

Cambridge English

Assessing Writing Performance – Level B1

Writing assessment by examiners in the Cambridge English: Preliminary (PET), Preliminary (PET) for Schools and Business Preliminary exams (BEC)

Cambridge English writing scripts are marked by trained examiners in a secure online marking environment. The quality assurance of Writing Examiners (WEs) is managed by Team Leaders (TLs) who are in turn responsible to a Principal Examiner (PE). All of the examiners (PEs, TLs and WEs) must prove each year, through a certification process, that they are competent to assess. In addition, they are regularly monitored during live testing sessions.

The Writing Examiners award marks using a Writing Assessment Scale which was developed with explicit reference to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). It covers all the levels of the Cambridge English exams and is divided into four subscales:

- **Content**
This focuses on how well the candidate has fulfilled the task, in other words, if they have done what they were asked to do.
- **Communicative Achievement**
This focuses on how appropriate the writing is for the task, and whether the candidate has used the appropriate register.
- **Organisation**
This focuses on the way the candidate puts together the piece of writing, in other words, if it is logical and ordered.
- **Language**
This focuses on vocabulary and grammar. It includes the range of language as well as how accurate it is.

Examiners use the B1 Level Assessment Scales to decide which marks to give candidates taking the Preliminary, Preliminary for Schools and Business Preliminary Writing test.

How can I use the Assessment Scales?

Using the scales yourself while marking students' writing will help you to:

- analyse your students' strengths and weaknesses when they practise B1 writing tasks
- form an impression of how ready your students are to take the writing part of the exam.

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The Assessment Scales

The B1 Assessment Scales are divided into six bands from 0 to 5, with 0 being the lowest and 5 the highest. Descriptors for each criterion are provided for bands 1, 3 and 5 and indicate what a candidate is expected to demonstrate at each band. The descriptors for band 3 and above generally indicate performance of at least B1 level.

B1	CONTENT	COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT	ORGANISATION	LANGUAGE
5	All content is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward ideas.	Text is generally well-organised and coherent, using a variety of linking words and cohesive devices.	Uses a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately, with occasional inappropriate use of less common lexis. Uses a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control. Errors do not impede communication.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>			
3	Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is on the whole informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task in generally appropriate ways to communicate straightforward ideas.	Text is connected and coherent, using basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices.	Uses everyday vocabulary generally appropriately, while occasionally overusing certain lexis. Uses simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control. While errors are noticeable, meaning can still be determined.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>			
1	Irrelevances and misinterpretation of task may be present. Target reader is minimally informed.	Produces text that communicates simple ideas in simple ways.	Text is connected using basic, high-frequency linking words.	Uses basic vocabulary reasonably appropriately. Uses simple grammatical forms with some degree of control. Errors may impede meaning at times.
0	Content is totally irrelevant. Target reader is not informed.	<i>Performance below Band 1.</i>		

As you look through the scales, it may help to highlight words which make one band different from another.

For example, under the Language subscale, the descriptor at Band 1 (below B1 level) for grammar – *Uses **simple** grammatical forms with some degree of control* – is described in similar language to the Band 3 descriptor (B1 level), but with key differences. *Uses simple grammatical forms with a **good** degree of control*. So at B1 level, simple forms are expected, used with a good degree of control. At Band 5 (B2 level), a writer *Uses a range of simple **and some complex** grammatical forms with a good degree of control*.

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Don't worry if a lot of the terms used in the scales are new to you – in Appendix A (and also in the Handbooks for Teachers for each exam) you will find a Glossary of Terms for Writing, where the terminology used in the scales is explained, and examples are given. For example, under the Language subscale, there are examples of **simple** and **complex grammatical forms** and an explanation of what is meant by **grammatical control** and **range**. The Language subscale also includes vocabulary, and the difference between **basic** and **everyday vocabulary** and **less common lexis** is explained, as well as a description of **appropriacy** of vocabulary. Under the Organisation subscale, there are examples of **linking words** and **cohesive devices**, and an explanation of the difference between them.

