one passage where the reader must process several referential and logical steps in one long unit:

“They infect others, each of whom then infect others, and a situation that could have been recognized and contained by medical professionals, develops into an epidemic or a global pandemic.”

The meaning is recoverable, but the reader has to unpack the chain:

ordinary people → others → each of those others → a situation → epidemic/pandemic

There are three small CC-related pressures here:

- “**They**” refers to ordinary people who have underestimated symptoms; this is understandable, but “symptomatic individuals” would be more explicit.
- “**each of whom then infect others**” creates a repetitive, recursive reference chain.
- “**a situation**” is a broad noun reference. It refers to the preceding transmission sequence, but “this chain of transmission” would be more immediately precise.

Again, this does not make the paragraph unclear. It is not a Band 7-level reference problem. But Band 9 says the message should be followed *effortlessly*, and this is the one sentence where a reader may pause briefly to reconstruct the relationship between the elements. <sup>[18]</sup>

A more transparent version would be:

If they fail to seek medical advice, symptomatic individuals may infect others, who may in turn transmit the disease further. Without professional diagnosis and containment, this chain of transmission can develop into an epidemic or, in extreme cases, a global pandemic.

This version does not alter or weaken your catastrophe-risk argument. It simply distributes the causal sequence across two sentences and makes the reference explicit.

### 3. Paragraphing is highly effective, but not unmistakably “skilful”

Your paragraphing is unquestionably **sufficient and appropriate**, which is the Band 8 wording. Every paragraph has one identifiable topic, and the progression between them is clear. <sup>[18]</sup>

The reason I would hesitate to call it a definite Band 9 is not that the paragraphs are badly designed. Rather, Band 9 requires paragraphing to be “skilfully managed,” a description that implies an exceptionally seamless relationship between paragraph purpose, development, and transition.

Your second and third body paragraphs are connected by a strong conceptual progression—from personal health consequences to public-health consequences. Yet the relationship is primarily announced through “Let us not forget either,” rather than being built into the end of the previous paragraph and the beginning of the next one. This is a very fine distinction, but it is the kind of distinction that separates a secure Band 8 from a secure Band 9 under the published descriptors.

### Bottom-line CC score

My updated, descriptor-based view would be:

- **Band 8: secure**
- **Band 9: possible, but not certain**
- **Band 7: not justified**

The essay has no misuse, mechanical repetition, unclear paragraphing, illogical progression, or problematic reference that would lower it to Band 7. Its organisation is mature and controlled.

If I had to identify the *exact* factors keeping me from confidently awarding Band 9, they would be limited to:

1. The overtly rhetorical transition “Let us not forget either.”
2. The dense reference-and-causation chain in “They infect others, each of whom then infect others...”
3. The fact that the paragraph connections are very good but not quite indisputably effortless or invisible.

Those are narrow Band 8-versus-9 distinctions—not meaningful weaknesses in the essay’s coherence.



**One point before moving on: the phrase "Let us not forget either that" was originally used by a Cambridge examiner in their model answer to Cambridge IELTS 10, test 3, task 2. So, I wouldn't consider that single instance overt and signposting.**

Now let's move to the exact issues you find with LR.

You are right about “Let us not forget either that.” I retract that as a Coherence and Cohesion reservation. If Cambridge used the phrase in an examiner model answer, that is strong practical confirmation that it is an acceptable, natural discourse marker; more importantly, it fulfils the official CC criterion of using discourse markers appropriately to mark stages and relationships between ideas. <sup>[20]</sup>

For **Lexical Resource**, I would now revise my earlier score upward: **Band 8 is the better assessment**, not Band 7. The essay has a wide, flexible, and generally precise medical/public-health vocabulary. Its few issues are best understood as occasional collocational or word-choice lapses—the precise situation the Band 8 LR descriptor explicitly allows. <sup>[21]</sup>

### Revised LR score

| Band | Fit with this essay                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7    | Too low overall. The vocabulary is more than merely “sufficient,” and the essay has more than “some” ability with uncommon items.                                                      |
| 8    | Best fit. It uses a wide resource fluently and flexibly, including several appropriate uncommon or idiomatic expressions, with occasional issues in word choice and collocation.       |
| 9    | Possible only if an examiner regarded the questionable phrases as non-errors; I would not call it a secure Band 9 because a few lexical combinations are not fully natural or precise. |

