



General Certificate of Secondary Education  
January 2013

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**English Language/English**

Unit 2: Functional Writing and Reading  
Non-Fiction

Foundation Tier

[GEG21]

MONDAY 14 JANUARY, AFTERNOON

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**MARK  
SCHEME**

## A General Introduction to the Assessment of CCEA's GCSE English Language/English

### The style of assessment

The exams will be marked using positive assessment, crediting what has been achieved.

The mark schemes emanate from the Assessment Objectives and are designed to support this positive approach.

### The relationship between tasks, mark schemes and Levels of Competence

Each task is designed to test a specified series of Assessment Objectives and every task has an individual mark scheme.

The mark scheme for each task comprises a task specific checklist as well as Competence Levels, each of which details an increasing level of proficiency. Each Competence Level is made up of a series of brief statements which, together, describe the essential characteristics of a response at that level.

The job for each examiner is to identify positively what has been achieved and then match the candidate's level of proficiency to the appropriate level of competence.

### Writing: the marking process

**Two** discrete assessments have to be made.

The first assessment will be used to gauge the candidate's performance in the first two of the Assessment Objectives for Writing (i) and (ii). The second assessment is measured against the final Assessment Objective for Writing (iii).

The first stage in the assessment of an individual task begins with the examiner highlighting what is creditworthy by:

- underlining and ticking valid points and relevant material;
- writing positive, brief, marginal comments – taken from the Competence Level descriptors.

Additionally, the examiner will highlight:

- errors in spelling, syntax, punctuation and paragraphing – each error only to be circled/noted once.

At the conclusion of the response, the examiner will then select and write down two/three phrases from each of the two sets of Competence Level descriptors Writing (i) and (ii)/ Writing (iii). These will be selected in order to summarise the candidate's achievement.

The process of selecting and noting these comments has the effect of helping the marker to assess which Competence Level best matches the candidate's achievement.

Once selected, the extent to which a candidate has met the requirements of that particular Competence Level will determine the point that has been reached within it.

The final element of the process is then to write down the mark to be awarded.

The required style of marking will be evident from the pre-marked exemplar scripts that will be distributed to all examiners at every standardising meeting. These will have been marked and annotated by the senior examining team prior to each standardising meeting.

## **Studying Written Language (Reading): the marking process**

The first stage in the assessment of an individual response begins with the examiner highlighting what, within an answer, is creditworthy by:

- underlining and ticking valid points and relevant material;
- writing positive, brief, marginal comments – taken from the descriptors for the Competence Levels.

At the conclusion of the response, the examiner is required to select and write down the two/three phrases from the Competence Level descriptors that best summarise the candidate's achievement.

The process of selecting and noting these comments has the effect of assisting the marker to assess which level best matches the candidate's achievement.

Once selected, the extent to which a candidate has met the requirements of that particular Competence Level will determine the point that has been reached within the mark range for that level – top, middle or bottom.

The final element of the process is then to write down the mark to be awarded.

The required style of marking will be evident from the pre-marked exemplar scripts that will be distributed to all examiners at every standardising meeting. These will have been marked and annotated by the senior examining team prior to each standardising meeting.

These procedures, which have been summarised above, are described in detail overleaf.

## Section A: Functional Writing

### The Assessment Objectives for Writing

- (i) Write to communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, using and adapting forms and selecting vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose in ways that engage the reader.
- (ii) Organise information and ideas into structured and sequenced sentences, paragraphs and whole texts, using a variety of linguistic and structural features to support cohesion and coherence.
- (iii) Use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling.

All are being assessed.

The Assistant Examiner will be required to make **two** distinct assessments: one for **Writing (i)** and **(ii)** and a second assessment for **Writing (iii)**.

### The two required assessments

1. The following method of marking is to be used:
  - each response will be assessed on the basis of **a single reading**
  - use brief affirmative comments in the margins to highlight positive achievement, for example – *“Simple dev.”*, *“Broad sense purpose”* or *“Incr. fluent”*
  - use underlining and ticking to point out creditworthy material
  - circle individual spelling errors – circle the same error only once
  - use continuous wavy underlining to highlight failings in grammar and syntax
  - one-off errors in punctuation should be noted by writing **“p”** in the margin
  - consistent omissions or errors in punctuation should be signalled by writing **“p”** in the margin, using arrows to highlight the extent of the problem
  - failings in paragraphing should be flagged up by writing **“para”** in the margin.
2. At the end of the response, using the descriptors from the Competence Levels for **Writing (i)** and **(ii)** as sources, summarise briefly (in two/three phrases) the most significant, positive features of the response. Only use snippets from these descriptors for these summaries. This process of summarising achievement is very important because in making this judgement it becomes clear as to where exactly the answer sits within the Competence Levels.
3. Write down the Competence Level from **Writing (i)** and **(ii)** that best encapsulates the overall achievement.