It is well worth spending some time looking through the glossary of terms and becoming familiar with the terms used, as well as referring to them constantly when marking your students' work, as the Cambridge English examiners do.

How can I use the Assessment Scales with students?

You could:

1. Refer to the scales as you mark students' written work in general, especially when they have attempted a Preliminary or Business Preliminary writing task.
2. Note down examples of performance in terms of the listed criteria.
3. Give students feedback on their strengths and weaknesses.
4. Think about whether your students are ready for the exam and how they could improve.

As teachers are not trained in the use of these Assessment Scales, as examiners are, it can be difficult to feel confident in using them in the right way. The following activity is designed to help you get started by practising using them to analyse some sample writing tasks.

The activity is based on some sample scripts from Preliminary, Preliminary for Schools and Business Preliminary writing tasks:

Sample script 1: Preliminary for Schools Part 1

Sample script 2: Preliminary for Schools Part 3

Sample script 3: Preliminary Part 3 Question 8

Sample script 4: Preliminary for Schools Part 3

Sample script 5: Business Preliminary Part 2

The tasks for each of these scripts can be found in the Appendices, and further information on the task types and their focus can be found in the relevant Handbook for Teachers.



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Activity

- 1 Make a copy of the blank assessment sheet on pages 5/6. You will see that statements from the Assessment Scales have been turned into questions.
- 2 Read the *Preliminary for Schools Writing Part 1* task (see Appendix).
- 3 Read *Sample Script 1*. Note down your comments and examples of good and not so good elements of the candidate's writing for each of the questions in the boxes on the assessment sheet. Make sure that while you are doing this you constantly refer to the B1 Assessment Scales and Glossary of Terms.
- 4 Compare the notes you have made with the completed example on page 7/8.
- 5 Repeat stages 1 – 4 for each of the other sample scripts, as appropriate.
- 6 When you feel familiar with using the Assessment Scales, continue to use the blank assessment sheet when assessing your own students' writing and use this to give them feedback on what aspects of the scales they need to work on to improve.

Remember:

In a real B1 level exam the marks awarded reflect a candidate's performance across the whole exam and not just in one part of it.

Being able to refer to the Assessment Scales will help you to analyse your students' strengths and weaknesses and to estimate whether they are ready for the writing part of the exam. However, it won't necessarily give you an accurate prediction of the marks that your students will achieve in a real Writing paper, as the candidate may be affected by other factors such as nervousness.



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Blank assessment sheets to copy

Photocopy this page and the next one.

PRELIMINARY (FOR SCHOOLS)/ BUSINESS PRELIMINARY (LEVEL B1) WRITING CONTENT	
Name of student:	
Is all content relevant to the task? Good	Not so good
Is the target reader fully informed? Good	Not so good
Content Mark:	
COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT	
Does the writer use the conventions of the task in generally appropriate ways? Good	Not so good
Does the writer communicate straightforward ideas? Good	Not so good
Communicative Achievement Mark:	



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ORGANISATION	
Is the text connected and coherent? Good	Not so good
Does the writer use basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices? Good	Not so good
Organisation Mark:	
LANGUAGE	
Does the writer use everyday vocabulary generally appropriately? Good	Not so good
Does the writer use simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control? Good	Not so good
How far can meaning be determined despite errors? Non-impeding errors	Impeding errors
Language Mark:	
Comments	



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PRELIMINARY (FOR SCHOOLS)/ BUSINESS PRELIMINARY (LEVEL B1) WRITING CONTENT	
Name of student: Sample script 1 (<i>Preliminary for Schools Part 3 Question 7</i>)	
Is all content relevant to the task?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All content is relevant. 	Not so good
Is the target reader fully informed?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good The reader is fully informed about the friend as all 3 questions are answered: how they met, why the writer likes the friend and what they do together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not so good
Content Mark: 5	
COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT	
Does the writer use the conventions of the task in generally appropriate ways?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer uses letter writing conventions (including an appropriate opening and close) in generally appropriate ways. 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The letter ends somewhat abruptly with no reference to reader apart from closing formula.
Does the writer communicate straightforward ideas?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Straightforward ideas are communicated throughout. 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reader's attention is not held due to the frequent and noticeable errors, especially in the middle part of the letter.
Communicative Achievement Mark: 3	

