

ESB Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International

All Modes – (C2)

This qualification is accepted by the UK Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and carries UCAS Tariff points for university and Higher Education (HE) entry: 12 (Pass); 24 (Merit) and 36 (Distinction).



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Amendments from Version 6	
Introduction p4	Updated
Qualification criteria p5	Updated to include online assessment and UCAS
Qualification objective p6	Information added
Reasonable Adjustments Policy link p6	New policy published
Guidance for Teachers p8	Reference to language activities
Assessment format p13 and p19	Updated to include online assessment
Quality Assurance process p20	Updated
Examiner, examination and Chief Examiner changed to assessor, assessment and Chief Assessor Candidate changed to learner	Updated
Contact details back page	Updated
Amendments from Version 7	
Reference to Wales removed p6	Updated

Introduction

English Speaking Board (International) Ltd. (ESB International) offers high-quality Speech and Language qualifications in the UK and internationally.

We aim to support learners to possess the oracy and English language skills they need to achieve their aspirations. ESB International has a full range of qualifications for learners of all ages and backgrounds which are designed to stretch the most able, support the least confident and realise the potential of all. Do contact ESB International via our website www.esbuk.org if you wish to find out more about our qualifications and how learners can progress.

Our assessments are marked and administered externally by ESB International. ESB International carries out moderation and standardisation of all its assessors to ensure their assessment of your learners is consistent and of the highest quality.

ESB International's ESOL International qualifications are mapped to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and are designed to encourage progression.



Qualification criteria

This specification describes the ESB Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International All Modes (C2), covering speaking, listening, reading, writing and use of English. It is intended to support ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) teachers and learners in the classroom and includes information on how the assessments will be conducted and the range of language to be assessed.

ESB Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International All Modes	
CEFR Level	C2
Assessment method	Paper-based assessments – listening, reading and use of English are assessed with multiple-choice questions, completed on optical mark forms and externally marked and moderated. Writing tasks are hand-written in an answer booklet and externally marked and moderated. Speaking assessments are face-to-face with ESB-trained assessors and interlocutors.
	Online assessments – listening, reading and use of English are assessed with multiple-choice questions, completed online and externally marked and moderated. Writing tasks are completed online and externally marked and moderated. Speaking assessments are online using a video-conferencing platform, with ESB-trained assessors and interlocutors.
Regulation start date	1 st February 2008
Qualification number	500/3655/5
GLH/TQT *	300 hours / 330 hours
Age range	Children from age 11 to adult learners
UCAS Tariff Points	This qualification is accepted by the UK Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and it carries the following UCAS Tariff points for university and Higher Education (HE) entry: 12 (Pass); 24 (Merit) and 36 (Distinction).

Prior knowledge, skills and understanding

There are no prior learning or formal qualification requirements for ESB ESOL International qualifications. Each qualification level in the ESB International ESOL qualification suite is a stand-alone qualification, and learners are entered for listening, reading, use of English, writing and speaking at the same level. Learners should ensure that the qualification level they are entered for reflects their ability and needs.

* GLH (Guided learning hours) are the suggested number of hours for a learner to be taught by an English Teacher, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training in preparing for this qualification. TQT (Total qualification time) is an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected for a learner to achieve the level of attainment necessary for this qualification. It includes both the number of hours assigned to a qualification for Guided Learning, and an estimate of the number of hours a learner will be likely to spend in preparing for the qualification with the tutor's guidance but not under his or her direct supervision. All learners differ in their educational and personal circumstances, previous learning, motivation, and rate of learning so these figures indicate the relative size of qualifications and are not definitive.

Qualification objective

ESOL International qualifications are designed for learners who are not native speakers of English and who wish to achieve a high quality, internationally recognised qualification in English that is available and recognised worldwide and up to the highest level (NQF level 3 / CEFR C2). They are suitable for learners who are preparing for entry to higher education or professional employment in the UK or elsewhere. ESOL International qualifications are designed to reference the descriptions of language proficiency in the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFR). The levels in the CEFR have been mapped to the levels in the National Qualifications Framework for England and Northern Ireland (see [Pathways to Proficiency: the alignment of language proficiency scales for assessing competence in English Language DFES / QCA, 2003](#)).

