

# **Essential Skills Northern Ireland (4800)**

## **Communication (Reading and Writing) external assessments at levels 1 and 2**

### **Guidance for Delivery**

## About this guide

This guide has been produced to help Essential Skills tutors and curriculum managers understand the structure, content and mark allocations within City & Guilds Essential Skills Communication (Reading and Writing) external assessments at levels 1 and 2.

It should be read in conjunction with

- the qualification specifications, as set out in **Section 5** of our **Essential Skills qualifications handbook**
- our periodic **examiner reports**.

Both of these can be found on the [Essential Skills \(4800\) qualification documents webpage](#).

## Relationship between the Essential Skills standards and curriculum vs the qualification' criteria and specifications

When preparing candidates for assessment, it is important to appreciate the distinction between the Department for the Economy (DfE) Essential Skills Standards and Curriculum versus the regulatory and assessment criteria for the Essential Skills qualifications.

The Standards and Curriculum document sets out the range of skills, knowledge and understanding expected to be *taught* and *learned* at each level; whereas the Essential Skills qualification and subject criteria set out the skill standards, coverage and range expected of candidates undergoing *assessment* in these qualifications.

The Essential Skills qualification and subject criteria were devised by CCEA Regulation, and are common to all awarding organisations' Essential Skills qualifications. Whilst the technical content and demand of these criteria align with the Standards and Curriculum, it is important to bear in mind that the Essential Skills qualifications also require candidates to demonstrate *application* of literacy and numeracy within purposeful contexts.

## Assessment model

The Reading and Writing components of Essential Skills Communication are externally assessed by City & Guilds. This is a summative exam-type assessment, and should only be attempted by candidates once they have completed a period of learning and assessment preparation. The latter might include attempting one or more sample papers and/or making use of centre devised activities that reflect demands and rigours of the live assessments.

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## Communication Level 1 external assessments

The Essential Skills Communication external assessment of Reading and Writing at Level 1 comprises the following:

Total marks available = 50

Assessment weighting	Reading/Writing	Number of questions	Number of source documents	Number of marks
Reading 50%	Level 1, section 1, Reading	8	2	25
Writing 50%	Level 1, section 2, Writing	2	2	25

<b>Section 1 Reading</b> <b>Read and understand a range of straightforward texts: 25 marks available.</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Mark allocation / coverage</b>		
a) Identify the main points and ideas and how they are presented in a variety of texts	6-8		
b) Read and understand texts in detail	6-8		
c) Utilise information contained in texts	5-7		
d) Identify suitable responses to texts	5-7		
e) In more than one text type	At least two texts		
<b>Total</b>	<b>25 marks</b>		
<b>Section 2 Writing</b> <b>Write a range of texts to communicate information, ideas and opinions using formats and styles suitable for their purpose and audience: 25 marks available.</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Q1 (marks)</b>	<b>Q2 (marks)</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
a) Write clearly and coherently, including an appropriate level of detail	9	6	60 %
b) Present information in a logical sequence			
c) Use language, format and structure suitable for purpose and audience			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>15 marks</b>		
	<b>Marks (Q1 &amp; Q2)</b>		<b>Weighting</b>
d) Use correct grammar, including correct and consistent use of tense	10		40 %
e) Ensure written work includes generally accurate punctuation and spelling and that meaning is clear			
f) In more than one text type	Two texts		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10 marks</b>		

## **Level 1 Reading**

### **Level 1 Reading will always:**

- address all four assessment criteria
- consist of eight questions
- present candidates with a realistic, work-related or formal scenario
- require a candidate to read two source documents in order to answer the eight questions
- have a 'non-formulaic' approach to testing individual criteria; for example, the wording of questions will differ from paper to paper, but the format of questions will not be significantly different
- have varied types of document, for example, an article and an extract from an instruction manual
- vary the purposes of source documents, for example, to persuade, explain/discuss, request action or response, instruct, inform
- have an overall word count of between 600 and 800 words
- have a balanced spread of questions across both the source texts
- have a minimum of two questions to test each assessment criterion.

### **Source documents**

Types of source documents will include articles, web pages, letters, report extracts, instructions, emails, adverts, manuals, book extracts, information leaflets, marketing material, texts of speeches, display posters etc.

The table below provides example questions that may be used to test each assessment criterion.

