

**ESB Level 2 Award in
ESOL Skills for Life (Writing)
601/5483/4**



Writing

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Table of Contents

Introduction	4
ESB Level 2 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing)	5
Qualification Objective	5
Prior Knowledge, Skills and Understanding	5
Reasonable Adjustments	5
Qualification Profile	6
Qualification Framework	7
Resources and Support for Tutors	7
Assessment Overview	8
1. Assessment Format	8
2. Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria	8
3. List of Topic Areas	9
4. List of Functions	10
5. Grammatical Structures	11
Assessment, Moderation and Quality Assurance	13
Marking Guidance	13

Updates

Version	Change made	Page
4	References to Wales removed	5
3	Punctuation descriptor added	12
2	Introduction page updated	4
	Reasonable adjustment information updated	5
	Qualification framework information updated – credits removed	7
	Assessment overview – types of text updated, letter, narratives removed	8
	Lists of topics, functions and grammatical structures added	9-12
	Assessment, moderation and quality assurance updated	13
	Marking guidance added from ESB-INFO-27 ESOL Skills for Life - Marking guidance for Writing assessments	13
	Contact details updated	Back cover

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.

When you choose to be a centre of ESB International and prepare your learners for our assessments, we offer you support via our website and your centre's online booking hub, along with training and guidance for all of your staff involved with the learning experience. We are here to support you so that your learners achieve and enjoy the experience of assessment with ESB International.



ESB Level 2 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing)

These specifications are designed to assist tutors in preparing learners for the ESB Level 2 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing). The document supports both tutors and learners and describes the content and the assessment of the qualification.

Qualification Objective

The ESB Level 2 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing) is part of the portfolio of ESB ESOL Skills for Life qualifications from Entry 1 to Level 2 on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). ESOL Skills for Life learners are diverse and may be members of settled minority communities, refugees or asylum seekers, migrant workers, or partners or spouses of UK residents. ESB ESOL Skills for Life assessments are designed to assess real-life English language skills for work, further learning and everyday life, encourage progression into further and higher education and employment, support learners' integration into the community and equip learners with the confidence to use English language skills in the real world. They are suitable for learners from the age of 16 upwards and are available in England and Northern Ireland.

ESB ESOL Skills for Life qualifications are based on the National Standards for Adult Literacy and aligned to the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum. They are regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) in England and CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland. At Level 2, adults can write to communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and effectively, using length, format and style appropriate to purpose, content and audience (National Standards for Adult Literacy).

Prior Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

There are no prior learning or formal qualification requirements for ESB ESOL Skills for Life qualifications. Learners can be entered for the Speaking and Listening, Reading or Writing Awards appropriate for their ability and needs. Learners must have the skills, knowledge and understanding to meet securely the learning outcomes for Level 2 by the assessment date. Learners who have achieved the three Awards at the same level can be awarded an ESB Level 2 Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life.

Reasonable Adjustments

We believe that 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, and we recognise that disabilities can be physical or invisible. Some learners may need an access arrangement (also known as a special accommodation or reasonable adjustment) to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment, i.e. the learning outcomes and assessment criteria. We refer to these as Reasonable Adjustments and centres need to apply for a reasonable adjustment before their learners' assessment. Please visit <https://esbuk.org/web/support/equality-diversity-inclusion-safeguarding/> for examples of reasonable adjustments, how to apply for them and further guidance. For more information on access arrangements, please see our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy [here](#).

Qualification Profile

ESB LEVEL 2 AWARD IN ESOL SKILLS FOR LIFE (WRITING)	
Assessment method	Assessment by external assessors and markers
Grading	Pass / Unsuccessful
Accreditation start date	1 st February 2015
Guided learning hours (GLH)*	90
Total Qualification Time (TQT)*	100
Qualification number	601/5483/4
Age range	16-19,19+,
An ESOL Skills for Life learner may be anyone who speaks English as an acquired language, for example:	• Learners at further education colleges and adult education centres • Learners attending private training organisations • Learners attending community-based ESOL providers and educational charities • Learners referred from Jobcentre Plus • Young learners (16-18) on ESOL courses • Learners from settled minority communities • Refugees or asylum seekers • Migrant workers • Partners or spouses of UK residents

Learners' educational and employment backgrounds are often highly diverse. English Speaking Board assessments are designed to reflect this diversity. Learners' real-life circumstances are taken into account when assessments are designed and topics include themes such as employability.

*GLH (Guided Learning Hours) is an estimate of the time allocated to teach, instruct, assess and support learners. Learner-initiated private study, preparation and marking of formative assessment is not taken into account. TQT (Total Qualification Time) includes both the number of hours which an awarding organisation has assigned to a qualification for Guided Learning, and an estimate of the number of hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, directed by but not under the supervision of a lecturer, supervisor or tutor. Both GLH and TQT are estimates as all learners are unique and will take different times to prepare for and achieve qualifications.