The ESB Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International All Modes is the fourth of a portfolio of ESB ESOL International qualifications at B1, B2, C1 and C2 on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). ESB ESOL International Assessments are designed to demonstrate the ability of non-native speakers of English to speak, listen, read and write in English and are suitable for learners wishing to improve their level of general English for personal, academic or professional reasons. These qualifications are appropriate for anyone from the age of 11 upwards and encourage progression and measure learners' attainment as they move through the CEFR levels on their learning journey. The four ESB ESOL International qualifications provide learners with the opportunity to achieve a high quality, internationally recognised qualification at the CEFR level appropriate to them and their educational circumstances.

C2 is the higher of the two C levels on the CEFR, which describes proficient users as those who can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read; summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation, and express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.*

Reasonable adjustments

Assessment should be a fair test of learners' skills and knowledge; for some learners the usual format of assessment may not be suitable or accessible. Learners with specific needs can apply for reasonable adjustments to be made to the assessment. For further information on access arrangements, please see our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy [here](#).

*Table 1. Common Reference Levels: global scale in Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge, U.K: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, p.24.

Qualification progression and CEFR levels

Independent user	ESB Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International All Modes (Entry 3) B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.*
	ESB Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International All Modes B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with speakers of the target language quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.*
Proficient user	ESB Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International All Modes C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.*
	ESB Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International All Modes C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.*

*Table 1. Common Reference Levels: global scale in Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge, U.K: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, p.24.

Guidance for teachers

The specification and the assessments are designed to closely reference level C2 of the CEFR. Teachers are recommended to consult these Council of Europe publications: Council of Europe (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge, U.K: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, and Council of Europe (2018). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Companion volume with new descriptors*, available online at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions>. Language activities are based in the public and personal domains, and in non-specialised educational and occupational contexts.

1. Listening – spoken reception and comprehension

The learner can understand with ease virtually any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast natural speed.

2. Speaking – spoken production and interaction

The learner should be able to take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. He/she should be able to express him/herself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If he/she has a problem, he/she can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.

The learner should be able to present a clear, smoothly flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.

3. Reading – written reception and comprehension

The learner should be able to understand virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.

4. Writing – written production and interaction

The learner should be able to write clear, smoothly flowing text in an appropriate style. He/she should be able to write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. The learner should be able to write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

Language requirements for ESB Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International All Modes

The learner should be able to use all grammatical forms, maintaining consistent grammatical control of complex language.

- All tense and aspect forms
- All question forms including the use of intonation to signal question
- Modals and modality (including pasts)
- Verb patterns
- Multi-word verbs
- Real and unreal conditions
- Complex multi-clause sentences
- More complex indirect speech
- Effective use of intonation to convey meaning
- Use of connotation to imply meaning

Functions for ESB Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International All Modes

- Asking for / giving personal advice
- Changing the past
- Clarifying / confirming for understanding
- Complaining about goods / services
- Conceding a point
- Counter-arguing
- Daydreaming
- Decision making
- Describing, comparing and discussing changes in lifestyle, etc.
- Developing ideas, opinions and systematic arguments
- Eliciting opinions
- Expressing irritation
- Expressing regrets, hopes and desires
- Expressing thoughts and emotions precisely
- Giving a critical response in a constructive fashion
- Giving advantages / disadvantages
- Hedging and expressing ideas tentatively
- Interrupting
- Making speculations
- Making / responding to complaints
- Making / responding to false accusations
- Modifying
- Negotiating meaning
- Persuading
- Qualifying / illustrating arguments
- Requesting and giving detailed travel information / instructions
- Seeking consensus and compromise
- Self-correcting
- Speculating about future
- Summarising and rounding up

Lexical areas for ESB Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International All Modes

- Friends, people and relationships
- Personality, character
- Feelings and emotions
- House, home and environment
- Daily life and society / social relations
- The environment
- The future
- Leisure activities and entertainment
- Education and school
- Language and languages
- Travel and transport
- Religious and cultural activities
- Special occasions
- Sports, health and fitness
- Weather, climate and the world around us
- Daily life and society
- Shopping, clothes and commodities
- Fashion and youth culture
- Music and the pop world
- Politics and current affairs
- Social and cultural issues

Listening, reading, use of English and writing assessment format

The assessment is taken in one sitting of 3 hours. There are four sections: listening, reading, use of English and writing.