Criteria	Explanation	Examples of questions
<b>a Identify the main points and ideas and how they are presented in a variety of texts</b>	Skills candidates need to use in order to do this include skimming, scanning and reading in detail. This will include an understanding of the way in which information has been presented, either through layout features or choice of language.	<p>What is the main point the author is trying to get across?</p> <p>What are the subjects covered in the various parts of the text?</p> <p>How is the author clearly setting out the main points?</p> <p>What layout features are used to communicate the main points and ideas?</p> <p>How does the author attract the reader's attention to the main themes?</p> <p>How does the author convey the main points?</p> <p>What techniques does the author use to make the different points stand out?</p> <p>The main thrust / emphasis of this document is to encourage the reader to: a) b) etc</p>
<b>b Read and understand texts in detail</b>	Detailed reading is expected, to understand the specific information presented and to capture necessary, but less apparent, facts, particulars and dates. There must be an awareness of the manner in which it is presented to suit the audience and topic.	<p>According to the witness, what were the causes of the accident?</p> <p>What details should be included in your presentation?</p> <p>How do the instructions differ for low platforms and high platforms?</p> <p>What are the final dates by which applications must be submitted?</p> <p>Which breeds of animal are you most likely to see in open fields?</p>
<b>c Utilise information contained in texts</b>	<p>The candidate must identify information that explains what actions are possible after having read the texts.</p> <p>The candidate must identify information that explains what actions are possible after having read the texts.</p> <p>(continued)</p>	<p>What <b>three</b> items are you not allowed to take to the festival?</p> <p>What formats can music be bought in?</p> <p>Who should you send a letter of complaint to?</p> <p>Who would be the most appropriate person to invite to speak at your conference?</p>

Criteria	Explanation	Examples of questions
		What steps would you take if you wanted to join the campaign?
<b>d Identify suitable responses to texts</b>	The candidate must identify information in the texts that explains how to carry out the actions suggested.	<p>In what format are you advised to submit your complaint?</p> <p>You want to buy an album, what would you click on?</p> <p>A) shop; B) album titles; C) blog; D) download</p> <p>How should you apply for a grant to pay for the equipment?</p> <p>Which <b>two</b> pieces of information are essential when buying tickets for the concert?</p>

These examples are by no means exhaustive and it is important that centres realise questions will vary across papers.

#### **Common reasons for losing marks:**

- Lack of adequate preparation before sitting assessment.
- Lack of familiarity with the types of questions being asked before summative assessment.
- Unfamiliarity with common exam techniques. Candidates often lose marks through failing to provide sufficient responses to particular questions.
- Lack of awareness that the number of required responses is either asked for directly in the question or indirectly by the number of marks available for that particular question.
- Failing to read the questions properly.
- Repeating the stem of the question and/or writing in complete sentences, wasting valuable time.

## Level 1 Writing

### Level 1 Writing will always:

- consist of two questions
- present candidates with at least one piece of stimulus material
- be formal and/or work related
- require candidates to write approximately 80-120 words for the shorter response and 120-140 words for the longer response
- require candidates to write different types of document
- require candidates to write for different audiences
- require high levels of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar to achieve a pass. It is very unlikely that a candidate will achieve sufficient marks to pass if zero marks are awarded for one of the three areas of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

### 1. Format and Structure

At Level 1, candidates will be asked to write **two** of the following types of document: a formal letter; a formal email; an article; a leaflet; a notice; the text of a speech.

- A letter should include a sender's address, a recipient's address, the date, a salutation and the associated valediction of *Yours faithfully* or *Yours sincerely*.
- A formal email should include the recipient's email address, a subject line and appropriate salutation and close.
- An article should include a heading and, if appropriate, strap-lines, subheadings or any other feature suitable for the particular article.
- A leaflet should include a heading, clear sections or any other feature suitable for the particular leaflet.
- A speech should include an opening acknowledgment of the audience and evidence of bringing the speech to a close.

### 2. Inclusion of relevant detail

- Candidates should carefully read the assessment task and any associated stimulus material, which will allow them to determine what should realistically be included.
- Planning a response should allow the candidate to ensure all relevant detail will be covered.
- A candidate's contact details are often essential in a written piece, for instance when requesting a response to a letter or applying for a job.
- Candidates should aim to write between 80-120 for the shorter response and 120-140 words for the longer response.
- Candidates should strike the right balance between including sufficient detail and maintaining a concise writing style.

### 3. Language, logical sequence, clarity and coherence

- Candidates are judged on their use of language in terms of register (tone), the use of correct expressions and their abilities to write clearly, without ambiguity or confusion.



- Candidates lose marks due to clumsy, inaccurate or long-winded expressions and failing to maintain a logical sequence. Planning, drafting and proof-reading would be very beneficial.
- Candidates should ensure there is coherence within, and between, the points being made. Successive points should be linked with connective devices and language to show logical progression.

