Criteria for writing a comment
In a comment you usually express your **personal opinion** on a certain topic or issue. However, you might also be asked to write a comment adopting the perspective of someone else (e.g. a literary character, a person of defined social standing). There are various types of comments. The most common form is the “pros and cons” comment, in which you look at a problem from two sides (tasks: Comment on /Discuss...; Evaluate...; Assess...; Look at the pros and cons...).
You might have to comment on a complete text, an excerpt or a single statement. A comment always has a clear structure consisting of an **introduction**, a **main part** and a **conclusion**.

**PREPARATION**
If you have to comment on a text,
1) skim the text to understand the author’s general attitude.
2) scan the text highlighting the author’s arguments.
3) make a list of the author’s arguments and write your opinion next to every single one of them. If you deal with a statement, collect your ideas on the given task. Group them as pro and con arguments and add examples. You should follow the “three-step-rule” of argumentation: argument - explanation – example

**WRITING A “PRO AND CON” COMMENT**

In the introduction:
Refer to the topic or question (often given in the task), clearly stating the problem/issue at stake. Do NOT simply repeat the task but find an appropriate introduction.

In the main part:
Discuss (the author’s) arguments in a more detailed way. The author claims that .../states .../maintains .../predicts ...

Present your own opinion. It is my belief/opinion that .../In my opinion .../As far as I can see ...(Personally,) I do not find such a claim/argument/statement convincing. There is no doubt/question that ...

Include supporting material from other sources such as books, articles or statistics. Arrange your arguments in a logical order. You can either take the argumentative approach with all the “pro” arguments first and then the “con” arguments or vice versa.

OR
Discuss the “pro” and “con” arguments of one aspect at a time.

In the conclusion:
Refer to the topic or question again and say what conclusion you have come to, summing up your arguments. All in all, I think .../I would like to conclude by saying that .../To sum up...
POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Work on the structure of your text before writing.
- When referring to material, concentrate on the necessary aspects to support your arguments.
- Avoid unnecessary summaries of information given in the text.
- Connect your sentences using linking words to show how your arguments and supporting points are related (see Supplementary page: “Linking words”).
- Organise your text in logical paragraphs
- Do not use “one-sentence paragraphs”