Qualification Framework

Qualification Option
3 Awards • ESB Level 2 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Reading) • ESB Level 2 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing) • ESB Level 2 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening)
ESB Level 2 Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life

Learners are entered for each individual Award and may take Awards at different levels. Once three Awards have been achieved, learners can apply for an ESB Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life. Please see <https://esbuk.org/web/support/policies-and-procedures/>.

Speaking and Listening assessments are conducted on site at approved ESB International centres by a team of trained assessors. All assessors are independent of the centres they visit and subject to moderation following Ofqual guidelines. Assessment takes place in pairs; learner interaction is an integral part of the assessment. Each learner is assessed according to the qualification learning outcomes and assessment criteria. All learners receive a report form with their grade and personalised feedback. Successful learners receive a certificate with the qualification title and level. Results are issued within 5 working days (10 days at peak times) and qualification certificates are issued to centres within 10 working days.

Reading and Writing assessments are set by ESB International and papers are shared securely with centres. Assessments are completed on site at approved centres and subject to ESB International regulations (see Centre Handbook <https://esbuk.org/web/app/uploads/2022/09/ESB-HBK-C29-ESB-Handbook-for-Skills-for-Life-Centres-in-the-UK-v1.pdf>). Invigilation is undertaken by the centre and monitored by ESB International. Papers are marked by ESB ESOL Skills for Life markers and results are issued within 5 working days (10 days at peak times). Qualification certificates are sent to centres within 10 working days.

Resources and Support for Tutors

Sample papers and resources are available on our website <https://esbuk.org/web/our-tutor-resources/esol-skills-for-life-resources/esol-skills-for-life-level-2/>

For questions about the content and conduct of assessments, contact product@esbuk.org. To find out more about the type of training available for your centre and to arrange bespoke face-to-face or remote training for tutors, contact business@esbuk.org.

Assessment Overview

1. Assessment Format

Length	1 hour 40 minutes
Number of tasks	3

	Task One	Task Two	Task Three
Text	form	email	essay, report, article
Audience	official, employer, organisation	friend, relative, colleague, tutor, official, employer, organisation	official organisation, employer, general readers
Approximate word length	150	150	250 (plus plan)
Assessment criteria	3.1 Complete a form with complex features 2.1 Produce content which meets the purpose effectively 2.5 Use punctuation 2.6 Spell words	2.1 Produce content which meets the purpose effectively 2.2 Use language effectively 2.3 Structure text coherently for purpose 2.4 Use grammar 2.5 Use punctuation	1.1 Plan text for a specific purpose 2.2 Use language effectively 2.3 Structure text coherently for purpose 2.4 Use grammar 2.6 Spell words

2. Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Core Curriculum Reference	Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>
Wt/L2.1a Wt/L2.1b Wt/L2.2a	1. Be able to plan text for a given task	1.1 Plan text for a specific purpose
Wt/L2.3a Wt/L2.4a Wt/L2.5a Wt/L2.6a Ws/L2.1a Ws/L2.2a Ws/L2.3a Ws/L2.4a Ww/L2.1a	2. Produce text for different tasks	2.1 Produce content which meets the purpose effectively
		2.2 Use language effectively
		2.3 Structure text coherently for purpose
		2.4 Use grammar correctly
		2.5 Use punctuation correctly
		2.6 Spell words accurately
Wt/L2.7a	2. Complete a form	3.1 Complete a form with complex features correctly

To pass the assessment, learners are required to achieve every assessment criterion once. Learners have to meet assessment criterion 3.1 in Task 1, there is one opportunity to meet AC1.1 in Task 3, and there are two opportunities to meet the remaining criteria throughout the assessment.

Pages 9-12 list the topic areas, functions and grammatical structures expected of learners by the time they have completed their course of study and undertake the assessments for the ESB ESOL Skills for Life awards at this level. The topics, functions and structures are from the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum <https://esbuk.org/web/app/uploads/2023/09/Adult-ESOL-Core-All-files.zip>. In addition to those listed here, learners should already be confident with the topic areas, functions and grammatical structures of Level 1.

