

Assessing Writing Performance – Level B2

Writing assessment by examiners in the Cambridge English: First, First for Schools and Business Vantage exams

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 B2-level Assessment Scales to decide which marks to give candidates taking the *Cambridge English: First, First for Schools and Business Vantage* Writing tests.

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 B2 writing tasks
- form an impression of how ready your students are to take the Writing part of the exam.

The Assessment Scales

The B2 Assessment Scales are divided into six bands from 0–5, 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 B2 level.

B2	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 effectively to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward and complex ideas, as appropriate.	Text is well organised and coherent, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns to generally good effect.	Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, appropriately. Uses a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with control and flexibility. Occasional errors may be present but 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 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.
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.	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.
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 (B1 level) for grammar – *Uses **simple** grammatical forms with a good degree of control* – is described in similar language to the Band 3 descriptor (B2 level), but with key differences: *Uses **a range of simple and some complex** grammatical forms with a good degree of control*. So at B2 level, a range of simple forms is expected as well as some complex forms, all used with a good degree of control. At Band 5 (C1 level), a writer *Uses a range of simple **and complex** grammatical forms with control **and flexibility***.

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**. **Flexibility** is explained under the General terms section. The Language subscale also includes vocabulary, and the difference between **everyday vocabulary** and **less common lexis** is explained; there is also 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, as well as an explanation of what is meant by **organisational patterns** (expected in a candidate's writing at Band 5).

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 Language Assessment examiners do.

How can I use the Assessment Scales with students?

You could do the following:

1. Refer to the scales as you mark students' written work in general, especially when they have attempted a *Cambridge English: First* or *Business Vantage* 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 *Cambridge English: First*, *First for Schools* and *Business Vantage* Writing tasks:

Sample script 1: Cambridge English: First for Schools Part 1

Sample script 2: Cambridge English: First Part 1

Sample script 3: Cambridge English: Business Vantage Part 2

Sample script 4: Cambridge English: First Part 2

Sample script 5: Cambridge English: Business Vantage Part 1

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.

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 *Cambridge English: First for Schools* Writing Part 1 task (see **Appendix B**).
- 3 Read Sample Script 1 (see **Appendix C**). 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 B2 Assessment Scales and Glossary of Terms (see **Appendix A**).
- 4 Compare the notes you have made with the completed example on pages 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 B2-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.

Blank assessment sheets to copy

Photocopy this page and the next one.

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH: FIRST (FOR SCHOOLS)/BUSINESS VANTAGE (LEVEL B2) 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 to hold the reader's attention? Good	Not so good
Does the writer communicate straightforward (and complex) ideas? Good	Not so good
Communicative Achievement Mark:	

ORGANISATION	
Is the text generally well organised and coherent?	
Good	Not so good
Does the writer use a variety of linking words and cohesive devices?	
Good	Not so good
Organisation Mark:	
LANGUAGE	
Does the writer use a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately?	
Good	Not so good
Does the writer use a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control?	
Good	Not so good
How far do errors impede communication?	
Non-impeding errors	Impeding errors
Language Mark:	
Comments:	

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH: FIRST FOR SCHOOLS (LEVEL B2) WRITING CONTENT	
Name of student: Sample script 1 (Cambridge English: First for Schools Part 1)	
<p>Is all content relevant to the task?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All content is relevant to the task. There is reference to both given points in the task (technology, the environment) and the candidate adds a third idea (adults teach teenagers important things). 	<p>Not so good</p>
<p>Is the target reader fully informed?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The target reader is fully informed. All three content points, an answer to the title question and the candidate's opinion with reasons are present. 	<p>Not so good</p>
Content Mark: 5	
COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT	
<p>Does the writer use the conventions of the task to hold the reader's attention?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer uses the conventions of an essay to hold the reader's attention. There is a clear statement of the candidate's opinion in the introduction, ideas are developed in the main body of the text, and the conclusion summarises the points made. 	<p>Not so good</p>
<p>Does the writer communicate straightforward (and complex) ideas?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Straightforward ideas are communicated clearly throughout, and some complex ideas are expressed (<i>If they didn't, young people probably wouldn't know what they do now and in their adulthood, and it would be harder for them to learn all that things by themselves</i>). 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer would need to hold the reader's attention more effectively to achieve a 5 here, especially in the final paragraph.
Communicative Achievement Mark: 4	