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ORGANISATION	
<p>Is the text connected and coherent?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connected and coherent and paragraphing is attempted. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some incorrect use of commas and missing referencing pronoun (<i>I tell you about my friend Andrea, is very lovely boy, I met...</i>).
<p>Does the writer use basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a limited number of basic linking words (<i>and; because; but</i>) and cohesive devices (referencing pronouns, <i>we spoke about our lives; during the competition; The day after</i>). 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some overuse of pronouns (<i>We spend our journey toogheter; we do homework; we play computer and often we play soccer.</i>).
<p>Organisation Mark: 3</p>	
LANGUAGE	
<p>Does the writer use everyday vocabulary generally appropriately?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyday vocabulary is used generally appropriately. Some range of personality adjectives (<i>lovely; intelligent; brilliant; boring</i>). 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional inappropriate and confusing use of vocabulary (<i>journey; informatic</i>).
<p>Does the writer use simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present and simple past tenses are used with a good degree of control. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall errors are fairly frequent and some require effort of the reader to determine meaning.
<p>How far can meaning be determined despite errors?</p>	
<p>Non-impeding errors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some spelling errors (<i>soo; thinks; toogheter</i>). Sentence structure errors (<i>I tell you about; he told to me</i>). There is some lack of clarity in the middle of the letter (<i>he told to me that he wont come in my class for study better informatic; he like my same thinks</i>) but meaning can still be determined. 	<p>Impeding errors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> none
<p>Language Mark: 3</p>	
<p>Comments</p> <p>This is a benchmark B1 script, showing what a candidate should be able to achieve at this level. Content is fully addressed and the candidate shows ability to communicate straightforward ideas despite a number of errors. To progress to B2 level the candidate would need to develop a wider and more accurate range of vocabulary and grammar and to use a greater variety of linking words and cohesive devices.</p>	

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PRELIMINARY (FOR SCHOOLS)/ BUSINESS PRELIMINARY (LEVEL B1) WRITING CONTENT

Name of student: **Sample script 2 (Preliminary for Schools Part 3 Question 8)**

Is all content relevant to the task?

Good

- All content is relevant as the story is logically linked to the prompt sentence and arrives at an appropriate and natural conclusion.

Not so good

Is the target reader fully informed?

Good

- The reader is fully informed.

Not so good

Content Mark: 5

COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Does the writer use the conventions of the task in generally appropriate ways?

Good

- The conventions of storytelling are followed with a clear beginning, middle and end.
- Direct speech is used to good effect.

Not so good

Does the writer communicate straightforward ideas?

Good

- Straightforward ideas are successfully communicated.
- The reader's attention is held throughout.

Not so good

Communicative Achievement Mark: 5

ORGANISATION

Is the text connected and coherent?

Good

- Text is well-organised and coherent throughout.
- Punctuation is accurate (including direct speech).

Not so good

Does the writer use basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices?

Good

- Basic linking words are used (*but; and; so; Then*).
- Appropriate use is made of a variety of cohesive devices to connect ideas both within and between sentences (...*where I met mum; As I opened the Door...; I touched it; Then I heard...; It was only a joke*).