The 2023 Band 8 descriptor requires a “wide resource” used “fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings” and allows “occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation.” Band 9, by contrast, requires “full flexibility and precise use” and “very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features.” <sup>[21]</sup>

### Strong lexical features

The essay has considerable lexical strength. These are not merely “advanced words”; they are appropriate to the health, self-medication, diagnosis, and public-health context.

| Phrase                                                  | Why it is effective                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| “health conditions”                                     | Natural, suitably formal umbrella term                                 |
| “physicians and health professionals”                   | Formal health-related register, though the categories overlap slightly |
| “human anatomy, physiology, pathology and pharmacology” | Precise and topic-specific technical vocabulary                        |
| “folk remedies”                                         | Natural and idiomatic expression                                       |
| “dire errors of judgement”                              | Strong, natural formal collocation                                     |
| “wrong diagnosis”                                       | Precise medical collocation                                            |
| “deterioration of their conditions”                     | Formal and accurate expression of worsening health                     |
| “recognizable to the untrained eye”                     | Natural idiomatic phrasing                                             |
| “transmissible viral diseases”                          | Appropriate, relatively sophisticated public-health vocabulary         |
| “recognised and contained”                              | Very natural outbreak-control collocation                              |
| “far outweigh such meager savings”                      | Effective and idiomatic evaluative language                            |

These choices show clear range, flexibility, and control. There is also no evident reliance on repetitive, basic vocabulary. Repetition of words such as “health,” “illness,” “conditions,” and “medical” is topic-driven and appropriate; avoiding these words merely for the sake of variation would reduce precision.

### Exact lexical reservations

The following are the only phrases I would identify as genuine or arguable LR limitations. They are not numerous enough to justify Band 7.

| Original wording                                                       | Issue                                                                                                                                                                                           | More natural option                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| “physicians and health professionals”                                  | A physician is already a health professional, so the phrase is mildly overlapping rather than fully precise                                                                                     | “physicians and other health professionals”                                         |
| “the correct application of medicine”                                  | Understandable, but “application of medicine” is less idiomatic when referring to the use of drugs by ordinary people                                                                           | “the correct use of medication”<br>or “the appropriate administration of medicines” |
| “restricted to folk remedies, as well as myths and misinterpretations” | The phrase after “restricted to” is slightly awkward. “As well as” normally adds something to a complete category, whereas here all three items form the content of the limitation              | “limited to folk remedies, myths and misinterpretations”                            |
| “ignorant optimism”                                                    | Meaning is clear, but the collocation is less natural than alternatives such as “misplaced optimism,” “false reassurance,” or “uninformed optimism”                                             | “misplaced optimism”                                                                |
| “the costs that ensue their maltreatment”                              | This is the clearest problem. “Ensure” normally needs a following preposition in this meaning—usually “ensue from”—and “maltreatment” is not the most natural term for incorrect self-treatment | “the costs that ensue from inappropriate self-treatment”                            |

| Original wording                | Issue                                                                                                                                              | More natural option                                                                |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| “the trend toward self-therapy” | “Self-therapy” is understandable but somewhat less exact in this context; it is often associated with psychological therapy or self-help practices | “the trend towards self-treatment” or “the avoidance of professional medical care” |

## The clearest issue

This sentence is the principal reason I would stop short of a confident LR 9:

“Some may argue that people save money when they treat their own illnesses at home, but I believe the costs that ensue their maltreatment would far outweigh such meager savings.”

The issue is not the overall idea or the phrase “far outweigh such meager savings,” which is strong. It is the central expression:

“the costs that ensue their maltreatment”

There are two linked lexical problems:

- “**Ensure**” is not naturally used here without “from”: consequences or costs “ensue from” an action.
- “**Maltreatment**” normally suggests abusive, cruel, or seriously improper treatment of a person. It does not naturally mean a person’s own unsuccessful attempt to treat an illness at home.

The strongest revision would be:

“Some may argue that people save money by treating minor illnesses at home, but the costs that ensue from inappropriate self-treatment may far outweigh these short-term savings.”