ORGANISATION	
Is the text generally well organised and coherent?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The text is well organised and coherent. The development of the argument follows the points in the task. 	Not so good
Does the writer use a variety of linking words and cohesive devices?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of linking words is used (<i>generally, or, now, furthermore, and, if</i>) and a variety of cohesive devices (<i>for instance, Nevertheless, as well, first of all, mainly by, and in my opinion, on the other hand, for example, summing up</i>). 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More complex organisational patterns are not used (longer sentences, ideas connected less explicitly).
Organisation Mark: 4	
LANGUAGE	
Does the writer use a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of everyday vocabulary is used appropriately (<i>languages, maths, cook, a really high level, water, energy, important things</i>), as well as some less common lexis related well to the topic (<i>smartphone, basic programmes, recycle, adulthood</i>). 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasionally lexis is used incorrectly (<i>I suppose</i>), and the writer could attempt a wider range of less common vocabulary.
Does the writer use a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most simple and some complex grammatical forms (e.g. passives) are used with a good degree of control (<i>nowadays lots of young people care about ... and they try to teach ... that it is really significant to ...</i>). 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Errors occur when more complex forms are attempted (<i>If they didn't, young people probably wouldn't know</i>).
How far do errors impede communication?	
Non-impeding errors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are occasional errors but they do not impede communication (<i>all that things, the technology, the water</i>). 	Impeding errors
Language Mark: 4	
Comments:	
A good B2 performance, using simple but mainly accurate language, good organisation and showing good essay techniques.	

**CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH: FIRST (LEVEL B2) WRITING
CONTENT**

Name of student: Sample script 2 (Cambridge English: First Part 1)

Is all content relevant to the task?

Good

- Most content is relevant to the task. There is reference to the two given points (appearance, price of clothes) and the candidate briefly adds a third point on quality (*expensive clothe is not the best*).

Not so good

- The writer does not answer the title question adequately, and the conclusion does not fit the topic under discussion (*the clothe do not be the way you are*).

Is the target reader fully informed?

Good

- The topic is discussed in some detail.

Not so good

- The irrelevance of the conclusion means the reader is not fully informed.

Content Mark: 4

COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Does the writer use the conventions of the task to hold the reader's attention?

Good

- The writer uses the conventions of an essay to hold the reader's attention. There is an introduction and an attempt to develop the ideas in the main body of the essay. There are a number of expressions appropriate for an essay (*Many people think, in my opinion, Now a day*).

Not so good

- Communication of ideas is made difficult by some of the errors present.
- The conclusion relates only to part of the argument, and distracts the reader.

Does the writer communicate straightforward (and complex) ideas?

Good

- Straightforward ideas are communicated and the candidate's opinion is clear in paragraph four.

Not so good

- Complex ideas are not attempted.