4. Finally, decide upon a mark by assessing the extent to which a candidate has met all of the requirements of the particular Competence Level. This will determine the point that has been reached within each – at the top, in the middle or at the lower end of the mark range. Write this mark down.

For example, a response that is judged to be mainly CL 3 in terms of development and sense of audience but is more CL 2 in relation to style, could be summarised as follows:

**(i) and (ii)**  
**Uncomp. dev.**  
**Broad sense purp. CL3 10**  
**Elem. style**

5. In order to assess **Writing (iii)**, the same process (steps 2–4 above) is used to make the second assessment using only the Competence Levels that relate to **Writing (iii)**.

For example, for a response that is judged to be mainly CL 3 in terms of sentence structuring and punctuation but is more CL 2 in relation to spelling, the following would offer an adequate summary:

**(iii)**  
**Controlled sf sentences**  
**Gen secure bas. punct. CL3 5**  
**Basic voc.sp.acc.**

### Task 1 Functional Writing

Response time: 45 minutes.

Max. 16 marks

“Designer clothes – are they worth the price tag?” This question raises the issue of the value of designer clothing. Write an article for a teenage magazine in which you attempt to persuade the readers to share your point of view on the value of fashionable clothes.

**How Writing (i) and (ii) feed through to marks:** use the task specific checklist to ascertain the extent to which a candidate has crafted language in order to **write to communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively; use and adapt forms and select vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose in ways that engage the reader; organise information and ideas into structured and sequenced sentences, paragraphs and whole texts; use a variety of linguistic and structural features to support cohesion and overall coherence.**

The response is then assessed against the five Competence Levels (drawn from grade descriptors) in order to award a mark that matches the level of performance.

**This task specific checklist outlines the skills associated with Writing (i) and (ii) that candidates at all Competence Levels may be expected to attempt to employ in their responses. Credit any other valid strategies used that are not mentioned below.**

**Communicate clearly and effectively and imaginatively, demonstrating:**

- a handling of the topic in such a way as to attempt to positively develop the reader’s interest
- use of a style that endeavours to build a positive relationship with the target audience
- possible use of anecdotes/humour to engage the audience

**Adapting form and vocabulary to task and purpose in ways that engage the reader, demonstrating:**

- an awareness of the readership of a teen magazine as the specified audience
- a use of tone that is meant to engage and sustain the audience’s attention
- use of straightforward vocabulary that is in keeping with the task and audience and that, occasionally, may enliven the writing

**Organise information and ideas into structured, sequenced sentences, paragraphs and whole texts demonstrating:**

- a sense of progression – the reader being led through the writer’s views and opinions
- the use of suitable opening and closing paragraphs
- some use of topic/link sentences for different paragraphs
- development that uses organisation in an attempt to hold the audience’s interest

**Use a variety of linguistic and structural features for cohesion and coherence demonstrating:**

- some variety of sentences for effect
- occasional use of connectives to give coherence
- some use of rhetorical devices such as questions, rule of three and hyperbole to attempt to create interest and connect with the audience

**Competence Level 0 [0]**

*Characterised by:*

- no creditworthy response

**Competence Level 1 [1–4]**

*Characterised by:*

- some general sense of development of the candidate’s views on designer clothes
- some general sense of purpose and audience
- some attempt at simple structuring using a rudimentary style

**Competence Level 2 [5–8]**

*Characterised by:*

- a simple development, that presents views in an elementary manner
- a broad sense of purpose and/or audience that may be sustained
- a basic structure and an elementary style

**Competence Level 3 [9–12]**

*Characterised by:*

- a straightforward, deliberate development
- an overall sense of purpose and audience
- a logical structure and a straightforward style

**Competence Level 4 [13–16]**

*Characterised by:*

- a generally effective development that maintains interest
- a recognition of purpose and audience
- a clear structure underpinned by an increasingly fluent style

**How Writing (iii) feeds through to marks:** use the task specific checklist to ascertain the extent to which a candidate has crafted language in order to **use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect**; **use accurate punctuation and spelling**. The response is then assessed against the five Competence Levels (drawn from grade descriptors) in order to determine a mark that matches the level of performance.