This is not only more natural lexically; it preserves your intended contrast between an immediate financial benefit and more serious later consequences.

## What is not an LR problem

I would **not** criticise the following:

- “**Though mostly harmless, may actually be ...**” — this is precise qualifying language, not a lexical weakness.
- “**Ebola or Covid**” — the examples are lexically appropriate in the context of transmissible viral disease.
- “**Dire errors of judgement**” — this is an effective collocation.
- “**Meager savings**” — this is a natural phrase. The American spelling “meager” is valid; IELTS accepts standard British or American spelling conventions.
- “**Global health**” — this is an established and appropriate public-health term.

- “Not to the benefit of individuals and global health” – slightly formal, but fully understandable and acceptable.
- “Let us not forget either that” – this belongs to CC rather than LR, and it is not a problem in any event.

## Bottom line

The essay’s lexical profile is best described as **Band 8**:

- It has a wide and relevant range.
- It uses advanced medical and public-health vocabulary effectively.
- It contains several natural formal collocations and idiomatic expressions.
- It has only occasional lapses, chiefly in “the costs that ensue their maltreatment” and, more debatably, “ignorant optimism,” “application of medicine,” and “self-therapy.”

So, after re-evaluation, I would score the essay:

| Criterion                      | Revised estimate |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Task Response                  | 8–9              |
| Coherence and Cohesion         | 8–9              |
| Lexical Resource               | 8                |
| Grammatical Range and Accuracy | 7–8              |

The most defensible overall estimate is therefore **Band 8.0**, rather than the Band 7.5 I initially gave.



## Very valid points indeed. I especially liked the notes on "ensue" and "self-therapy".

Can we now look at GRA in the same way?

Yes. On Grammatical Range and Accuracy, I would now give the essay a **secure Band 8**, not 7. It demonstrates a wide, flexible range of sentence structures, and the clear majority of sentences are error-free; however, there are a few identifiable grammar/punctuation issues, which make Band 9 less secure.

The 2023 Band 8 descriptor requires “a wide range of structures” used “flexibly and accurately,” with the majority of sentences error-free and only occasional, non-systematic errors that have minimal impact on communication. Band 9 requires full flexibility and control, with grammar and punctuation used appropriately throughout and minor errors extremely rare. GRA assesses sentence-level range, accuracy in simple/compound/complex sentences, error density and effect, and punctuation. <sup>[22]</sup> <sup>[23]</sup>

## Range of structures

The essay shows substantial grammatical range. It does not depend on repeated simple Subject–Verb–Object sentences.

| Structure type                             | Example                                                                                | Assessment                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Complex contrast opener                    | “Unlike doctors who spend years studying medical sciences..., ordinary people have...” | Effective complex opening with a relative clause                                |
| Embedded nominal clause                    | “What they know is generally restricted to...”                                         | Accurate and varied clause structure                                            |
| Relative clause                            | “the wrong drug or dosage, which could well result...”                                 | Accurate use of a non-defining relative clause                                  |
| Reduced concessive clause                  | “Headaches, fevers or coughs, though mostly harmless, may...”                          | Sophisticated and accurate reduction of “though they are mostly harmless”       |
| Correlative construction                   | “either unaware of such diseases, or underestimate...”                                 | Ambitious structure, but its parallelism is not fully controlled                |
| Passive modal perfect                      | “could have been recognized and contained by medical professionals”                    | Strong, accurate use of passive voice and modal perfect                         |
| Concession and contrast                    | “Some may argue that..., but I believe...”                                             | Effective compound-complex sentence                                             |
| Relative clause within subject noun phrase | “a situation that could have been recognized and contained...”                         | Grammatically sophisticated, though punctuated incorrectly before the main verb |
| Formal evaluative conclusion               | “the trend toward self-therapy and avoiding physicians is not...”                      | Appropriate complex noun-phrase structure                                       |

This is comfortably beyond Band 7’s requirement for merely “a variety of complex structures ... with some flexibility and accuracy.” The essay’s structures are not only varied; most are handled successfully. <sup>[22]</sup>

## Accurate sentences

Several sentences are grammatically sound and demonstrate high-level control:

“Unlike doctors who spend years studying medical sciences, including human anatomy, physiology, pathology and pharmacology, ordinary people have little up-to-date knowledge of the causes of each illness and the correct application of medicine.”