Communicative Achievement Mark: 3

ORGANISATION	
<p>Is the text generally well organised and coherent?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay is generally well organised and coherent. There is a clear structure to the text and paragraphs are used for the development of ideas. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Punctuation is inaccurate in places (sentences starting with <i>But, Or</i>). Some ideas are not coherently expressed (<i>the fashion injured the society</i>).
<p>Does the writer use a variety of linking words and cohesive devices?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a variety of linking words (<i>But, and, Or, which</i>) and some cohesive devices are used to connect sentences (<i>First of all, In my opinion, For example, That is because, In conclusion</i>). 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some linkers are not accurately used in the sentence. There could be more variety of organisational patterns.
<p>Organisation Mark: 3</p>	
LANGUAGE	
<p>Does the writer use a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a range of topic-specific and everyday vocabulary used appropriately (<i>expensive label, funny, cheerful, relevant, the mall</i>). 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some lexis is overused and/or not always used correctly (<i>a sport or cheap clothe, expensive clothe, the matter of that clothe, the clothe</i>).
<p>Does the writer use a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some simple grammatical forms are used with a good degree of control (<i>You can wear expensive and remarkable label and be a false and arogant person, If you go to the mall and buy a shirt of channel, you will pay a lot, you can wear it for a long time</i>). 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In other instances control is less sure (<i>the way that you look do not be the way that you are, the appearance can show something the person isn't be, wearing new labels are too expensive</i>).
<p>How far do errors impede communication?</p>	
<p>Non-impeding errors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most errors are non-impeding. 	<p>Impeding errors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Errors are noticeable (<i>the fashion injured the society, the clothe do not be the way you are</i>) but meaning can still be determined.
<p>Language Mark: 2</p>	
<p>Comments: This piece of writing is only just at B2 level in terms of Communicative Achievement and Organisation, and slightly below in terms of the Language (control and accuracy).</p>	

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH: BUSINESS VANTAGE (LEVEL B2) WRITING CONTENT	
Name of student: Sample script 3 (Cambridge English: Business Vantage Part 2)	
<p>Is all content relevant to the task?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the necessary points are attempted and content is generally relevant to the task. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are some irrelevances (<i>We should consider the inconvenience of taking by customers; Advertisement always promote customers' buying desire</i>).
<p>Is the target reader fully informed?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The target reader is on the whole informed. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is some lack of clarity when discussing the fall in sales figures and improving the technology and design of TVs.
Content Mark: 3	
COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT	
<p>Does the writer use the conventions of the task to hold the reader's attention?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer uses some of the conventions of a report in a generally appropriate way. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report begins as a letter (<i>Dear Sir</i>), although it is mainly written in the style of a report. There is some inconsistency in style and register with evidence of both directness (<i>make new advertising campaign; provide customers special offers</i>) and more neutral tone (<i>we should consider ...</i>).
<p>Does the writer communicate straightforward (and complex) ideas?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Straightforward ideas are conveyed on the whole. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex ideas are attempted but not conveyed adequately (e.g. the first sentence).
Communicative Achievement Mark: 2	

ORGANISATION	
Is the text generally well organised and coherent?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The text is generally well organised with the three areas of the report developed logically. 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is some lack of coherence when discussing the special offers to customers and technology/design. Punctuation sometimes interferes with coherence (in second paragraph).
Does the writer use a variety of linking words and cohesive devices?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of linking words and cohesive devices is used (<i>First; Second; At the same time; Third, we also need to ...</i>). 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some linkers are not correctly used (<i>Followings are ...; we need to outline an importance</i>).
Organisation Mark: 3	
LANGUAGE	
Does the writer use a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses a range of topic-appropriate lexis.* 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some vocabulary could be used more precisely, e.g. when discussing special offers (<i>cupons or discount need, size and colour different style</i>).
Does the writer use a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple grammatical forms are used with a good degree of control (<i>I have confidence that; we need to</i>). 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less control when complex forms are attempted (<i>inconveniences of taking by customers cupons or discount need; outline an importance to attract people's eyes</i>).
How far do errors impede communication?	
Non-impeding errors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Errors are noticeable, but in general meaning can still be determined (<i>We are not the except; with fast improvement on lifestyle</i>). 	Impeding errors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reader has to work quite hard to understand some phrases (see examples above).
Language Mark: 2	
Comments: This piece of writing is a little below the standard of B2 writing, particularly in terms of Language and Communicative Achievement. *N.B. In this exam, 'everyday' vocabulary includes business language as appropriate to the topic.	