Not so good

Organisation Mark: 5



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LANGUAGE	
Does the writer use everyday vocabulary generally appropriately?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none">Appropriate use is made of a natural range of everyday and some less common vocabulary (<i>Amazed and a little bit worried; I got dressed; check; touched; flour; joke</i>).	Not so good
Does the writer use simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none">There is confident and controlled use of a range of simple and some complex forms (Past tense, <i>Amazed and a little bit worried; I got dressed; I heard someone laughing</i>).	Not so good
How far can meaning be determined despite errors?	
Non-impeding errors No errors are present.	Impeding errors
Language Mark: 5	
Comments A performance which has a very impressive effect on the reader: it addresses Content fully and meets the criteria for the B2 level in terms of Communicative Achievement, Organisation and Language.	

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PRELIMINARY (FOR SCHOOLS)/ BUSINESS PRELIMINARY (LEVEL B1) WRITING CONTENT

Name of student: Sample script 3 (*Preliminary Part 3 Question 8*)

Is all content relevant to the task?

Good

- The story links to the prompt sentence.
- Content is largely relevant.
- There is an appropriate ending.

Not so good

- The end of the first paragraph (*so I remember a history about a blod animal called "chuyacabras"*) is distracting as it interrupts the narrative development and its relevance does not become clear to the reader until the end of the long second paragraph.

Is the target reader fully informed?

Good

- Overall, the reader is able to follow the story.

Not so good

- The distracting section described above.

Content Mark: 4

COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Does the writer use the conventions of the task in generally appropriate ways?

Good

- Follows storytelling conventions with a beginning, middle and end.

Not so good

- The narrative development is inappropriately interrupted at the end of the second paragraph (see above).

Does the writer communicate straightforward ideas?

Good

- Straightforward ideas are generally communicated despite errors.

Not so good

- The reader's attention is not held due to the frequent errors and incorrect punctuation.

Communicative Achievement Mark: 3

ORGANISATION

Is the text connected and coherent?

Good

- Generally, the story is connected and coherent with appropriate paragraphing.

Not so good

- Punctuation lacks accuracy with overuse of commas (*I was very happy and exited because, I kill at the "cuyacabras"*) and some missing full stops (*... I can saw a figure flying between the buildings, I though must be...*). Direct speech is attempted but with incorrect use of dashes (*-you are crazy is impossible-*).

Does the writer use basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices?

Good

- Basic linking words are used (*because; but; so; then; but; when*).
- Uses a limited number of cohesive devices for referencing (*When I came to my home, Nobody belive me and my parents....; a person... the figure*).

Not so good

- Overuse of "and" (*...and I thought...and I shot him... and I was very happy and exited...*).

Organisation Mark: 3



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LANGUAGE	
<p>Does the writer use everyday vocabulary generally appropriately?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyday vocabulary is generally used appropriately and there is occasional use of less common lexis (<i>scared and nervous; the figure; I shot him the animal dead</i>). 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some incorrect use of everyday vocabulary (<i>the street it was <u>alone</u>; I remmember a <u>history</u>; my Parents <u>saw</u> – you are crazy is impossible-...</i>).
<p>Does the writer use simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past simple tense is used correctly at times (<i>was; started; thought, shot, came</i>). There is some correct use of participle structures (<i>see any person <u>walking</u>; about a blod animal <u>called</u>; saw a figure <u>flying</u></i>). 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall there is only some degree of control of past verb forms, especially with negative and modal expressions (see below). Intrusive pronouns (see below).
<p>How far can meaning be determined despite errors?</p>	
<p>Non-impeding errors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are some spelling mistakes (<i>blod; I though; gung; belive</i>) but meaning can be determined from context. There are frequent noticeable errors in past verb forms (incorrect forms - <i>didn't can see; only can saw</i> and incorrect use of present tense in past narrative – <i>I use my gung, I kill, Nobody belive me</i>). Some use of intrusive pronouns (<i>the street <u>it</u> was alone; I shot <u>him</u> the animal dead</i>). 	<p>Impeding errors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The frequency of errors demands some effort on the part of the reader. The combination of wrong word and incorrect punctuation in <i>my Parents saw-you are crazy is impossible – but it was real</i> demands considerable effort of the reader.
<p>Language Mark: 2</p>	
<p>Comments</p> <p>An example of a candidate who very minimally satisfies the criteria for B1 level overall. Content is almost all relevant and Communicative Achievement and Organisation are at B1 level but Language is slightly below it. This candidate will need to improve control of grammatical structures and punctuation in order to be secure at the level.</p>	

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PRELIMINARY (FOR SCHOOLS)/ BUSINESS PRELIMINARY (LEVEL B1) WRITING CONTENT

Name of student: **Sample script 4 (Preliminary for Schools Part 3 Question 7)**

Is all content relevant to the task?