3. List of Topic Areas

Aspirations and ambitions
Community and volunteering
Cultural events, celebrations, variations and influences
Daily interactions e.g. shops and services
Detailed personal information
Education systems
Employment and career
Environment and climate
Food and cuisine
Health and lifestyle
Hobbies and leisure/free time – sport, TV, books, films, music
Language and communication
Lifestyles and trends
Local, national and international issues
Neighbourhood and social issues
Public services
Shopping
Social roles
Sport and fitness
Technology and technological developments
Travel and transport

4. List of Functions

Ask about and express feelings, likes and dislikes, wishes, hopes

Ask about past events

Ask about processes

Ask for and give advice

Ask for and give descriptions of self/others

Ask for and give general and specific descriptions of things and places

Ask for and give personal information

Ask for and respond to requests for confirmation

Ask for definitions

Change the topic

Check back

Clarify

Complain

Criticise, rebuke

Disagree

Explain and give reasons

Express definite and tentative arrangements in the future

Express obligation in the past

Generalise and compare/contrast

Give factual accounts: define with explanations, give examples, classify, describe a complex process

Give instructions

Give reassurance and praise

Give views, opinions and justification

Greet and sustain social interaction

Hypothesise

Interrupt

Make requests in formal and informal situations: ask for something, ask someone to do something, ask for permission

Narrate

Negotiate

Persuade

Rephrase for clarification or emphasis

Report

Speculate

Summarise

Take leave

Warn and threaten

5. Grammatical Structures

Simple, compound and complex sentences, with a wide range of subordinate clauses
Word order in complex sentences, including choice of order for emphasis: <i>You have to press here to open it/To open it, you have to press here.</i>
There could be/would be/should be Could have/would have/should have
A wide range of conjunctions: <i>on condition that, provided that</i>
Conditional forms, using had + would/could/should have: <i>I would have lent you the money if you'd explained what you wanted it for.</i>
Comparative clauses: <i>The more he spoke, the less I understood.</i>
More complex participle clauses with -ing and -ed: <i>She's often late as parking is so difficult round here.</i>
Fronting and cleft sentences for emphasis: <i>What I found particularly surprising was how long the process took to complete.</i>
Reported speech, using a range of verb forms: <i>He confirmed that the new timetable will begin next week.</i> More complex embedded questions: <i>We'd be grateful if you could explain what happened.</i> Reported questions, using a range of verb forms: <i>He asked me how long I'd wanted to be a pilot.</i>
Statements with questions tags, using Level 2 verbs and tenses: <i>He could've explained that much more clearly, couldn't he?</i> Imperative + question tag: <i>Shut the window, can't you?</i>

Noun phrases
Noun phrases of increasing complexity: <i>The percentage of people in full time employment who express satisfaction with their salary...</i>
Use of zero article with a wide range of countable and uncountable nouns in a range of constructions: <i>Colleges say that they will struggle to provide enough classes to meet current and future demand unless funding increases significantly.</i>

Verb forms and time markers in statements, interrogatives, negatives and short forms
Use a wide range of simple, continuous, perfect and perfect continuous verb forms, active and passive: <i>Significant increases have been reported in the number of people using local bus services.</i>
<i>Would</i> expressing habit in the past: <i>We'd always go round to my grandmother's house on Saturdays.</i>
Use of had + would/could/should have in conditional sentences: <i>They could have completed the task more easily if they'd taken the time to read the instructions before they started.</i>
Modals expressing past obligation, possibility, rejected conditions: <i>should have, might have, could have, must have, can't have</i>
A wide range of phrasal verbs with a number of particles: <i>to get round to, to carry on with</i>

Adjectives
Connotations and emotive strength of adjectives: <i>interesting, scandalous, devastating, unbelievable</i>
Collocation of a range of adjectives + prepositions: <i>popular with, interested in, certain of</i>

Adverbs and prepositional phrases
Prepositions + -ing forms: <i>By taking the bus, you help reduce congestion.</i>
Prepositions followed by noun phrases: <i>contrary to popular opinion</i>

Discourse
A range of logical markers: <i>in this respect, it follows that, therefore, consequently</i>
Sequence markers: <i>previously</i>

Punctuation
Commas: <i>Listing items in connected prose, between clauses in complex sentences, after connectives</i>
Semi-colons, colons
Bullet points, dashes, brackets
Apostrophes: <i>for omission and possession</i>
Inverted commas/speech marks: <i>for direct speech, quotations, to indicate attitude</i>
Full and contracted forms for style

Assessment, Moderation and Quality Assurance

All Reading and Writing scripts are marked and moderated by ESB International's team of ESOL Skills for Life markers and moderators according to ESB International policies.

Our markers are standardised and grade all written papers according to the ESB ESOL Skills for Life mark scheme which is based on the National Standards for Adult Literacy and aligned to the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum.

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

Speaking and Listening assessments are carried out by trained assessors according to our policies. Speaking assessments are marked as they happen, based on the ESB ESOL Skills for Life mark scheme linked to the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum.

All ESOL Skills for Life Speaking and Listening assessors are trained and standardised by our Chief and Senior Assessors. In addition to this, ESB International conducts live moderations of a proportion of assessors every year.