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH: FIRST (LEVEL B2) WRITING CONTENT	
Name of student: Sample script 4 (Cambridge English: First Part 2)	
Is all content relevant to the task?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All content is relevant to the task. The letter responds to the questions asked about a festival (<i>day of the deads</i>), why it takes place (to remember friends, family or even pets that passed away) and what happens (pictures, food, cemetery visit, etc). 	Not so good
Is the target reader fully informed?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The target reader is fully informed. 	Not so good
Content Mark: 5	
COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT	
Does the writer use the conventions of the task to hold the reader's attention?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The letter uses the conventions of a letter effectively to hold the reader's attention. It is written in an informal and friendly tone, which is appropriate. The opening and closing phrases are suitable for a letter to a friend. 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is some inconsistency of register (<i>to resolve all your queries, love and kisses</i>).
Does the writer communicate straightforward (and complex) ideas?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Straightforward ideas are communicated, and developed well. 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex ideas are not expressed.
Communicative Achievement Mark: 4	

ORGANISATION	
<p>Is the text generally well organised and coherent?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The letter is generally well organised, coherent and uses the input letter well to structure the response (<i>Anyway, about the festivals you were asking me, This festival takes place in order to, other thing that the people do, write me again</i>). 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It could be more clearly set out and paragraphed.
<p>Does the writer use a variety of linking words and cohesive devices?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of linking words is used (<i>since, anyway, and, like, too, but, that day, in order to</i>) to connect the ideas. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some linking is quite basic (<i>one of my favourite ones is the one called, for that, Other thing that</i>). More sophisticated cohesive devices or organisational patterns are not used.
<p>Organisation Mark: 3</p>	
LANGUAGE	
<p>Does the writer use a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a range of everyday and topic-specific vocabulary used (<i>one of my favourite ones, I know that sounds a little bit strange, that day is very important in my culture and there is nothing creepy about that day, or even pets that passed away, the food they used to enjoy the most, cemetery, information on the web</i>). 	<p>Not so good</p>
<p>Does the writer use a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control?</p>	
<p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple grammatical forms, mostly simple present, are used with a good degree of control. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex forms are not attempted.
<p>How far do errors impede communication?</p>	
<p>Non-impeding errors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are occasional errors (<i>whether, in that day, cover with sugar</i>) but they do not impede communication. 	<p>Impeding errors</p>
<p>Language Mark: 3</p>	
<p>Comments: This is a reasonably good B2 script, showing what candidates should be able to do at this level. This letter shows a candidate who can write in an appropriate style for the target reader, use some interesting vocabulary and communicate well despite some minor errors.</p>	

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH: BUSINESS VANTAGE (LEVEL B2) WRITING CONTENT	
Name of student: Sample script 5 (Cambridge English: Business Vantage Part 1)	
<p>Is all content relevant to the task?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All content is communicated. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The email contains a considerable amount of superfluous (rather than totally irrelevant) material (too much detail about the problem/dates).
<p>Is the target reader fully informed?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target reader is on the whole informed. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information about the dates (5/7/9/11 June) is potentially confusing.
Content Mark: 3	
COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT	
<p>Does the writer use the conventions of the task to hold the reader's attention?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register in this business email is consistent and appropriate throughout (<i>I sincerely apologise for a delay</i>). 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The email does not hold the target reader's attention because it is not appropriately concise.
<p>Does the writer communicate straightforward (and complex) ideas?</p> <p>Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Straightforward ideas are mostly communicated. 	<p>Not so good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too much detail is given, and too many dates are mentioned, which confuses the communication of this internal email.
Communicative Achievement Mark: 2	