Paper-based assessments take place in an ESB International centre or satellite centre. Learners receive one question paper and complete a multiple choice optical mark form with their responses to the first three sections of the paper. The invigilator plays the audio for the listening section to the cohort of learners at the start of the assessment. Learners then complete the rest of the paper and write their responses to the writing section in a separate answer booklet.

Computer-based assessments take place online. Learners complete the assessment on screen and play the audio for the listening section through headphones at the start of the assessment. Learners complete the multiple choice questions by clicking on the option they have chosen, and they type their response to the writing section using their keyboard.

Listening Skills focus	Task	Format	Marks/Timings
Part One (Sections A and B) Learner can: • understand any kind of spoken language even when delivered at fast, natural speed • understand a wide range of recorded and broadcast audio material • identify finer points of detail • identify implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers	Two recordings (600 words each) and ten questions Two recordings of an extended discussion/radio interview between two speakers on a topical subject The core subject of both recordings is the same, however the second recording offers a different perspective on the topic The interviewer is present in both recordings, but the interviewee changes in audio two Each recording is tested with five three-option multiple choice questions The learner has one minute to read the questions before each recording begins	Three-option multiple choice	10 marks

Listening Skills focus	Task	Format	Marks/Timings
Part Two Learner can: - understand any kind of spoken language even when delivered at fast, natural speed - easily follow complex interactions even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics - identify finer points of detail	Three recordings (300-375 words each) and ten questions Three conversations of a complex nature involving abstract, complex or unfamiliar topics Three recordings tested with a total of ten three-option multiple choice questions The learner has one minute to read all the questions before all the recordings begin Each recording is played twice	Three-option multiple choice	10 marks Total time approximately 40 Minutes
Total weighting for the Listening section = 20% of the assessment.			

Reading Skills focus	Task	Format	Marks/Timings
Reading Part One Learner can: - understand all forms of the written language - appreciate subtle distinctions of style and implicit as well as explicit meaning - quickly scan through long and complex texts, locating relevant details	Seven multiple choice comprehension questions based on a text of abstract, structurally complex, or highly colloquial literary and non-literary nature Learners read the text and choose the appropriate answer to each question from four options Text length 500-550 words	Four-option multiple choice	7 marks
Reading Part Two Learner can: - understand all forms of the written language - appreciate subtle distinctions of style and implicit as well as explicit meaning - quickly scan through long and complex texts, locating relevant details	Eight multiple choice comprehension questions based on a text of abstract, structurally complex, or highly colloquial literary and non-literary nature Learners read the text and choose the appropriate answer to each question from four options Text length 500-550 words	Four-option multiple choice	8 marks Total suggested time 40 minutes
Total weighting for the Reading section = 20% of the assessment.			

Use of English Skills focus	Task	Format	Marks/ Timings
Part One Learner can: maintain consistent grammatical control of complex language	Fifteen grammatical multiple choice items Fifteen sentences each with a gap. Learners choose the appropriate grammar construct, word or phrase to fill each gap from four options	Four-option multiple choice	15 marks
Part Two Learner can: demonstrate a good command of a broad lexical repertoire and of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms	Fifteen lexical multiple choice items Fifteen sentences each with a gap. Learners choose the appropriate word or phrase to fill each gap from four options	Four-option multiple choice	15 marks
Part Three Learner can: - maintain consistent grammatical control of complex language - demonstrate a good command of a broad lexical repertoire and of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms	Ten items on a cloze text A factual text of 300-325 words with ten gaps Learners read the text and choose the best word, phrase or grammar construct to fill each gap from four options	Four-option multiple choice	10 marks
Part Four Learner can: - maintain consistent grammatical control of complex language - demonstrate a good command of a broad lexical repertoire and of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms - distinguish different meanings according to the form of a word	Ten items on a cloze text A factual text of 300-325 words with ten gaps Learners read the text and choose the best word to fill each gap from four options. All options are lexical derivatives	Four-option multiple choice	10 marks Total suggested time 40 minutes
Total weighting for the Use of English section = 20% of the assessment.			