Good

- All content is relevant.

Not so good

Is the target reader fully informed?

Good

- The reader is fully informed about the friend as all 3 questions are answered: how they met, why the writer likes friend and what they do together.

Not so good

Content Mark: 5

COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Does the writer use the conventions of the task in generally appropriate ways?

Good

- The writer uses letter writing conventions (including an appropriate opening and close) in generally appropriate ways.
- The writer makes appropriate reference to the target reader at the beginning and end of the letter.

Not so good

Does the writer communicate straightforward ideas?

Good

- Straightforward ideas are communicated.
- Overall the reader's attention is held.

Not so good

- The reader's attention is not held consistently due to errors in language and punctuation.

Communicative Achievement Mark: 4



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ORGANISATION	
Is the text connected and coherent?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The letter is generally well-organised and coherent with appropriate paragraphing. 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer misses the opportunity to use reference pronouns to avoid the repetition of <i>friend/friends</i> in the first paragraph. Occasional use of commas for full stops (<i>Thank you so much for your letter about one of your friend, He looks a good friend, now I want to tell you about...</i>).
Does the writer use basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A limited number of basic linking words are used (<i>because; and; but</i>). There is a slightly wider range of cohesive devices (<i>now; naturally; by the way</i> and some reference pronouns). 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More variety of linking words could improve coherence.
Organisation Mark: 4	
LANGUAGE	
Does the writer use everyday vocabulary generally appropriately?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of everyday vocabulary is used that is appropriate to the topic (<i>third year of secondary school; computer games; go out together</i>). 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is some repetition (<i>friend/friends; go out; together</i>).
Does the writer use simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence of more complex forms (<i>He likes computer games Just like me; now I must finish because I have to go out with...; I hope you find my friend very interesting</i>). There is a good degree of control with some non-impeding errors. Spelling is accurate. 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures are mainly simple (e.g. verbs are mostly limited to the simple present tense).
How far can meaning be determined despite errors?	
Non-impeding errors There are some minor errors, especially in the first paragraph (<i>one of my friend; He's name is; I was meet him, I like him because is funny</i>).	Impeding errors None
Language Mark: 4	
Comments A very secure B1 performance that fully informs the reader and communicates straightforward ideas through generally good organisation and a mostly accurate range of vocabulary and grammatical forms. In order to progress to B2 level candidate needs to develop a wider range of language and to show evidence of a greater variety of linking words and cohesive devices.	

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PRELIMINARY (FOR SCHOOLS)/ BUSINESS PRELIMINARY (LEVEL B1) WRITING CONTENT

Name of student: *Sample script 5 (Business Preliminary Part 2)*

Is all content relevant to the task?

Good

- All 4 content points are attempted.
- Content is mostly relevant.

Not so good

- There is some irrelevant information in the second paragraph regarding the second point (date of meeting – *I assume that I will be attending, as it will be more convenient for me to attend this meeting on Tuesday*).

Is the target reader fully informed?

Good

- The reader is on the whole informed.

Not so good

- The fourth content point (why the company has been successful) is attempted but not clearly explained (*It has a rapid growth in a short period of time. It well supports the local business*).

Content Mark: 3

COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Does the writer use the conventions of the task in generally appropriate ways?

Good

- The writer uses the conventions of a business letter and generally follows the appropriate features of the letter format.