ORGANISATION	
Is the text generally well organised and coherent?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The email is generally well organised and the ideas are developed logically. 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some lack of coherence due to language issues.
Does the writer use a variety of linking words and cohesive devices?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linking words, referencing and relative pronouns are used to establish cohesion (<i>a new computer system which; the project mentioned</i>). 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The linker <i>After it</i> does not sound natural in the context.
Organisation Mark: 3	
LANGUAGE	
Does the writer use a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer uses a range of topic-appropriate vocabulary (<i>important order; establish; adjust</i>). 	Not so good
Does the writer use a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control?	
Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some simple and complex grammatical structures are used with control (<i>We don't have enough people to; the project mentioned will be finished on</i>). 	Not so good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is some lack of control when complex forms are used (<i>get ready for using it</i>).
How far do errors impede communication?	
Non-impeding errors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In some parts, errors are noticeable (... <i>went HSBC for establish ... the system which bought by HSBC</i>). 	Impeding errors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On one occasion, the error impedes communication (<i>should be completed? should have been completed?</i>).
Language Mark: 2	
Comments: This piece of writing is below the level of B2 in terms of Language and Communicative Achievement, as one important part of the task is not conveyed clearly due to a language error. N.B. In this task, the emphasis is on writing in a concise way (40–50 words), and the content in the bullet points has to be included. Responses like this one, which are too long, may contain irrelevant content and have a negative effect on the target reader, which will affect the marks on the relevant subscale(s).	

Appendices

Appendix 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’.

Flexibility **Flexible** and **flexibly** refer to the ability to adapt – whether language, organisational devices, or task conventions – rather than using the same form over and over, thus evidencing better control and a wider repertoire of the resource. Flexibility allows a candidate to better achieve communicative goals.

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 should 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, suggest alternatives.

Straightforward and complex 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.

4. ORGANISATION

Linking words, cohesive devices, and organisational patterns **Linking words** are cohesive devices, but are separated here to refer to higher-frequency vocabulary which provide 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*).

Cambridge English

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.

Organisational patterns refers to less explicit ways of achieving connection at the between sentence level and beyond, e.g. arranging sentences in climactic order, the use of parallelism, using a rhetorical question to set up a new paragraph.

5. LANGUAGE

Vocabulary

Basic vocabulary refers to vocabulary used for survival purposes, for simple transactions, and the like.

Everyday vocabulary refers to vocabulary that comes up in common situations of a non-technical nature in the relevant domain.

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.

Appropriacy of vocabulary

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.

Grammatical forms

Simple grammatical forms: words, phrases, basic tenses and simple clauses.

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.

Grammatical control

Grammatical control: the ability to consistently use grammar accurately and appropriately to convey intended meaning.

Where language specifications are provided at lower levels (as in *Cambridge English: Key* and *Cambridge English: Preliminary*), candidates may have control of only the simplest exponents of the listed forms.

Range

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.

Overuse

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.

Errors and slips

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.

**Impede
communication**

Impede communication means getting in the way of meaning.

Meaning can still be determined indicates that some effort is required from the reader to determine meaning.