Marking Guidance

ESB International has a policy of marking positively: in other words, learners are given credit for what they have achieved successfully, and are not penalised for errors. Where reference is made to 'accurate' or 'correct', markers would expect approximately 75% of what the learner has written to be accurate for that level in order to achieve the assessment criterion.

All word counts are approximate. Responses are not penalised for being over or under-length, but those that are more than 10% shorter than the recommended word length are likely to be too brief to achieve all of the criteria securely, and those that are longer are likely to be verbose and contain irrelevant information.

Task One

Text Form	Audience Official, employer, organisation	Word length 150
3.1 Complete a form with complex features correctly Information required on the form is written accurately and in the appropriate field. The responses indicate form-filling instructions and conventions have been understood. The form should be functional, i.e. it communicates sufficient meaningful information to the reader to serve its purpose. The open response should be appropriate and easily intelligible. Grammar and spelling errors are not taken into account to achieve this criterion.		
2.1. Produce content which meets the purpose effectively The response is laid out following conventions for the genre and purpose of the task. The learner must include relevant information to achieve the purpose, i.e. the response must be relevant to the task, with every part of the question addressed. If appropriate layout is considered as part of the AC, instructions for learners will be included in the paper.		

2.5 Use punctuation correctly

The learner uses a range of Level 2 punctuation accurately and appropriately, e.g. commas, semi-colons and colons, inverted commas and apostrophes. Learners should use appropriate Level 2 punctuation and are not expected to use the full range suggested in the mark scheme or specifications when they are not appropriate. Errors do not impede communication.

2.6 Spell words accurately

The learner can spell personal key words, words appropriate to Level 2, and context and key specialist words correctly. Errors do not impede communication. If there are errors in attempts to use specific special interest vocabulary or a broad range of lexis, these are not penalised.

Task Two

Text	Audience	Word length
Email	Friend, relative, colleague, tutor, official, employer, organisation	150
2.1 Produce content which meets the purpose effectively The text is of an appropriate register for the purpose and audience, and is laid out following conventions for the genre. The learner must include relevant information to achieve the purpose, i.e. the response must be relevant to the task, with every part of the question addressed. If appropriate layout is considered as part of the AC, instructions for learners will be included in the paper.		
2.2 Use language effectively The learner uses a range of Level 2 lexis appropriate to the task and audience.		
2.3 Structure text coherently for purpose The format, layout and conventions are appropriate to the task. The learner effectively uses structure and paragraphing appropriate to the task.		
2.4 Use grammar correctly There are at least 5 accurate sentences using Level 2 grammar, i.e. simple, compound and complex sentences with correct subject-verb agreement. The learner uses Level 2 tenses and voice correctly, e.g. simple and continuous past, present and future tenses, and the active and passive voice as appropriate to the task. If the learner has used complex sentences which may contain errors, then correct clauses are taken into account. Spelling and chronology are not considered in these sentences as these are marked in ACs 2.6 and 2.3. A repeated error (e.g. failure to use a direct or indirect article) is not penalised twice. Errors do not impede communication.		
2.5 Use punctuation correctly The learner uses a range of Level 2 punctuation accurately and appropriately, e.g. commas, semi-colons and colons, inverted commas and apostrophes. Learners should use appropriate Level 2 punctuation and are not expected to use the full range suggested in the mark scheme or specifications when they are not appropriate. Errors do not impede communication.		

Task Three

Text	Audience	Word length
Essay, report, article	Official, organisation, employer, general readers	250
1.1 Plan text for a specific purpose An appropriate plan is produced which informs the purpose, structure and content of the final text. The plan can take any form, e.g. a list or mind map.		
2.2 Use language effectively The learner uses a range of Level 2 lexis appropriate to the task and audience.		
2.3 Structure text coherently for purpose The format, layout and conventions are appropriate to the task. The learner effectively uses structure and paragraphing appropriate to the task.		
2.4 Use grammar correctly There are at least 5 accurate sentences using Level 2 grammar, i.e. simple, compound and complex sentences with correct subject-verb agreement. The learner uses Level 2 tenses and voice correctly, e.g. simple and continuous past, present and future tenses, and the active and passive voice as appropriate to the task. If the learner has used complex sentences which may contain errors, then correct clauses are taken into account. Spelling and chronology are not considered in these sentences as these are marked in ACs 2.6 and 2.3. A repeated error (e.g. failure to use a direct or indirect article) is not penalised twice. Errors do not impede communication.		
2.6 Spell words accurately The learner can spell personal key words, words appropriate to Level 2, and context and key specialist words correctly. Errors do not impede communication. If there are errors in attempts to use specific special interest vocabulary or a broad range of lexis, these are not penalised.		

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