Not so good

- There is some inconsistency in register as the writer uses some informal language in a letter whose tone is fairly formal overall (*Thanks a lot, I got a opportunity*) and occasionally the language is inappropriately flowery (*No words to express my gladness*).

Does the writer communicate straightforward ideas?

Good

- Straightforward ideas are communicated and the reader's attention is mostly held.

Not so good

- The reader's attention is not always held due to occasional lapses in register and errors.

Communicative Achievement Mark: 4

ORGANISATION

Is the text connected and coherent?

Good

- The letter is connected and coherent overall and there is paragraphing.
- Punctuation is generally accurate despite a few missing full stops.

Not so good

- Content points 3 (writer's role in the company) and 4 (reasons for company's success) could be clearer to the reader if addressed in separate paragraphs.
- The irrelevant information in the second paragraph has a slightly negative effect on coherence.



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<p>Does the writer use basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A limited number of linking words are used (<i>when; and; then; while</i>). Cohesive devices (<i>as it will be; this meeting; it has</i>) are used to organise ideas within and between sentences. 	<p>Not so good</p>
<p>Organisation Mark: 3</p>	
<p>LANGUAGE</p>	
<p>Does the writer use everyday vocabulary generally appropriately?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyday vocabulary appropriate to the task is used. There is some less common lexis (<i>leading organiser; rapid growth; supports the local business</i>). 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary is not always correctly used (<i>created many official friends; no word to express my gladness</i>).
<p>Does the writer use simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall simple grammatical forms are used with a good degree of control. Occasionally more complex forms are attempted (<i>I will be attending</i>). Spelling is accurate. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a number of noticeable tense errors (simple past and present perfect) see below. Errors are non-impeding but are fairly frequent and some require effort on the part of the reader.
<p>How far can meaning be determined despite errors?</p>	
<p>Non-impeding errors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past tense (<i>I was so glad when I <u>receive</u> your invitation</i>). Present perfect (<i>I <u>am</u> the leading organiser in the company for the last 1 year; its now created</i>). Word order (<i>It well supports the local business</i>). 	<p>Impeding errors</p> <p>None</p>
<p>Language Mark: 3</p>	
<p>Comments</p> <p>Overall this letter meets the requirements of a B1 performance; had the content element been addressed more clearly and been consistently relevant, the candidate's performance would have been secure at the level. NB in the Business English exam, everyday vocabulary includes business language as appropriate to the topic.</p>	

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Appendices

A. Cambridge English Writing mark scheme – Glossary of Terms

1. GENERAL

Generally **Generally** is a qualifier meaning not in every way or instance. Thus, ‘generally appropriately’ refers to performance that is not as good as ‘appropriately’.

2. CONTENT

Relevant **Relevant** means related or relatable to required content points and/or task requirements.

Target reader The **target reader** is the hypothetical reader set up in the task, e.g. a magazine’s readership, your English teacher.

Informed The target reader is **informed** if content points and/or task requirements are addressed and appropriately developed. Some content points do not require much development (e.g. “state what is x”) while others require it (“describe”, “explain”).

3. COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Conventions of the communicative task **Conventions of the communicative task** include such things as genre, format, register, and function. For example, a personal letter should not be written as a formal report, should be laid out accordingly, and use the right tone for the communicative purpose.

Holding the target reader’s attention **Holding the target reader’s attention** is used in the positive sense and refers to the quality of a text that allows a reader to derive meaning and not be distracted. It does not refer to texts that force a reader to read closely because they are difficult to follow or make sense of.

Communicative purpose **Communicative purpose** refers to the communicative requirements as set out in the task, e.g. make a complaint, and suggest alternatives.

Straightforward, complex and simple ideas **Straightforward ideas** are those which relate to relatively limited subject matter, usually concrete in nature, and which require simpler rhetorical devices to communicate. **Complex ideas** are those which are of a more abstract nature, or which cover a wider subject area, requiring more rhetorical resources to bring together and express. **Simple ideas** typically require only one or a few words to communicate (e.g. “I like pop music”, “Let’s go next week”).