Cambridge English

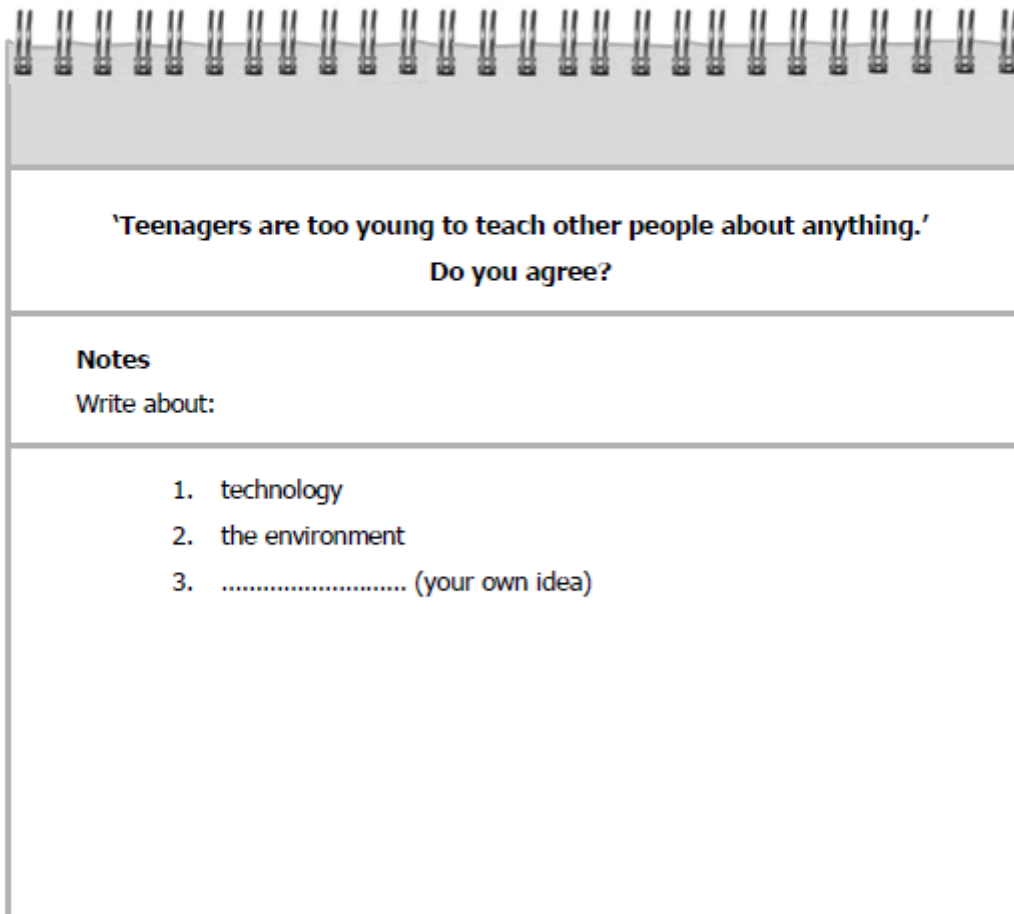
Appendix B. Sample Writing tasks

Sample task 1 – Cambridge English: First for Schools (Part 1)

You **must** answer this question. Write your answer in **140 – 190** words in an appropriate style on the separate answer sheet.

- 1 In your English class you have been talking about what different people can teach each other. Now your English teacher has asked you to write an essay for homework.

Write your essay using **all** the notes and giving reasons for your point of view.



'Teenagers are too young to teach other people about anything.'
Do you agree?

Notes
Write about:

1. technology
2. the environment
3. (your own idea)