#### **4. Spelling**

- Performance in this category varies from very poor to excellent. Some words are frequently spelt incorrectly; these include *writing, believe, thank you, a lot, as well, manager, receive*, amongst others.
- Lower levels of Communication are subsumed into the level above; therefore, all accurate spellings deemed appropriate to Entry 3 and below should also be correctly spelt at Level 1.
- Access to dictionaries is permitted.
- Responses can be word-processed.
- Proof-reading of work is important.

#### **5. Punctuation**

- Correct punctuation (appropriate to the level) is always required, irrespective of the type of text being written.
- At Level 1, candidates must demonstrate the correct use of upper and lower case letters, initial capital letters, full stops and question marks.
- Whilst most candidates start sentences with a capital letter, it is often the candidates who word-process their responses who miss this out.
- Some candidates have the mistaken belief that emails need not be punctuated correctly.
- Candidates often omit capital letters when writing proper nouns, especially on days of the week, months of the year, or in addresses and postcodes.
- The personal pronoun should always be capitalised.

#### **6. Grammar**

- Recurring errors include:  
     incorrect subject / verb agreement, verb / tense agreement  
     incorrect word order  
     the omission of definite and indefinite articles  
     inconsistency/incorrect use of tense  
     misuse of common homophones such as too/to, their/there/they're and your/you're  
     *could of* and *should of*

## Level 1 Writing – sample questions

### Question 1



**Omagh Gazette**

Evening DJ sessions, self-defence classes, cookery lessons, gardening groups, social clubs – the list is endless!

**It's official – more community projects mean less vandalism and other anti-social behaviour, saving councils thousands!**

**Your task:** write a letter to your council in response to this headline, suggesting they invest in community projects.

The person to write to is Michael Armstrong, 15 Upper Road, Omagh, BT96 1TL.

Include:

- why you are writing
- what sort of community projects you would like
- the advantages of community projects for local people
- the advantages of community projects for the council.

**We suggest you write 120 – 140 words.**

**There are 9 marks available for this question. A further 10 marks are available for accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar across Questions 1 and 2.**

**Question 2**

You have received a promise of funding from the Council to run a DJ-ing course for people in your community. You need to find volunteers to help with setting it up and running it.

**Your task:** write a brief article for the local paper about the project and ask for volunteers to help run it.

Include:

- information about the project (what, when, where, etc)
- what jobs you need volunteers for
- how it will help the community.

**We suggest you write 80 – 120 words.**

**There are 6 marks available for this question. A further 10 marks are available for accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar across Questions 1 and 2.**

## Communication Level 2 external assessments

The Essential Skills Communication external assessment of Reading and Writing at Level 2 comprises the following:

Total marks available = 50

Assessment weighting	Reading/Writing	Number of questions	Number of source documents	Number of marks
Reading 50%	Level 2, section 1, Reading	8	2	25
Writing 50%	Level 2, section 2, Writing	2	2	25

### Section 1 Reading

Select, read, understand and compare texts and use them to gather information, ideas and opinions: 25 marks available.

Criterion	Mark allocation / coverage
a) Select and use different types of texts to obtain and utilise relevant information	4-6
b) Read and summarise succinctly, information/ideas from different sources	4-6
c) Identify the purposes of texts and comment on how meaning is conveyed	4-6
d) Detect point of view, implicit meaning and/or bias	4-6
e) Analyse texts in relation to audience needs and consider suitable responses	4-6
f) In two or more texts	At least two texts
<b>Total</b>	<b>25 marks</b>

### Section 2 Writing

Write a range of texts including written documents, communicating information, ideas and opinions effectively and persuasively: 25 marks available.

Criterion	Q1 (marks)	Q2 (marks)	Weighting
a) Present information/ideas concisely, logically and (persuasively - Q1 only)	9	6	60%
b) Present information on complex subjects clearly and concisely			
c) Writing style is suitable for purpose			
d) Use a range of sentence structures, including complex sentences, and paragraphs to organise written communication effectively			
Totals	15 marks		

<b>Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar</b>	<b>Marks (Q1 &amp; Q2)</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
e) Punctuate written text using commas, apostrophes and inverted commas accurately	10	40%
f) Accurate spelling that supports clear meaning Accurate grammar that supports clear meaning		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10 marks</b>	

## **Level 2 Reading**

### **Level 2 Reading will always:**

- address all five assessment criteria
- consist of eight questions
- present candidates with a realistic or work-related scenario
- require a candidate to read two source documents in order to answer the eight questions
- have a 'non-formulaic' approach to testing individual criteria; for example, the wording of questions will differ from paper to paper
- have varied types of document, for example, an article, a webpage and an advertisement
- have two source documents that have different purposes, for example, to persuade, explain/discuss, request action or response, instruct, inform
- have an overall word count of between 700 and 900 words
- have a balanced spread of questions across both the source texts
- have a minimum of two questions to test each assessment criterion.