4. ORGANISATION

Linking words and cohesive devices **Linking words** are cohesive devices, but are separated here to refer to higher-frequency vocabulary which provides explicit linkage. They can range from basic high frequency items (such as “and”, “but”) to basic and phrasal items (such as “because”, “first of all”, “finally”).

Cohesive devices refers to more sophisticated linking words and phrases (e.g. “moreover”, “it may appear”, “as a result”), as well as grammatical devices such as the use of reference pronouns, substitution (e.g. There are two women in the picture. The one on the right . . .), ellipsis (e.g. The first car he owned was a convertible, the second a family car.), or repetition.

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5. LANGUAGE

Vocabulary	<p>Basic vocabulary refers to vocabulary used for survival purposes, for simple transactions, and the like.</p> <p>Everyday vocabulary refers to vocabulary that comes up in common situations of a non-technical nature in the relevant domain.</p> <p>Less common lexis refers to vocabulary items that appear less often in the relevant domain. These items often help to express ideas more succinctly and precisely.</p>
Appropriacy of vocabulary	<p>Appropriacy of vocabulary: the use of words and phrases that fit the context of the given task. For example, in I'm very sensible to noise, the word sensible is inappropriate as the word should be sensitive. Another example would be Today's big snow makes getting around the city difficult. The phrase getting around is well suited to this situation. However, big snow is inappropriate as big and snow are not used together. Heavy snow would be appropriate.</p>
Grammatical forms	<p>Simple grammatical forms: words, phrases, basic tenses and simple clauses.</p> <p>Complex grammatical forms: longer and more complex items, e.g. noun clauses, relative and adverb clauses, subordination, passive forms, infinitives, verb patterns, modal forms and tense contrasts.</p>
Grammatical control	<p>Grammatical control: the ability to consistently use grammar accurately and appropriately to convey intended meaning.</p> <p>Where language specifications are provided at lower levels (as in Cambridge English: Key (KET) and Cambridge English: Preliminary (PET)), candidates may have control of only the simplest exponents of the listed forms.</p>
Range	<p>Range: the variety of words and grammatical forms a candidate uses. At higher levels, candidates will make increasing use of a greater variety of words, fixed phrases, collocations and grammatical forms.</p>
Overuse	<p>Overuse refers to those cases where candidates repeatedly use the same word because they do not have the resources to use another term or phrase the same idea in another way. Some words may unavoidably appear often as a result of being the topic of the task; that is not covered by the term overuse here.</p>
Errors and slips	<p>Errors are systematic mistakes. Slips are mistakes that are non-systematic, i.e. the candidate has learned the vocabulary item or grammatical structure, but just happened to make a mistake in this instance. In a candidate's response, where most other examples of a lexical/grammatical point are accurate, a mistake on that point would most likely be a slip.</p>
Impede communication	<p>Impede communication means getting in the way of meaning.</p> <p>Meaning can still be determined indicates that some effort is required from the reader to determine meaning.</p>

Cambridge English

B. Sample writing tasks

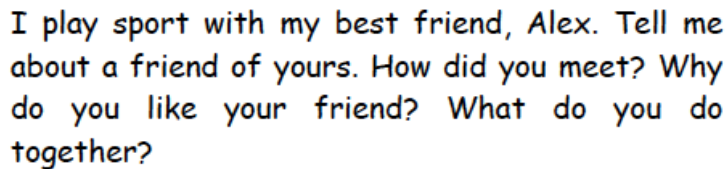
Preliminary for Schools

Writing • Part 1

Write an answer to **one** of the questions (**7** or **8**) in this part.
Write your answer in about **100 words** on your answer sheet.
Mark the question number in the box at the top of your answer sheet.

Question 1

- This is part of a letter you receive from an English friend, Sam.



I play sport with my best friend, Alex. Tell me about a friend of yours. How did you meet? Why do you like your friend? What do you do together?