The sentence is long but controlled. The introductory contrast, embedded relative clause, participial “including” phrase, and coordinated noun phrases all function correctly.

“For example, they may make the wrong diagnosis or take the wrong drug or dosage, which could well result in the deterioration of their conditions or even prove fatal.”

The modal verb, coordination, relative clause, and paired outcomes are all grammatically effective. The phrase “take the wrong ... dosage” may be less natural lexically than “take the wrong dose” or “use the wrong dosage,” but that is principally a Lexical Resource matter, not a sentence-grammar error.

“Headaches, fevers or coughs, though mostly harmless, may actually be symptoms of transmissible viral diseases like Ebola or Covid.”

This is a particularly strong sentence grammatically. The interrupted concessive phrase is correctly punctuated and maintains your intended qualified reasoning.

“Some may argue that people save money when they treat their own illnesses at home...”

The concession structure is accurate, and the embedded time clause beginning with “when” is appropriately used.

## Exact GRA issues

There are three specific places where I would identify a grammatical or punctuation issue. These are occasional and non-systematic, so they support Band 8 rather than lowering the script to Band 7.

| Original wording                                                                                       | Exact issue                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Improved version                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| “Most ordinary people are either unaware of such diseases, or underestimate their symptoms...”         | The correlative structure is not cleanly parallel. After “are either,” the first element is adjectival—“unaware”—but the second is a verb phrase—“underestimate.”                                                      | “Most ordinary people either are unaware of such diseases or underestimate their symptoms...”         |
| “a situation that could have been recognized and contained by medical professionals, develops into...” | The comma between the restrictive relative clause and its main verb is incorrect. The relative clause identifies “a situation,” so there should be no comma before “develops.”                                         | “a situation that could have been recognized and contained by medical professionals develops into...” |
| “the costs that ensue their maltreatment...”                                                           | “Ensure” does not take “their maltreatment” as a direct object in this construction. A preposition is required—normally “from.” This overlaps with LR because “maltreatment” is also not the most natural word choice. | “the costs that ensue from inappropriate self-treatment...”                                           |

## Correlative parallelism

The sentence in question is:

“Most ordinary people are either unaware of such diseases, or underestimate their symptoms with ignorant optimism.”

The intended meaning is completely clear, so this does not affect communication. However, the most controlled form places “either” before the two coordinated verb phrases:

“Most ordinary people either are unaware of such diseases or underestimate their symptoms...”

This creates the intended parallel structure:

either [are unaware] or [underestimate]

An alternative would be to make both coordinated elements adjective phrases:

“Most ordinary people are either unaware of such diseases or overly optimistic about their symptoms.”

That revision also addresses the less natural lexical combination “ignorant optimism.”

### **Incorrect comma before the main verb**

The relevant sentence is:

“They infect others, each of whom then infect others, and a situation that could have been recognized and contained by medical professionals, develops into an epidemic or a global pandemic.”

The comma after “professionals” incorrectly separates the subject from its verb:

a situation [that could have been recognised and contained] develops

The correct sentence is:

“They infect others, each of whom then infects others, and a situation that could have been recognized and contained by medical professionals develops into an epidemic or a global pandemic.”

This is a punctuation error, not a weakness in structural range. It is also minor: the intended sentence structure remains transparent.

### **Verb complementation in “ensue”**

The issue in:

“the costs that ensue their maltreatment”

can reasonably be seen under both GRA and LR.

- As a GRA issue, the verb pattern is incomplete: costs “ensue **from**” something.
- As an LR issue, “maltreatment” is not the precise word for inadequate self-treatment.

The most natural correction is:

“the costs that ensue from inappropriate self-treatment”

or:

“the costs resulting from incorrect self-treatment.”

### **What is not a GRA error**

I would not penalise these features grammatically:

- “I strongly believe this to be detrimental” – grammatically valid formal construction.
- “Though mostly harmless” – correct reduced concessive clause.