Writing Skills focus	Task	Format	Marks/Timings
Writing Learner can: • write complex texts, underlining the relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples, and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion • produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured text, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices • express him/herself with clarity and precision • maintain consistent grammatical control of complex language Learner can demonstrate • a good command of a broad lexical repertoire and of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms	The learner produces one piece of writing of 300 - 350 words There is a choice of three options – a formal email or one of two essays The email prompt describes a situation to which the learner responds The essay prompt is a statement or quote and an instruction to which the learner responds in an essay	Essay, formal email	10 Total Suggested Timing 45 minutes
Total weighting for the Writing section = 20% of the assessment.			

Speaking assessment format

The speaking assessment takes place separately from the written paper. Speaking assessments are held in person with the learners and assessors at the assessment venue, or online using a video-conferencing platform. Each learner is assessed in a pair with a partner. In the event of an odd number of learners, assessments may be conducted with three learners.

The total time of the assessment is 15 minutes (23 minutes for 3 learners) and it is split into three distinct parts. An assessor and interlocutor are present in the room. The learners are asked questions by the interlocutor and the process is observed by the assessor.

At the end of the assessment the interlocutor will award each learner a holistic score. The assessor will award a more analytical set of marks based on their observation of the exam and more detailed criteria. The total number of marks available for each learner is thirty.

Learners are marked analytically in five distinct areas: Grammar, vocabulary, interactive ability, discourse management and pronunciation. Details of the individual criteria can be found on page 23 of this document.

The assessment is scripted and the interlocutor does not deviate from the script other than to select the topics and questions to be asked. Topics are rotated after each pair of learners to ensure no subsequent learners have an unfair advantage.

ESB ESOL International Speaking Assessments make use of a list of twenty prescribed topics.

Prescribed Topics List
Animals
Clothes and fashion
Communication and language
Daily life
Dreams and ambitions
Entertainment and culture
Fame and famous people
Food and drink
Friends and family
Health
Holidays and tourism
Jobs and professions
Learning and education
Leisure time
Places
Science and technology
Special occasions
Sports and hobbies
The natural world
Travel and transport

Speaking Skills focus	Task	Format	Marks/Timings
Speaking Part One Learner can: - understand any interlocutor, given the opportunity to adjust to a less familiar accent - converse comfortably and appropriately, unhampered by any linguistic limitations in a personal, social context - backtrack and restructure around a difficulty so smoothly the interlocutor is hardly aware of it	General questions The assessor (interlocutor) asks the learners a series of questions in turn on personal or general topics from the ESB prescribed list The learner responds to the interlocutors questions, but does not interact with the other learner in this part of the assessment	Series of short questions relating to personal/general information	3 Minutes

Speaking Skills focus	Task	Format	Marks/Timings
Speaking Part Two Learner can: • put his/her case in a clear, smoothly flowing, elaborate and often memorable fashion • put forward an articulate and persuasive argument • hold his/her own in formal discussions of complex issues • backtrack and restructure around a difficulty so smoothly the interlocutor is hardly aware of it	Interactive discussion based on one of the twenty topics The interlocutor gives the learners instructions for part two of the exam and hands them a card with two prompts written on it There is a question with eight related bullet points for discussion, and a follow-up question asking for a more personal response. The learners read the prompt and discuss it. They do not have to talk about all the bullet points and may add information of their own to further the discussion if they wish The interlocutor does not participate in the discussion The interlocutor will intervene to stop the discussion after the allotted time has passed	Interactive discussion on a written prompt between both learners	6 minutes for two learners, 9 minutes for three learners

Assessment, moderation and quality assurance

All completed scripts are marked and moderated by ESB's team of ESOL International Assessors and Moderators according to ESB policies.

Our markers are standardised and grade all written papers according to the ESB mark scheme which is linked to the CEFR level descriptors.

To ensure additional quality assurance throughout the process, all markers are moderated within each marking session and at least 20% of all written scripts are second marked to maintain standardisation levels.