### **Source documents**

1. Types of source documents will include articles, web pages, letters, report extracts, instructions, emails, adverts, manuals, book extracts, information leaflets, marketing material, texts of speeches, display posters etc.
2. One source will provide opportunities for candidates to detect point of view, bias and/or implied meaning.

The table below provides example questions that may be used to test each assessment criterion.

Criteria	Explanation	Examples of questions
<b>a Select and use different types of texts to obtain and utilise relevant information</b>	Candidates identify which document information comes from based on clues in the question and the type of document. For example, an unbiased opinion would come from a review rather than the manufacturer's promotional information.	<p>According to the journalist, what are four arguments that could be used to prove your case?</p> <p>What are the instructions provided regarding attending the protest?</p> <p><i>Remember, questions will not explicitly lead candidates to the correct document, as selecting the correct one forms part of the assessment criterion.</i></p>
<b>b Read and summarise, succinctly, information/ideas from different sources</b>	The candidate will be asked to summarise briefly; we do not expect lengthy responses as this is assessing reading skills.	<p>Compare the authors' opinions in documents 1 and 2 about the importance of contracts.</p> <p>Write a short paragraph summarising the different points of view in documents 1 and 2.</p> <p>Summarise the benefits of healthy eating using documents 1 and 2, clarifying the main differences.</p> <p><i>NB: if a candidate is asked to use two separate documents, it will not be possible for the candidate to use only one document to achieve the full marks.</i></p>
<b>c Identify the purposes of texts...</b>	This may or may not be a multiple choice question.	<p>Identify the purpose of Document 2 and provide one reason from the text to support your answer.</p> <p>Which of the following best describes the purpose of document 2?</p> <p>To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) review</li> <li>b) promote</li> <li>c) instruct</li> <li>d) critique.</li> </ul>

Criteria	Explanation	Examples of questions
c ...and comment on how meaning is conveyed through language and layout	This will usually focus on literary devices or language techniques used by the author to enhance the effectiveness of the document and its relevance to its intended audience, as opposed to layout features of a document, although this will also be tested at times.	<p>What characteristics show that this document is an article?</p> <p>Document 2 uses some or all of the following techniques:</p> <p>Bias Similes Metaphors Idioms Clichés*</p> <p>Identify <b>two</b> techniques from the above list that have been used in the text and explain how they help to convey meaning.</p> <p><i>* See DfE Curriculum and Standards document for other possible literary devices / techniques</i></p>
d Detect point of view, implicit meaning and/or bias	<p>At least one source document will contain implicit meaning and/or bias.</p> <p>At least one source document will contain implicit meaning and/or bias (continued).</p>	<p>Which of the following best sums up the author's point of view:</p> <p>a) pro b) against c) un-decided d) independent</p> <p>What is meant by the phrase 'one good turn deserves another'?</p> <p>Identify <b>three</b> examples of opinion presented as fact from Document 1.</p> <p>Provide examples of biased phrases used in the document.</p> <p>What indications are there that the author has a biased viewpoint?</p>
e Analyse texts in relation to audience needs and consider suitable responses, where applicable	Questions will require candidates to go beyond merely extracting information from a document; they will have to analyse a text, either in content or form.	<p>In replying to the complaint letter received (Document 1), which four policy statements from Document 2 are applicable?</p> <p>What are <b>two</b> implications of having an alternative fuel supply?</p> <p>Support your answers with evidence from the text.</p> <p>Identify <b>two</b> ways the author is using language to persuade people to apply for the position. Support</p>



Criteria	Explanation	Examples of questions
		your answers with quotes from the text.

These examples are by no means exhaustive and it is important that centres realise questions will vary across papers.

**Common reasons for losing marks:**

- Lack of adequate preparation before sitting the assessment.
- Not understanding Level 2 concepts, such as biased writing, implicit meaning and specific devices used to enhance communication or convey meaning.
- Lack of familiarity with the types of questions being asked before summative assessment.
- Unfamiliarity with common exam techniques. Candidates often lose marks through failing to provide sufficient responses to particular questions.
- Lack of awareness that the number of required responses is either asked for directly in the question or indirectly by the number of marks available for that particular question.
- Failing to read the questions properly.
- Repeating the stem of the question and/or writing in complete sentences, wasting valuable time.