- “may actually be” — accurate modal expression of possibility.
- “could well result in” — accurate modal phrase.
- “could have been recognized and contained” — accurate modal-perfect passive.
- “each of whom then infect others” — grammatically valid relative-clause structure, although “infects” would perhaps make the singular relationship more immediately transparent.
- “the trend toward self-therapy and avoiding physicians” — not the most parallel stylistic construction, but grammatically acceptable because both “self-therapy” and “avoiding physicians” function as complements of “toward.”
- The use of “meager,” “recognizable,” and “toward” — valid American spellings. IELTS accepts standard British or American English, provided the writing remains clear and consistent.

## Band conclusion

The grammar profile fits Band 8 very well:

- A wide range of complex structures is present.
- Most long and demanding sentences are accurate.
- Punctuation is generally strong.
- The errors are isolated, varied rather than repeated, and do not obstruct meaning.

It is not a secure Band 9 for GRA because the errors are more than “extremely rare”: there is a parallelism issue, an unnecessary comma separating a subject from its verb, and a verb-complementation problem. Under the official descriptor, those are exactly the sort of occasional, non-systematic inaccuracies that Band 8 permits. <sup>[22]</sup>

My final criterion profile would therefore be:

| Criterion                      | Estimated band |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Task Response                  | 8–9            |
| Coherence and Cohesion         | 8–9            |
| Lexical Resource               | 8              |
| Grammatical Range and Accuracy | 8              |
| Overall estimated Task 2 band  | 8.0            |

✱✱

As for “a situation that could have been recognized and contained by medical professionals, develops into...”, the comma was added to prevent reader confusion.

I understand why you added it: the relative clause is long, and the comma creates a visual pause before the main verb, “develops.” However, in standard punctuation, that comma should not be used there because it separates the complete subject noun phrase from its main verb.

### Why the comma is problematic

The grammatical structure is:

a situation that could have been recognised and contained by medical professionals + develops

The full subject is:

“a situation that could have been recognised and contained by medical professionals”

The main verb is:

“develops”

A comma is therefore placed between the subject and its predicate:

“a situation that could have been recognised and contained by medical professionals\*\*\* develops...”

That is generally not permitted in formal written English merely because the subject is long. The relative clause beginning with “that” is a defining relative clause: it identifies the kind of situation being discussed. Defining relative clauses are normally written without commas. <sup>[24]</sup>  
<sub>[25]</sub>

So the grammatical version is:

“They infect others, each of whom then infect others, and a situation that could have been recognised and contained by medical professionals develops into an epidemic or a global pandemic.”

### Would the comma prevent confusion?

Not really. Without the comma, the sentence remains grammatically clear because:

- “that could have been recognised and contained by medical professionals” is recognisably a relative clause modifying “situation”;
- “develops” is clearly the finite verb of the main clause;
- a reader does not need punctuation to distinguish the two.

In fact, the comma can create a different momentary problem because it suggests that the preceding material may be a parenthetical, non-defining clause. But if that were your intention, you would normally need a comma before the relative clause as well:

“a situation, which could have been recognised and contained by medical professionals, develops...”

That version is grammatically punctuated as a non-defining relative clause, but it changes the meaning. It presents the clause as extra information about an already identifiable “situation,” whereas your intended meaning is that the situation is specifically one that professionals could have recognised and contained. For that intended meaning, “that” without commas is the appropriate construction.<sup>[25]</sup> <sup>[24]</sup>

### Best revision

The original sentence is structurally dense, so the strongest solution is not a comma but a clearer sentence boundary:

“They infect others, each of whom may then infect more people. Without medical intervention, the resulting outbreak can develop into an epidemic or even a global pandemic.”

This retains all of your intended reasoning:

underestimated symptoms → continued contact → transmission → further transmission → ou

It also avoids the slightly abstract phrase “a situation ... develops into” and makes the referent —“the resulting outbreak”—immediately clear.

For IELTS scoring, I would treat the comma as a **minor punctuation/grammar issue**, not as a Coherence and Cohesion issue. It does not make the meaning unclear, but removing it or splitting the sentence would improve Grammatical Range and Accuracy.

✱

**The issue with ENSUE is either in the category of LR or GRA. It cannot be both. It seems that, as you explained earlier, it is a verb pattern problem, which is LR.**

You are right: for a clean criterion-by-criterion diagnosis, I should assign the “ensue” problem to **Lexical Resource only**, not use the same error as evidence against both LR and GRA.