Speaking assessments are carried out by ESB trained assessors and interlocutors according to our policies. Speaking assessments are marked as they happen. Both the interlocutor and the assessor award marks based on the ESB mark scheme linked to the CEFR level descriptors.

All ESOL International Speaking Assessors are trained and standardised by our Chief Assessor and Senior Assessors. In addition to this, ESB teams conduct live and recorded moderations of these assessors across the centres during each assessment period.

All multiple-choice answer sheets are marked electronically by ESB and are subject to rigorous scrutiny and checks to ensure their accuracy at every stage of the marking process.

To ensure that our ESOL International qualifications are valid and fit-for-purpose, we review learner performance to ensure that outcomes are fair and reliable. As a result, English Speaking Board (International) Ltd. reserves the right to make appropriate amendments to overall grade thresholds in order to maintain standards over time.

Rating scales for speaking

Mark C2	Grammar	Lexis	Interactive Ability	Discourse Management	Pronunciation
5	Comprehensive range of structures used accurately, appropriately and fluently. More or less error-free.	Consistently demonstrates a very extensive and comprehensive range of lexical competence.	Sustained interaction in both initiating and responding which facilitates natural, fluent communication. Very sensitive to turn-taking.	Consistently makes extensive, coherent and relevant contributions to facilitate the achievement of the task.	Use of stress and intonation puts no strain on listener and individual sounds are articulated clearly. Utterances are consistently understandable.
4.5	More features of band 4 than band 5.				
4	Wide range of structures used accurately, appropriately and fluently but minor non-impeding errors present.	Evidence of an extensive and appropriate range of lexis with only occasional lapses.	Meaningful communication is largely achieved through initiating and responding effectively. Hesitation is minimal and the norms of turn-taking are generally applied.	Contributions are generally relevant, coherent and of an appropriate length. The task is dealt with effectively.	Stress and intonation patterns may cause minimal strain on listener. Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly.
3.5	More features of band 4 than band 3.				
3	Reasonable range of structures used with generally consistent accuracy and fluency but some non-impeding errors are evident.	Lexis is mostly effective and appropriate although range and accuracy are restricted at times.	Sufficient and appropriate initiation and response generally maintained throughout the discourse although there may be some undue hesitation. Turn-taking norms may not always be observed.	Contributions are normally relevant, coherent and of an appropriate length but there may be occasional irrelevancies and incoherence. The task is dealt with satisfactorily.	Use of stress and intonation is sufficiently adequate for most utterances to be comprehensible. Some intrusive L1 sounds may cause difficulties for the listener.
2.5	More features of band 3 than band 2.				
2	A rather limited range of structures. Consistent errors especially when attempting more ambitious grammatical forms.	Lexis is limited in terms of range and accuracy and lacking in precision.	Contributions limited and the patience of the listener may be strained by frequent hesitations. The norms of turn-taking are rarely observed.	Discourse is not developed adequately and may be incoherent and irrelevant at times. Task achievement is only partially realised.	Inadequacies in all areas of pronunciation put considerable strain on the listener.
1.5	More features of band 2 than band 1.				
1	Very limited range with serious structural inaccuracy and lack of flexibility.	Insufficient and inappropriate range of lexis to deal with the task adequately.	Fails to initiate and/or respond. The interaction breaks down as a result of persistent hesitation. The norms of turn-taking are not observed.	Monosyllabic responses. Performance lacks relevance and coherence throughout. Task achievement is very limited.	Limited competence in all areas of pronunciation severely impedes comprehension.
0.5	More features of band 1 than band 0.				
0	Too little speech to assess effectively.	Too little speech to assess effectively.	Too little speech to assess effectively.	Too little speech to assess effectively.	Too little speech to assess effectively.

Grammar: the range and accuracy of structures used. At C2 level, the learner should be approaching mastery of the structures of the language and be able to demonstrate a very wide range of effective and appropriate forms and have the flexibility to achieve a wide variety of effects and functions without difficulty.

Vocabulary: the range of lexis employed and to the extent of its appropriate usage. At C2 level, the learner should be able to draw on an extensive bank of lexical items to deal with both familiar and unfamiliar topics. Learners should have sufficient lexical resources to convey abstract concepts and to move easily from one situation to another.