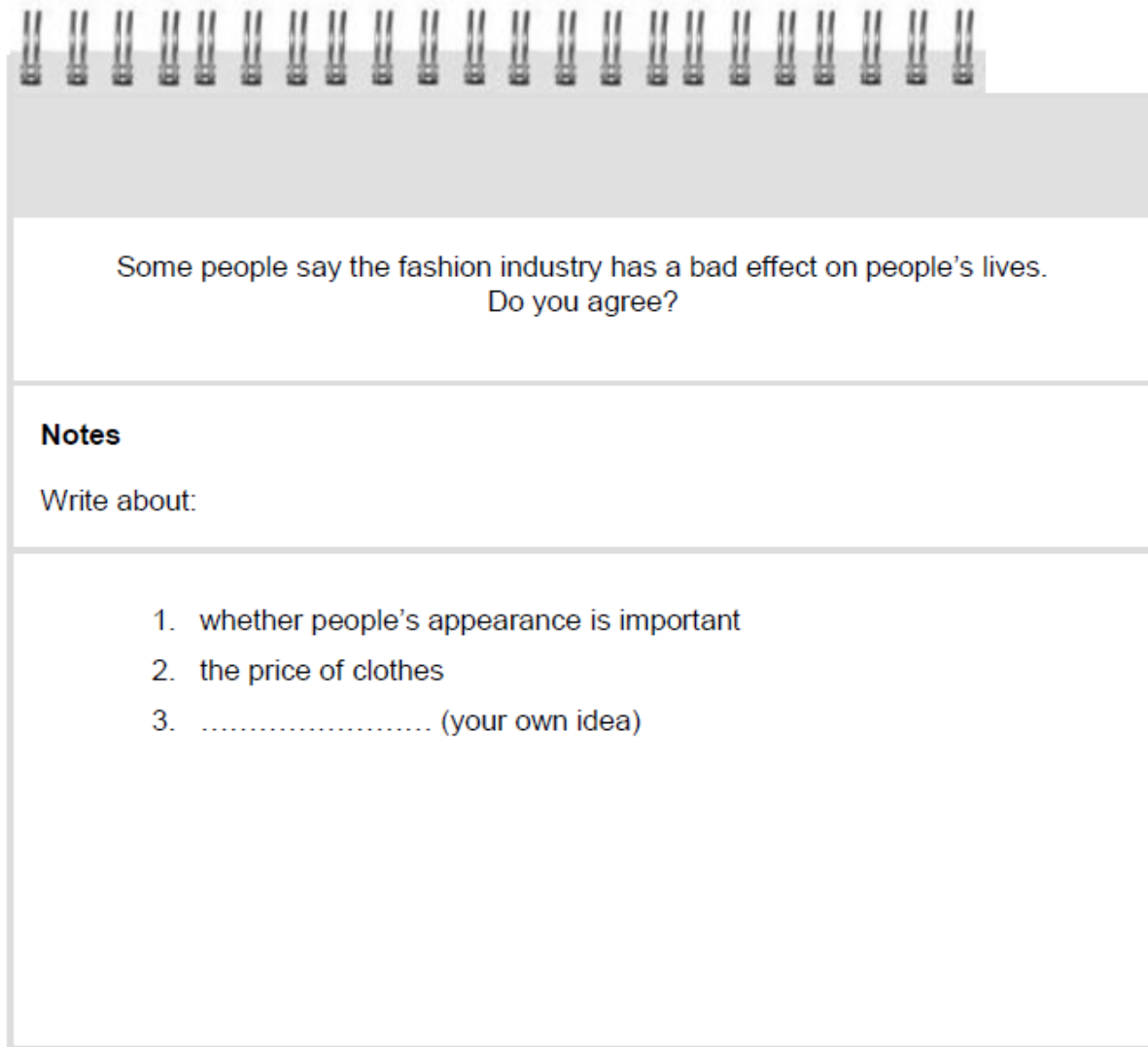
Cambridge English

Sample task 2 – Cambridge English: First (Part 1)

Write **140 – 190** words.

- 1** In your English class you have been talking about the fashion industry. Now, your English teacher has asked you to write an essay.

Write an essay using **all** the notes and giving reasons for your point of view.



Some people say the fashion industry has a bad effect on people's lives.
Do you agree?

Notes

Write about:

1. whether people's appearance is important
2. the price of clothes
3. (your own idea)

Cambridge English

Sample task 3 – Cambridge English: Business Vantage (Part 2)

- You work in the sales department of a large television manufacturer. Your line manager at head office has asked you for a report about sales in your region.
- Look at the information below, on which you have already made some handwritten notes.
- Then, using all your handwritten notes, write your report.
- Write 120 – 140 words.
- Write on the opposite page.

Figures show that there has been a fall in the company's sales in your region over the last 3 months.

Do you think demand for our products will improve and can you make some suggestions for increasing sales?

all retail sales fallen!

yes - in next 6 months

Suggestions for increasing sales of televisions:

- special offers for customers
- new advertising campaign
- improve technology and design

give example

give details

explain what customers want

Cambridge English

Sample task 4 – Cambridge English: First (Part 2)

Write **140 – 190** words.

1 This is part of a letter you have received from your English friend, Anna:

I'm doing a school project on different festivals around the world. Could you tell me about a festival in your country? I need to know why this festival takes place and what happens.

Write soon, and thanks! Anna

Write your **letter**.

Sample task 5 – Cambridge English: Business Vantage (Part 1)

- You work in the Information Technology department of a large company. There has been a delay setting up a new computer system.
- Write an **email** to all staff:
 - apologising for the delay
 - explaining why there was a problem setting up the new system
 - saying when the new system will be ready.
- Write **40 – 50** words.
- Write on the opposite page.