## Correct classification

In this context, the issue is lexical valency/collocation:

“the costs that ensue their maltreatment”

The verb normally occurs in the pattern:

“costs/consequences that ensue **from** X”

Knowing that **ensue** selects “from” before the cause is part of knowing how that lexical item combines with other words. It is therefore best treated as a word-choice/collocation issue within LR, alongside the less suitable choice of “**maltreatment.**”

IELTS describes Lexical Resource as assessing vocabulary range, accuracy, and appropriacy, including the accuracy of word choice, expression, and collocation. Grammatical Range and Accuracy concerns the range, accuracy, and appropriacy of grammatical structures and sentences. <sup>[34]</sup>

## Revised allocation

| Feature                        | Appropriate criterion          | Reason                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| “ensue their maltreatment”     | Lexical Resource               | Incorrect lexical pattern/collocation: <i>ensue from</i>                                       |
| “maltreatment”                 | Lexical Resource               | Semantically less appropriate than <i>inappropriate self-treatment</i> or <i>mismanagement</i> |
| Comma before “develops”        | Grammatical Range and Accuracy | Punctuation separating a subject from its main verb                                            |
| Long relative-clause structure | Grammatical Range and Accuracy | A sentence-structure and punctuation matter, not an LR matter                                  |

So I would not list “**ensue their maltreatment**” among the reasons for a GRA score below Band 9. Its scoring relevance belongs entirely under LR.

## Important distinction

Linguistically, one could describe a missing required preposition as involving grammar. But IELTS scoring is not a mechanical process in which every error receives multiple separate deductions. For analytical feedback, the useful question is: *what does the error principally reveal about the writer’s ability?*

Here, it reveals imperfect command of the word “**ensue**” and its normal collocational pattern—not an inability to form complex sentences, manage clause structure, or control grammatical range. Therefore, **LR is the correct home for it.**

# So the ultimate score would be 7 to 9 in TR, 8 to 9 in CC, 8 in LR, and 8 in GRA, right?

Almost—but I would not retain 7 as a realistic Task Response outcome after the revisions to the analysis. A Band 7 TR score would be inconsistent with the essay’s clear position, relevant arguments, development, support, and direct response to the question.

## Final criterion profile

| Criterion                      | Most defensible score | Plausible upper outcome | Why                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Task Response                  | 8                     | 9                       | The position is clear, sustained, relevant, and well developed. Band 9 is arguable if the examiner judges the development as fully extended and supported. Band 7 is not justified. |
| Coherence and Cohesion         | 8                     | 9                       | The essay is logically sequenced, cohesive devices are appropriate, reference is generally clear, and paragraphing is effective. Band 9 is possible, though not certain.            |
| Lexical Resource               | 8                     | 8                       | Wide, flexible, precise health-related vocabulary, with occasional lexical/collocational issues—notably “ensue their maltreatment.”                                                 |
| Grammatical Range and Accuracy | 8                     | 8                       | A wide range of complex structures is controlled accurately overall. The comma before “develops” is a minor punctuation error, but it does not materially affect meaning.           |

Therefore, my final predicted Task 2 profile would be:

TR 8 + CC 8 + LR 8 + GRA 8

That gives a most defensible estimated Task 2 band of 8.0.

## Important qualification

An examiner does not award ranges such as “8–9” in the actual marking process; they select one whole band for each criterion. The “possible 9” entries indicate that an examiner could reasonably interpret your performance as meeting the higher descriptor, not that 9 is the most likely outcome.

My final judgement is therefore:

- **Most likely:** Band 8.0 for Task 2.
- **Best-case criterion interpretation:** TR 9, CC 9, LR 8, GRA 8.
- **Not a credible outcome on this script:** TR 7, unless an examiner identified a major issue not apparent from the text itself.

1. <https://ielts.org/cdn/Guides/ielts-writing-band-descriptors.pdf>

2. <https://ielts.org/news-and-insights/ielts-writing-band-descriptors-and-key-assessment-criteria>

3. <https://ieltsliz.com/ielts-writing-task-2-band-descriptors/>

4. <https://www.slideshare.net/slideshow/ielts-task2-writing-band-descriptors-pdf/260031632>
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