## Level 2 Writing

### Level 2 Writing will always:

- consist of two questions
- present candidates with at least one piece of stimulus material
- require candidates to write approximately 100-120 words for the shorter response and 140-200 words for the longer response
- require a candidate to use persuasive writing in at least one of the responses
- require candidates to write different types of document
- require candidates to write for different audiences
- require high levels of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar to achieve a pass. It is very unlikely that a candidate will achieve sufficient marks to pass if zero marks are awarded for one of the three areas of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

### 1. Format and Structure

At Level 2, candidates will be asked to write two of the following types of document: a formal letter; a formal email; a report; an article; the text of a speech.

- A letter should include a sender's address, a recipient's address, the date, a salutation and the associated valediction of *Yours faithfully* or *Yours sincerely*.
- A formal email should include the recipient's email address, a subject line and appropriate salutation and close.
- An article should include a heading and, if appropriate, strap-lines, subheadings or any other feature suitable for the particular article.
- A report should include a heading and subheadings and can include additional features such as bullet points and numbered points, for instance.
- A speech should include an opening acknowledgment of the audience and evidence of bringing the speech to a close.

### 2. Inclusion of relevant detail

- Candidates should carefully read the assessment task and any associated stimulus material, which will allow them to determine what should realistically be included.
- Planning a response should allow the candidate to ensure all relevant detail will be covered.
- A candidate's contact details are often essential in a written piece, for instance when requesting a response to a letter or applying for a job.
- Candidates should aim to write to the suggested word count for each question.
- Candidates should strike the right balance between including sufficient detail and maintaining a concise writing style.

### 3. Language, logical sequence and concise expression

- Candidates are judged on their use of language in terms of register (tone), the use of correct expressions and their abilities to write concisely in a logical sequence.
- Candidates lose marks due to clumsy, inaccurate or long-winded expressions and failing to maintain a logical sequence. Planning, drafting and proof-reading would be very beneficial.

- Candidates are required to demonstrate the use of paragraphs, which should help candidates maintain a logical sequence.

#### **4. Persuasive writing**

- At Level 2, one of the tasks requires the candidates to write persuasively.
- Markers are instructed to look for specific techniques of persuasive writing such as repetition, emotive language, reasoned argument, rhetorical questions or appealing directly to the reader through the use of direct address, amongst others.
- The majority of candidates receive at least one of the two marks available for this, but it is evident that some candidates are not familiar with persuasive techniques.

#### **5. Spelling**

- Performance in this category varies from very poor to excellent. Some words are frequently spelt incorrectly; these include *writing, believe, thank you, a lot, as well, manager, receive*, amongst others.
- Lower levels of Communication are subsumed into the level above; therefore, all accurate spellings deemed appropriate to level 1 should also be correctly spelt at level 2.
- More complex words deemed appropriate to Level 2 should be used and spelt correctly.
- Access to dictionaries is permitted.
- Responses can be word-processed.
- Proof-reading of work is important.

#### **6. Punctuation**

- Correct punctuation (appropriate to the level) is always required, irrespective of the type of text being written.
- At Level 2, candidates must demonstrate the correct use of upper and lower case letters, initial capital letters, full stops, question marks, commas, apostrophes and inverted commas.
- Whilst most candidates start sentences with a capital letter, it is often the candidates who word-process their responses who miss this out.
- Some candidates have the mistaken belief that emails need not be punctuated correctly.
- The greatest cause of lost marks is the misuse or absence of commas and apostrophes.
- Candidates often omit capital letters when writing proper nouns, especially on days of the week, months of the year, or in addresses and postcodes.
- The personal pronoun should always be capitalised.

#### **7. Grammar**


- Recurring errors include:  
     incorrect subject / verb agreement, verb / tense agreement  
     incorrect word order  
     the omission of definite and indefinite articles  
     inconsistency/incorrect use of tense

misuse of common homophones such as too/to, their/there/they're and  
your/you're  
*could of* and *should of*

## Level 2 Writing – sample questions

### Question 1

Scenario – You are considering a change of job and decide to apply for the job below.



**Overseas Holiday Representative required**

**Based in our resort in Spain.**

**Duties include:**  
meeting holiday makers from the airport, taking them to their hotel,  
offering advice and guidance about the local area and being their point  
of contact for questions and any emergencies that may occur.

Accommodation and food provided in hotel.  
Basic salary of £9000 a year plus commission on trips sold in resort.  
Free return flights to Spain.