Interactive ability: the ability to use language effectively to engage in flowing, meaningful communication. This includes sensitivity to turn-taking, initiating, responding appropriately and repairing miscommunication.

Discourse management: the extent, coherence and relevance of the learner's contributions. The focus is on the learner's ability to maintain a flow of coherent language and manage and develop the discourse in order to achieve the task. Contributions should be of an appropriate length and relevant to the task. Hesitation will be only minimal and will not impede the development of the discourse.

Pronunciation: includes individual sounds, rhythm, stress and intonation. At C2 level, a learner should demonstrate an ability to manipulate weak and strong sounds and to use pitch and range effectively at word and sentence level to heighten meaning and to convey attitudes. The prosodic features and individual sounds of the first language are obviously present but they are sufficiently modulated so as to cause no undue strain upon the listener.

General descriptors for writing

C2 General Descriptors

The learner can

- write clear, smoothly flowing text in an appropriate style.
- write complex texts which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the reader to notice and remember significant points.
- demonstrate a sufficiently well-developed level of accuracy and range of syntax, structure and lexis to enhance what he or she writes.

Pass band descriptor	Content & Appropriacy	Organisation & Cohesion	Language (Grammar & Vocabulary), Mechanics (Spelling & Punctuation)
	Style of text is almost entirely appropriate to the genre (i.e. essay, formal email). Content demonstrates considerable control over the set task type. Content is almost completely appropriate to the nature of the set task.	Text is paragraphed in such a way that it supports and enhances the logical flow of the text. Organisation of the text supports and aids the reader in following the line of argument/discussion taken in the piece of writing. Cohesion exists throughout the text and is carried out through the use of some complex and sophisticated cohesive devices. Cohesion supports & enhances the flow of the text and contributes to the successful achievement of the task.	Use of vocabulary and grammar is sufficiently complex to allow the conveying of finer shades of meaning and connotations to be precisely communicated. Vocabulary and grammar are consistently correct. Lapses in vocabulary are mainly due to the use of a specialist term in an area probably unfamiliar to the student. Spelling and punctuation are carried out with sufficient competence so as to support and enhance the text. The degree of control means that the reader is not distracted by any more errors than would reasonably be expected in a piece of writing by an educated proficient speaker writing under similar conditions.

See: Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge, U.K: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, p.26-29.

Task-specific descriptors for writing

Task genre	High pass	Pass	Below pass
Formal Email	Engages the reader's attention and creates a very positive impression. Writes in a style fully appropriate for the genre. Presents a full and detailed answer in response to the question. Ideas are precisely communicated through accurate, sophisticated and wide-ranging use of structure and lexis although some minor errors may be present. Text well-organised and fully coherent.	Answers the question supported by examples, opinions and suggestions. Writes a well-structured email with an introduction, conclusion and main body. Uses topic sentences and signposting language to structure the answer. Uses language appropriate to a piece of formal writing and adheres to the majority of the conventions of the genre (e.g. avoidance of contractions and very informal language). Demonstrates a good level of sophisticated, wide-ranging structure and lexis.	Lacks cohesion in the answer. Writes in a style that in places is inappropriate for the genre. Fails to produce a coherent argument. Only partially answers the question. Uses very simple, unsophisticated structure and lexis. Negative impression created on reader. Produces too many errors for this level.
Essay	Engages the reader's attention and creates a very positive impression. Writes in a style fully appropriately for the genre. Presents a full and detailed answer in response to the question. Ideas are precisely communicated through accurate, sophisticated and wide-ranging use of structure and lexis although some minor errors may be present. Text well-organised and fully coherent.	Writes a well-structured essay with an introduction, conclusion and main body which answers the question. Uses topic sentences and signposting language to structure the answer. Reader informed and made aware of writer's stance. Uses language appropriate to a piece of formal writing and adheres to the majority of the conventions of the genre (e.g. avoidance of contractions and very informal language). Demonstrates a good level of sophisticated, wide-ranging structure and lexis.	Lacks cohesion in the answer. Writes in a style that in places is inappropriate for the genre. Fails to produce a coherent argument. A very inadequate attempt to address the question. Uses very simple, unsophisticated structure and lexis. Negative impression created on reader. Produces too many errors for this level.

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