



Rewarding Learning

**General Certificate of Secondary Education
January 2017**

English Language/English

**Unit 2: Functional Writing and
Reading Non-Fiction**

Foundation Tier

[GEG21]

FRIDAY 13 JANUARY, MORNING

**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 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 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 in each case.

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

- (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 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 style of marking and annotation 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 – *“Simp dev”*; *“Broad sense p”* or *“Inc flu”*
 - 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 the descriptors for these summaries. This process of summarising achievement is very important because in making this assessment it becomes clear as to where exactly the response 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)	
S/f del dev	
Grasp p + a	CL3 10
Bas struct	

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

For example, 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)	
Contr s/f ss	
Gen secure bas punct	CL3 5
Use acc sp bas words	

Task 1: Functional Writing

Response time: 45 minutes.

Max. 16 marks

Write an article for your school magazine in which you put forward **your own thoughts and views** on the following topic: “Teenagers should have a part-time job.”

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, effectively and imaginatively, demonstrating:

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

Adapt form and vocabulary to task and purpose in ways that engage the audience, demonstrating:

- an awareness of a school magazine readership as audience
- a use of tone that is meant to engage and sustain the audience's attention
- use of vocabulary that is in keeping with the task and audience and that, occasionally, may enliven the article

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

- a sense of progression – the audience being led through the writer's views and opinions
- the use of a suitable introduction and conclusion
- 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 to support cohesion and overall coherence demonstrating:

- some variety of sentences for effect
- occasional use of connectives to give coherence
- the use of some rhetorical devices, such as questions, exclamatory sentences, rule of three, 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/brief development of the candidate's
- some sense of purpose and/or audience
- some attempt at structuring using a rudimentary style

Competence Level 2 [5–8]

Characterised by:

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

Competence Level 3 [9–12]

Characterised by:

- straightforward, deliberate development on task
- general grasp of purpose and audience
- logical structuring and an uncomplicated style

Competence Level 4 [13–16]

Characterised by:

- generally effective development that maintains the audience's interest
- recognition of purpose and audience
- 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 greater the degree of originality and control in sentence structuring, the more opportunity the candidate gives him/herself to attempt to sustain the audience's interest.
- More control of sentences and variety in their structuring demonstrates a higher level of competence and will 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 audience'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 audience's attention.
- 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:

- rudimentary sentence structuring
- very occasional use of full stops and/or commas
- some accuracy in the spelling of simple words
- limited vocabulary

Competence Level 2 [3–4]

Characterised by:

- use of basic sentence structuring – simple connectives used to link ideas; verbs often repeated
- some appropriate use of full stops and other forms of basic punctuation
- usually accurate spelling of basic words
- narrow range of vocabulary

Competence Level 3 [5–6]

Characterised by:

- controlled use of straightforward sentence structuring with some variety in sentence construction and length
- generally secure use of basic punctuation
- 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
- accurate use of basic punctuation, such as full stops, commas, exclamation and question marks
- generally accurate spelling including some words with irregular patterns
- greater precision in the use of a widening vocabulary

Section B: Studying 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:

- (i) Read and understand texts, selecting material appropriate to purpose
- (ii) Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives
- (iii) Explain and evaluate 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 – “*reporting*”, “*s/f rev*” or “*comp interp*”
 - use underlining and ticking to point out creditworthy material and to 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 the 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 this mark down.

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

Simp consid		
Some underst	CL2	10
Some bas com		

This article puts forward a parent's strong views about school sports days. **Explain** how the writer has presented her point of view. Discuss how she has: expressed her feelings strongly/used particular words and phrases to highlight her views/used different types of sentences to add impact.

How Reading (i), (ii) and (iii) 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 matches the candidate's achievement.