- Now write a letter to Sam about one of your friends.
- Write your **letter** on your answer sheet.

Preliminary for Schools Part 3

Question 1

- Your English teacher wants you to write a story.
- Your story must begin with this sentence:

When I woke up and saw the weather, I couldn't believe it!

- Write your **story** on your answer sheet.

Cambridge English

Preliminary Part 3

Question 1

- Your English teacher has asked you to write a story.
- Your story must begin with this sentence:

It was getting dark and I was completely lost.

- Write your **story** in about 100 words on your answer sheet.



Cambridge English

Business Preliminary

PART TWO

Question 1

- Read part of a letter from Isobel Nursten, who runs an organisation called Business Links.

Our organisation, Business Links, supports local businesses. We are holding a series of evening meetings on the first Tuesday of each month about how to succeed in business.

We would like to invite you to speak at one of the meetings. For our publicity material, could you please send me a short description of your role in the company you work for, and the reasons why your company has grown so rapidly.

- Write a **letter** to Isobel Nursten:
 - thanking her for the invitation
 - saying which month would be convenient for you
 - describing your role in the company you work for
 - explaining why your company has been successful.
- Write **60 – 80 words**.
- Write on your **Answer Sheet**. Do not include any postal addresses.

Dear Ms Nursten



Cambridge English

C. Sample scripts

Sample script 1

Hi Sam,
How are you? I tell you about my friend Andrea, is very lovely boy, I met him two years ago in a football match. during the competition we spoke about our lives. The day after we met at school and we spoke about school journey, and he told to me that he ^{want} come in my class for study better informatic. I like him because he is soo funny and he like my same things, is very intelligent and brilliant but sometimes he is boring but I like him.
We spend our journey toogheter, we do homework, we play computers and often we play soccer.
bye bye Keep in touch

Cambridge English

Sample script 2

When I woke up and saw the weather, I couldn't believe it!

It was snowing, but it was the 12th of August!

Amazed and a little bit worried, I got dressed and went to the dining room, where I met mum.

"Mum, it's snowing!" I said. "Don't be silly, Sam, it's August!" she replied.

She didn't believe me, so I decided to go outside and check.

As I opened the door, a lot of snow fell on me.

I touched it, it was flour!

Then I heard someone laughing and saw my brother and my dad on the roof with many packets of flour. It was only a joke!

Cambridge English

Sample script 3

It was getting dark and I was completely lost, I was scared and nervous because the street it was alone, I didn't can see any person walking around the street so I remember a history about a blod animal called "chuyacabras".

I was completely alone and then, I can saw a figure flying between the buildings, I though must be a person but I was wrong the figure started to walk behind me, I only can saw her red eyes and I thought is my final day but I use my gung and I shot him the animal dead and I was very happy and exited because, I kill at the "chuyacabra".

When I came to my home, Nobody belive me and my parents saw - you are crazy is imposible - but it was real.



Cambridge English

Sample script 4

Dear Sam,

Thank you so much for your letter about one of your friend, He looks a good friend, now I want tell you about one of my friends. He's name is Alessandro, I was meet him at my third year of secondary school. I like him because is funny and He likes computer games Just like me.

We often go out together on Saturday evening and we play together computer games, naturally I always win.

By the way, now I must finish because I have to go out with Alessandro, I hope you find my friend very interesting.

All the bests,

Cambridge English

Sample script 5

Dear Ms Nursten

Thanks a lot for inviting me to this organisation. I was so glad when I receive your invitation

I will be free at next month i.e. June. I assume that I will be attending, as it will be more convenient for me to attend this meeting on tuesday.

I am the leading organiser in the company for the past 1 year. I worked for experience and then it is pleasant atmosphere / its now created many official friends while attending this meeting for the past two years and this time I got a opportunity to speak about the successful organisation. It has a rapid growth in a short period of time. It well supports the local business. No words to express my gladness. Thank you so much for giving this opportunity

Thanking you