Cambridge English

Appendix C. Sample scripts

Sample script 1 – Cambridge English: First for Schools (Part 1)

Generally, young people are the ones that are taught languages, Maths or how to code, for instance. Nevertheless, I suppose that teenagers can teach adults many useful things, as well.

First of all, the technology has been developing for many years and now it has reached a really high level. Computers and smartphones are used every day, mainly by young people. A majority of older people don't know how to use some basic programmes and in my opinion teenagers can really help and teach them. Furthermore, nowadays lots of young people care about the environment and they try to teach adults and children that it is really significant to recycle and save the water and energy.

On the other hand, adults teach children and teenagers many other important things, for example how to write or read. If they didn't, young people probably wouldn't know what they do now and in their adulthood, and it would be harder for them to learn all that things by themselves.

Summing up, I suppose that both teenagers and adults can teach each other and it really something new and it's very important to do so.

Cambridge English

Sample script 2 – Cambridge English: First (Part 1)

Many people think that fashion is essential for our life. But, in my opinion, the fashion injured the society.

First of all, the way that you look do not be the way that you are. You can wear expensive and remarkable label and be a false and arrogant person.¹⁰ Or wear a sport or cheap clothe and be funny, cheerful and well know person. A lot of people think that the appearance is important or relevant to be someone or to have something, but is not true. Sometime the appearance can show something that the person isn't be.¹⁰⁰

Now a day, wearing know labels are too expensive. For example, If you go to the mall and buy a shirt of channel, you will pay a lot. But not always ~~mean~~ wear¹ buy expensive clothe mean that you can wear it for a long time. Sometime the matter of that clothe is not good at all.¹⁰⁰

~~In conclusion~~ In my opinion expensive clothe is not the best. That is because I feel ok in sport clothe, which is cheaper.¹⁰⁰

In conclusion, ~~Expensive~~^{the} clothe do not be the way you are.¹⁰⁰

Dear Sir,

Over the last 3 months all retail sales fallen in our region has been fallen in our region, and we are not the except. But I have confidence that in next 6 months, sales will be increased. Followings are several suggestions for increasing sales of televisions.

First, provide customers special offers. For example, we should consider the inconveniences of taking by customers, coupons or discount need, size and color different style, etc.

Second, make new advertising campaign. Advertisement always promotes customers' buying desire, so we should pay more attention to. All medias should be used. TV, net and newspaper. At the same time, we need to outline an importance to attract people's eyes.

Third, we also need to improve technology and design. With fast improvement on Lifestyle customers now pay more attention to the color and technology.

Cambridge English

Sample script 4 – Cambridge English: First (Part 2)

Hi! And it's really nice to know about you, how are you?, it seems ages since the last time you wrote me!. Anyway about the festivals you were asking me, one of my favourite ones is the ~~one day~~ of one called the day of the deads, I know that sounds a little bit strange, ~~but believe me~~ ^{but believe me} that day is very important in my culture and there is nothing creepy about that day. This festival This festival takes place in order to remember, friends, family, or even pets that passed away, so we put ~~in our houses~~ for that we put in our houses pictures of them, flowers, candles and some interesting elements like: water, ~~candles a bottle~~, and the food they used to enjoy the most, and bread of dead, that is like any kind of sweet bread, cover with sugar and very tasty too.

Other thing that the people do in that day they is that they go to the cemenetry and leave flowers and ~~said a pray and pictures of~~

I guess that would be the most important but whether you want to know more, there is a lot of information on the web and you can write me again and I'll try to resolve all your queries

Love and Kisses

Lorena Rente.

Sample Script 5 – Cambridge English: Business Vantage (Part 1)

I sincerely apologize for a delay setting up a new computer system which should be completed on June 5.

Recently, our company has got an important order of 50 million dollars from HSBC. Most of our staff in the

Information Technology department went HSBC for establish and adjust the system which bought by HSBC

We don't have enough people to set up the new system.

The project mentioned will be finished on June 7. After it, we will start to install the new system on June 9 and get ready for using it on June 11.