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

Expressed her strong feelings:

- the title immediately makes her opinion on the subject clear: "School Sports Day – Annual Torture!"
- the writer uses negative language throughout – she only describes misery
- the use of ellipsis in the opening sentence helps to create a dramatic short pause before the reveal that follows: "It's that time of year again ..."
- at the conclusion of the first paragraph the writer reveals that it's not just children who dread school sports days, it's parents too. The exclamation mark reinforces this: "and for plenty of parents it's an annual torture!"
- humorous imagery is used to add informality and liveliness to the piece: "to watch small children ... whilst tied together at the ankles"/"battling mothers racing ... sharp elbows jutting out."
- a mix of personal anecdotes and honesty about her past adds to the humour and builds rapport with the reader: "the nickname "Greased Lightning" thanks to a rather too cautious approach"/"certain humiliation that my woeful running"
- the use of a self-mocking tone helps generate reader sympathy: "as a shy teenager, sports day continued to make me wince"/"has there ever been a teenage girl ... I don't think so!"
- the anecdote about deliberately appearing in inappropriate clothing to avoid participation in her child's sports day – "wearing all the wrong gear" – emphasises her sense of inadequacy as well as creating humour
- the article ends on a positive, inclusive note: "we find a way of letting... who are really not very athletic"

Used particular words and phrases to highlight her views:

- the headline uses emotive language: "Annual Torture!" along with an exclamation mark, to signal her strong feelings. The word "torture" is repeated at the end of the first paragraph for added emphasis
- emotive language is used throughout the article to reinforce her point of view: "dread"/"rubbish"/"wince"/"cringing"
- the writer engages the reader with her honesty: "I was just rubbish"/"To be honest"
- a rule of three is used to help to create a familiar picture of sports day in the mind of the reader: "running, jumping and hopping"
- sensory language is also used to help the reader to develop an accurate picture of the day: "Shrill whistle"/"being cold and soaked through"
- the self-importance of teachers is humorously mocked: "strutting around with clipboards"
- negative phrases help to highlight her sense of personal shortcomings and dread when it comes to sports day: "The very words strike fear into my heart"/"certain humiliation"/"woeful running"
- vivid language is used to express her sense of awkwardness: "wince"/"utter embarrassment"
- the noun "let-down" humorously describes how even the weather conspires to add to the misery of the whole event
- humorous exaggeration emphasises how hostile and striving the competitive mothers become in their own race: "battling ... sharp elbows jutting out"
- the writer personalises the ending of her article by directly addressing her readers: "I hope I'm fair-minded"/"My plea"

Used different types of sentences to add impact:

- the second paragraph consists of a question (a one sentence paragraph) in order to help develop a rapport with the reader and logically progress the article: “So why ... something I dread?”
- direct speech is used to emphasise her embarrassment: “Tracey, you’ll ... the shot-put”
- short sentences are used to show her feelings forcibly and clearly: “As a kid, I hated sports day. I was just rubbish at everything.”/“More cringing embarrassment.”/“I don’t think so!”
- questioning is used, as is a question and answer strategy, to put forward her opinion and build her rapport with the audience: “Without such opportunities ... ever been a girl ... shot-put? I don’t think so!”/“Michael McKillop?”
- the writer uses an incomplete sentence for direct appeal and conversational tone: “More cringing embarrassment.”
- dashes are used to emphasise negative feelings in a conversational style: “still makes me shudder – even now”/“soaked through – the weather is usually a let-down as well”/“even if I had wanted to – which of course I didn’t”
- the article concludes with a one sentence paragraph which offers her personal solution to the ‘torture’ of sports days: “My plea ... like me!”

Competence Level 0 [0]

Characterised by:

- no creditworthy response

Competence Level 1 [1–6]

Characterised by:

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

Competence Level 2 [7–12]

Characterised by:

- **simple consideration** of some of the features highlighted in the bullet points
- **some understanding** of the more obvious features
- **some basic comments** that **may be supported by references to the text**

Competence Level 3 [13–18]

Characterised by:

- a **consideration** of the features highlighted in the bullet points
- **straightforward review** of the features 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** of the features that **will be supported by appropriate explanations**
- **development of a competent interpretation** of the stimulus material through the presentation of a **range of appropriate supporting evidence**