As part of the initial selection process, we want you to send us an email  
telling us why you would be suitable for the position and why the job  
appeals to you. Most importantly, we want you to convince us that you,  
like us, understand what excellent customer service is and why it is  
important.  
Send your emails to: [recruit@dreamdestinations.co.uk](mailto:recruit@dreamdestinations.co.uk)

Your task: **write the email** to apply for the position.

**We suggest you write 140 – 200 words.**

There are 9 marks available for this question. A further 10 marks are available for accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar across Questions 1 and 2.

## Question 2

You were successful at the interview and have decided to accept the position as an Overseas Representative. You need to hand in a resignation letter to your current employer, Grant's Supplies. Address your letter to:

Tracey O'Hare, Managing Director, Grant's Supplies, 124 Coats Road, Belfast BT9 7TD.

**Your task:** is to write the resignation letter.

Include detail about:

- why you are writing
- when you need to leave by
- your new position
- your time at Grant's Supplies.

**We suggest you write 100 – 120 words.**

**There are 6 marks available for this question. A further 10 marks are available for accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar across Questions 1 and 2.**

## **Resources available on the Essential Skills (4800) qualifications webpage**

In addition to this Guidance for Delivery, the following documents are available to download from the [Essential Skills qualification documents webpage](#):

- Essential Skills qualifications handbook  
(containing qualification specifications)
- Sample assessment papers
- Chief Examiner reports
- Department for the Economy (DfE) Essential Skills Standards and Curriculum

## **Sample teaching and learning activities**

### **Communication Level 1 – Reading**

#### **Identify the main points and ideas and how they are presented in a variety of texts**

1. As a group, read several types of text and make notes and/or discuss various techniques employed by the writers that help establish what the main points are, and how they are presented, within each text.
2. Integrate reading and writing activities by asking group or individuals to compose various types of text with one or more main messages, suitable to particular audiences.
3. Present a group with unformatted text and discuss ways in which layout could be altered to make the text suitable for different audiences or purposes.
4. Discuss what layout features can be used in order to convey main messages to an intended audience.
5. Discuss how a combination of language and layout features can be used to enhance communication of main messages.

#### **Read and understand text in detail**

1. Read a review of a particular product and list positive and negative qualities of the product.
2. Use a document in which it is essential to read all the text, eg, instructions how to mix mortar, and ask learners to explain the process to the group.
3. Have a variety of texts to hand and discuss which texts require skimming, scanning or detailed reading.
4. Use an insurance claim report (or similar) and ask group to assume either the role of claimant or the company disputing the claim. Based on the detail in the report, ask the group to argue relative positions for and against the claim.

#### **Utilise information contained in texts**

1. Ask learners to read a text and to then use the information in the text to create a brief verbal argument as to why a particular (course of) action should be undertaken. For instance, the text could be a holiday brochure about two different resorts, two different job descriptions or a fundraising leaflet from a charity.
2. Ask learners to follow a set of instructions.
3. Ask the group to discuss what actions could be taken after reading a protest leaflet, or a leaflet intended to persuade the audience to a particular action.
4. Use an instructional text on how to format different types of documents, or how to write an effective speech, and ask group to complete the tasks.

#### **Identify suitable responses to texts**

1. Ask a learner to read a complaint letter and a second document with three different responses. Ask learners to discuss which response is suitable and the reasons why.
2. Ask learners to compose suitable responses to a variety of texts. For instance, a letter of complaint or a letter about a particular issue sent to a newspaper.



3. Use both a complaint letter and a corresponding set of policies and procedures, and discuss which policies and procedures should be used to create an adequate response.

## **Communication Level 1 – Writing**

### **Write clearly and coherently, including an appropriate level of detail**

1. Discuss various written pieces with a view to understanding the differing amounts of required detail in each piece. Go on to discuss how the coherence of a text impacts upon essential and superfluous detail.
2. Analyse two sets of instructions; one poor and one well written. Discuss the need for clarity and level of detail. Then ask learners to write their own set of instructions and pass to another learner to follow. Can they follow them completely?
3. Present a learner or group with a sequential scenario and discuss how to relate the events through coherent writing, using discourse markers, reference to earlier parts, ellipses and the use of other linguistic devices to ensure the texts 'hangs together'.
4. Take a coherent piece of writing and ask the group to remove all the elements that connect the various sentences and give the piece cohesion. Compare the two pieces of writing and discuss their effectiveness.