**This task specific checklist outlines the skills associated with Writing (iii) that candidates at all Competence Levels may be expected to attempt to employ in their responses. Credit any other valid strategies used that are not mentioned below.**

**The range and effectiveness of sentence structuring:**

- The wider the range and degree of originality and control the more opportunity the candidate gives him/herself to attempt to sustain the reader's interest
- More control of sentences and variety in their structuring demonstrates a higher level of competence and is to be rewarded accordingly

**The use made of accurate punctuation and spelling:**

- Linked to the control of sentence structure is the control of a variety of appropriate punctuation. Here, too, competent usage can help to maintain the reader's interest. The greater the control and variation, the higher will be the reward
- Accuracy in spelling, in isolation, can be misleading; it needs to be viewed beside the range and precision of the vocabulary used. A limited vocabulary spelt accurately is unlikely to capture the reader's attention.
- Examiners should credit ambitious use of vocabulary, where the word may not always be accurately spelt but has been chosen with care

**Competence Level 0 [0]**

*Characterised by:*

- no creditworthy response

**Competence Level 1 [1–2]**

*Characterised by:*

- some sense of sentence structuring
- occasional use of full stops and commas
- some accuracy in the spelling of simple words
- the range of vocabulary is narrow

**Competence Level 2 [3–4]**

*Characterised by:*

- a use of basic sentence structuring – simple connectives used to link ideas;
- generally correct use of full stops and the use of some other forms of punctuation
- usually accurate spelling of basic words
- a limited vocabulary

**Competence Level 3 [5–6]**

*Characterised by:*

- a controlled use of straightforward sentence structuring – some variety in sentence construction and length
- a generally secure use of basic punctuation to support sentence structure
- generally accurate spelling of straightforward, regular words
- some conscious use of vocabulary, e.g. a particular word for effect

**Competence Level 4 [7–8]**

*Characterised by:*

- increasingly sustained competence in the handling of a variety of sentence structures – occasionally these may be used for effect
- the basics of punctuation – full stops, commas, exclamation and question marks – used accurately
- generally accurate spelling including some words with irregular patterns
- a greater precision in the use of a widening vocabulary

## Section B: Written Language (Reading)

### The Assessment Objectives

- (i) Read and understand texts, selecting material appropriate to purpose, collating from different sources and making comparisons and cross-references as appropriate.
- (ii) Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives.
- (iii) Explain and evaluate how writers use linguistic, grammatical structural and presentational features to achieve effects and engage and influence the reader.

### The specific elements of the Assessment Objectives addressed by Task 2:

- Task 2**
- (i) selecting material appropriate to purpose
  - (ii) develop and sustain interpretations
  - (iii) explaining and evaluating how a writer uses linguistic, grammatical and structural devices to achieve effects

### The required process of assessment

1. The following style of marking and annotation is to be used:
  - each response will be assessed on the basis of **a single reading**
  - in the margins insert brief affirmative comments drawn from the Competence Level descriptors to highlight positive achievement, for example – *“reports”, “s/f consid.” or “comp. interpret.”*
  - use underlining and ticking to point out creditworthy material and highlight significant strengths in a response
  - ignore all errors in punctuation, syntax and spelling as they are not being assessed
2. At the end of the response, using the descriptors from the Competence Levels as a source, summarise briefly (in two/three phrases) the most significant, positive features of the response. Only use snippets from these descriptors for this summary.
3. On the principle of “best fit” select and write down the Competence Level that best encapsulates the overall achievement of the response.
4. The final stage in the process is to decide upon a mark by assessing the extent to which a candidate has met all of the requirements of that particular level. This will determine the point that has been reached within it – at the top, in the middle or at the lower end of the mark range. Write down this mark.

For example, a response to Task 2 that is CL 2 could be summarised as follows:

**Simple interp.**                      **CL2**   **9**  
**Some basic anal.**



This article attempts to persuade the reader that cutting back on the schools' building programme is a mistake. **Explain** how the writer has presented her ideas. In your response discuss how the writer has made use of real-life examples and opinions to encourage the reader to think about the government's decision/used particular words and phrases to highlight the problems facing schools/used an effective opening and strong conclusion.