### **Present information in a logical sequence**

1. Take a well written text and separate and mix up the various sections and/or paragraphs. Ask learners to rearrange the sections into a logical order and discuss the impact of poor ordering on logicity and coherence.
2. Ask a learner to relate a complaint they have and ask another learner to plan and draft a complaint letter on their behalf. The draft letter needs to follow the conventions of signalling to the reader the forthcoming content, of presenting the details in a logical, coherent order and concluding in a suitable manner.
3. Identify an event about which a news article will be written. Discuss the order in which the details should be written. Discuss the impact of altering the order.
4. Write a speech or presentation to persuade people to vote for a particular motion, for instance, and discuss the conventions of writing and the ordering of ideas. Include conventional openings, brief outlines of content to come, details and signalling of close of speech or presentation.

### **Use language, format and structure suitable for purpose and audience**

1. Discuss the details of an article or story and ask learners to re-write the text for two different audiences.
2. Learners could act as broadcast journalists and re-tell the same story for an audience of teenagers and an audience of adults, similar to children's Newsround and the BBC Six O'clock News.
3. Ask candidates to compare the language, format and structure of a blog on the BBC News website compared to a blog on a more teenage conscious web site.
4. Discuss and practice the formatting of various documents according to the accepted conventions. Include formal letters, articles, speeches, emails, reports, promotional material, instructions, etc.

### **Use correct grammar, including correct and consistent use of tense**

1. Ask learners to re-write texts in different tenses and discuss the implications this has for word selection, word order and overall sense and meaning.
2. Ask learners to proof read texts produced by other learners, themselves or tutors.

3. Produce a piece of text with tenses all mixed up and ask candidates to make sense of the writing by making the tense consistent.

**Ensure written work includes generally accurate punctuation and spelling and that meaning is clear**

1. Ask learners to write a paragraph devoid of any punctuation and then pass the paragraph to another learner to insert the correct punctuation. This should also highlight the possible ambiguities of meaning when a text is unpunctuated.
2. Produce a text containing common homophones or near homophones used incorrectly throughout. In groups, ask learners to discuss and correct the text.
3. Ensure learners are secure in their knowledge of when to use upper and lower case letters, full stops, initial capital letters and question marks.
4. Ensure learners appreciate the need for correct punctuation in all tasks, including informal emails.

## **Communication Level 2 – Reading**

### **Select and use different types of texts to obtain and utilise relevant information**

1. Obtain several texts on a contentious subject, ideally from different viewpoints in regards to the subject, and ask learners to prepare and deliver a speech for a debate.
2. Utilise information within a complaint letter to compose a suitable reply.
3. Use both a complaint letter and a corresponding set of policies and procedures, and discuss which policies and procedures should be used to create an adequate response.
4. Obtain different texts about the same subject, written from different viewpoints, such as a product review compared to product promotional material, or newspaper reports about a protest written with opposing sides, and ask group to discuss the differences.

### **Read and summarise, succinctly, information/ideas from different sources**

1. Obtain two different texts about a particular product and ask learners to summarise the positive and negative points, either in writing or in a discussion or presentation.
2. Ask learners to select texts relating to a contentious subject (e.g. film censorship, hunting, genetic engineering) and to summarise the arguments presented in the texts. The summary could be written or verbal.
3. Compare and contrast different texts' viewpoints about a particular subject.
4. Focus on ensuring explicit comparison between different viewpoints through using discourse markers such as 'on the one hand', 'in direct contrast', 'similarly', 'whereas', 'in summary', 'despite', 'however', etc.

### **Identify the purposes of texts and comment on how meaning is conveyed**

1. As a group or individuals, select and read some persuasive texts (e.g. an advertising leaflet, a promotional brochure for a theme park, a blurb on a book cover). Discuss the authors' intentions and whether or not the authors have been successful in their persuasive intentions.
2. As a group or individuals, select various texts (e.g. newspaper articles, business reports, children's literature) and discuss the particular techniques each piece of writing contains that are an aid (or hindrance) to conveying the authors' intentions.
3. Use unformatted texts and ask different groups to re-write the texts for different audiences. Discuss the resulting differences in language and layout.
4. Obtain different types of texts and analyse how each has been written and formatted in order to address its particular audience(s).
5. Ask a group to write a newspaper article or a promotional leaflet for different age groups and discuss the differences.

### **Detect point of view, implicit meaning and/or bias**

1. Obtain several texts written from a biased standpoint and ask learners to identify and discuss specific examples of bias within the writing.
2. Obtain at least two different articles about the same subject and discuss the ways in which each article presents the subject matter (e.g. two articles about a particular sporting event written by the local papers of the teams involved; a complimentary and a non-complimentary review or a film of other event).

3. Discuss the differences between objective fact and points of view and opinion. Discuss the characteristic of written argument. Ask learners to read texts and identify the facts on one hand, and the opinions on the other.
4. Obtain a neutral text and discuss ways to alter it to produce a biased text.

**Analyse texts in relation to audience needs and consider suitable responses**

1. Present learners with various complaint letters and ask them to read the letters in detail and then construct suitable responses.
2. Combine the complaint letters with copies of relevant policies and procedures and ask learners to identify the particular policies and procedures that would apply to the particular circumstance, making reference to both the complainant's points and the policies and procedures in their response.
3. Present candidates with various written responses to a particular task and ask them to discuss the appropriateness of each response. For example, a Manager could ask for a sales report and the learners could be presented with three or four summaries, only one of which is wholly appropriate.
4. Compare and contrast authors' ideas, looking for similarities and differences in opinion.
5. Identify the most common suggestion or complaint amongst contributors to a discussion forum.
6. Discuss how language in a text has been used in relation to its audience.

## **Communication Level 2 – Writing**

### **Present information/ideas concisely, logically, and persuasively**

1. Ask learners to consider and discuss the different texts that require persuasive writing. As a follow up, ask learners to write a persuasive text about a particular topic (e.g. an advertising leaflet, a letter soliciting funds, the text for a debate).
2. Ask learners to consider the order of information and detail within a text. Separate the various sections of a text and ask learners to put them in the correct order.
3. Discuss the impact of altering the sequence of a news report.
4. Ask learners to edit a text so it becomes concise.
5. Swap written texts and ask colleague to edit the text so it becomes more concise.
6. Take a four hundred word text and see if the word count can be reduced to three hundred without significant loss of detail.

### **Present information on complex subjects clearly and concisely**

1. Ask learners to act as an Editor for a newspaper. They must then edit a piece of writing on a complex subject so that it is presented clearly and concisely. This can be repeated for a different audience.
2. Ask learners to write a speech for a debate about a complex subject, considering structure, tone, syntax, audience and detail required etc.
3. Present a learner or group with a sequential scenario and discuss how to relate the events through coherent writing, using discourse markers, reference to earlier parts, ellipses and the use of other linguistic devices to ensure the texts 'hangs together'.
4. Take a coherent piece of writing and ask the group to remove all the elements that connect the various sentences and give the piece cohesion. Compare the two pieces of writing and discuss their effectiveness.

### **Use a range of writing styles for different purposes**

1. Ask learners to be on an editorial board for a magazine and to discuss the various types of items that could be included and the styles required for the different item types. Learners can then contribute to production of the items to produce a draft of the magazine.
2. Take one situation and explore the way the writing styles would differ according to the intended audience. For instance, the learner could be asked to support or object to a new runway at a local airport and to write a letter to local residents and the council, adapting each accordingly.
3. Ask learners to produce two different versions of promotional material for a new toy, one aimed at children the other aimed at adults.
4. Recount the same event, for instance an accident or a theft, for two different audiences; for instance, a friend and the police or insurance company.

### **Use a range of sentence structures, including complex sentences, and paragraphs to organise written communication effectively**

1. Examine and discuss a complex piece of writing, looking specifically at the inevitable mix of simple, compound and complex sentence structures.

2. Take a piece of writing with a mix of simple and compound sentences, asking candidates to reduce the number of sentences by forming complex sentences, yet retaining all the detail and sense of the original piece.
3. Produce a single block of text and ask learners to discuss where the paragraph breaks should occur.

**Punctuate written text using commas, apostrophes and inverted commas accurately**

1. Ask learners to proof read and correct various texts with punctuation omitted.
2. Construct various sentences and ask learners to insert apostrophes in the right place. For example: "I didnt have a cats chance in hell of knowing why Europes tallest buildings flags were at half-mast; its possible that my uncles explanation wasnt right either."
3. Ensure learners are as secure as possible in their use of commas. Discuss the different uses of commas, eg, for bracketing information, for separating items in a list, for joining two complete sentences into one sentence using a suitable connecting word, or for indicating the omission of words (also known as the gapping comma).
4. Use very simple texts, such as some children's literature, to explore the use of commas in context.
5. Explore the effect on sense or meaning of a sentence by including or omitting a comma.

**Ensure written work is fit for purpose and audience, with accurate spelling and grammar that support clear meaning**

1. Ask learners to discuss the differing requirements of writing styles and content for various audiences. Compare and contrast specific texts written for different audiences and ask learners to construct similar texts.
2. Ask learners to rewrite short texts for different audiences and purposes. For example, news story for a local and national audience.

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