**How the AOs feed through to marks:** use the task specific checklist to ascertain the extent to which a candidate has **selected and evaluated** evidence to **explain how linguistic and structural features achieve effects and engage and influence the reader**. The overall performance is then assessed against the five Competence Levels (drawn from grade descriptors) in order to determine a mark that reflects the candidate's achievement.

**This task specific checklist of evidence outlines the material that candidates at all Competence Levels may be expected to include in their responses. Credit fully any other valid suggestions/ comments.**

**Real-life examples and opinions to encourage the reader to think:**

- the real-life situations are intended to highlight the plight of some of the schools caught up in the government decision to axe the school building scheme and develop the reader's sympathy for these schools
- the writer emphasises what Leytonstone School was expecting to highlight the disappointment for teachers and pupils: "looking forward to a £15m refurbishment"/"rotting windows replaced"/"the creation of a new performing arts centre"
- the fact that the decision was unexpected and the news came through "one week before the builders were due to move in" and "with the children's books and equipment packed in boxes" is intended to shock the reader
- the emotive details of the situation in the school for children with special needs where the pupils "have to hold buckets when it rains because the roof leaks so badly" – to encourage a sense of outrage at the government's cruelty towards vulnerable children
- the writer pinpoints the health and safety issues in East Bridgwater Community School in a way intended to impact the reader: "to make it safe will cost £2.8m"/"the sports hall has recently been condemned"/"Last month a lad did a flip in the sports hall, slipped on the water and broke his arm"

**Particular words and phrases to highlight the problems:**

- the emotive headline – "We've been left to rot!" – sends an emphatic message that the government doesn't care
- negative words "wrong" and "scrap" in the sub-heading reinforce the idea that the government has made a mistake
- the use of bold: "one of **three** schools" – to highlight how one area has been hit particularly badly by the cutbacks
- negative language describing the physical condition of some schools is intended to create a sense of outrage at the government's decision: "disgusting"/ "over-crowded"/ "rusting shipping containers"/ "ceiling tiles fall down when it rains"
- the use of quotations from the two head teachers reinforces the negative effects of the cuts and the disappointment for all concerned: "I felt hugely disappointed and let down"/"Our main block has walling which is so rotten that you can put your finger through it"
- the fact that "many local councils are challenging" the education secretary's decision and the claim that "they have lost millions of pounds because of the late cancellation of schemes" enhance the impression that government policy is wrong

### Effective opening and strong conclusion:

- the opening of the piece focuses on a pupil as an effective device to highlight the school's predicament – the reader is brought directly into her “English class at her northeast London school” where she “felt a drip, drip of water on her nose”
- details such as her name, age and the use of her own words help the reader to empathise with her situation: “the roof of our school was leaking...I had to get up and move seats so I wouldn't get too wet”
- the penultimate paragraph contains a quote from the head teacher of one of the schools affected which highlights two positive benefits: “plenty of research shows that children achieve more and behave better in modern, properly equipped buildings”
- the writer uses direct appeal and inclusive language such as “we” and “our” in her concluding paragraph to make her final plea to “invest in the future of our schoolchildren” even more compelling
- she finishes strongly with a blunt warning that if this doesn't happen, the message to them is: “We don't think you're important; we don't value you.”

### Competence Level 0 [0]

- no creditworthy response

### Competence Level 1 [1–6]

*Characterised by:*

- **rudimentary comments** in relation to a few of the features in the bullet points
- **reporting/description** from the text
- a **partial interpretation** of the text

### Competence Level 2 [7–12]

*Characterised by*

- a **very straightforward consideration** of some obvious features highlighted in the bullet points
- **some basic comments** that **may be supported by appropriate evidence**
- **some development of valid, if simple, interpretations**

### Competence Level 3 [13–18]

*Characterised by:*

- a **consideration** of the features highlighted in the bullet points in relation to the desired outcome – holding the reader's interest
- **straightforward analysis** that will be supported by **uncomplicated explanations**
- **some appropriately developed interpretations** backed up by **mainly straightforward supporting evidence**

### Competence Level 4 [19–24]

*Characterised by:*

- an **attempt to analyse** the features highlighted in the bullet points
- an **examination** that **will be supported by appropriate explanations**
- the development of a **competent interpretation** of some aspects of the stimulus material through the presentation of a range of **appropriate supporting evidence**