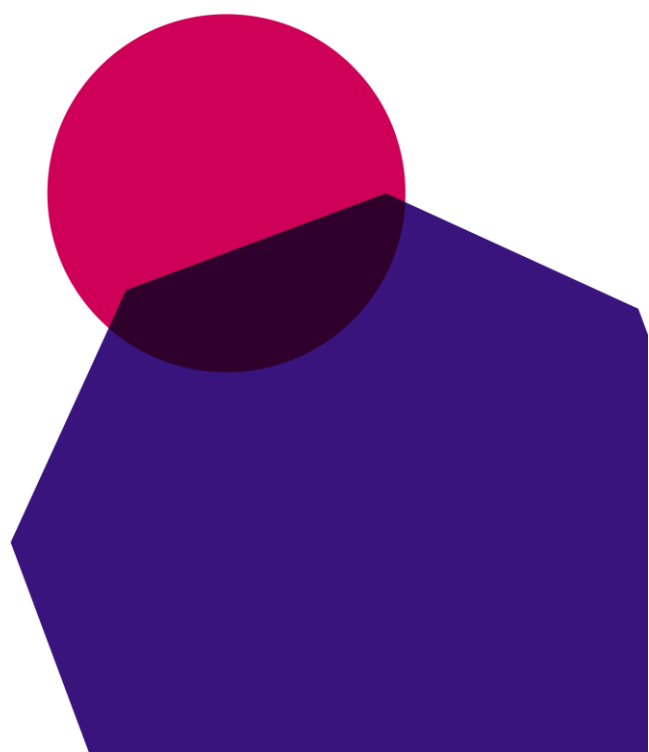


Guidance for Delivery

Functional Skills English Writing Level 1 (4748)

4748-111 (e-volve)

4748-211 (paper-based)



This guide has been produced in order to help centres understand and prepare candidates for the new Functional Skills English Writing examinations provided by City & Guilds.

The examinations have been designed to reflect the changes made to the subject content of Functional Skills English produced by the Department for Education in 2018, found [here](#). The subject content is also incorporated into City & Guilds' Functional Skills English handbook

Whilst there are some differences in the Functional Skills English subject content, the examinations will look familiar to centres as many of the previous approaches to assessment design have remained the same.

It is important to stress that the revised Department for Education Functional Skills English subject content is different from the previous Ofqual Functional Skills subject criteria. For more information on the differences, City & Guilds has produced a useful mapping guide to help centres understand some of the changes and is available on City & Guilds' [Functional Skills qualification documents webpage](#).

All Functional Skills qualifications are assessed summatively, and the Writing component of Functional Skills English should only be attempted by candidates once they have completed a period of learning and have successfully completed practice papers or centre-devised exercises that replicate the demands and rigours of the live examination materials. A range of sample papers is available on City & Guilds' [Functional Skills qualification documents webpage](#).

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Functional Skills English Writing Level 1

A Level 1 writing paper will always:

- consist of 2 questions
- require candidates to write approximately 200-250 words per response
- require candidates to write different types of document
- require candidates to write for different audiences and for different purposes
- assess 100% of the subject content.

Every question will clearly inform the candidate of the purpose and audience for the writing, and it is important that candidates take note of this and adapt their writing accordingly.

An indication of expected length of response will also be given; this may be in the form of a word count, i.e. *200-250 words*, or indicated by a phrase such as *5 - 6 paragraphs*. However, centres should note that the expectation is that a candidate will write approximately 250 words for each Level 1 response. Responses significantly shorter than this may be penalised to a lesser or greater degree. Responses that are significantly longer than the indicated word count will not be penalised for the length.

Functional Skills English Writing Level 1 Subject Content

Writing

Scope of study

Text: this should include straightforward texts such as narratives, instructions, explanations and reports of varying lengths.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar

19. Use a range of punctuation correctly (e.g. full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, commas, possessive apostrophes)
20. Use correct grammar (e.g. subject-verb agreement, consistent use of different tenses, definite and indefinite articles)
21. Spell words used most often in work, study and daily life, including specialist words

Writing composition

22. Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly, coherently and accurately
23. Write text of an appropriate level of detail and of appropriate length (including where this is specified) to meet the needs of purpose and audience
24. Use format, structure and language appropriate for audience and purpose
25. Write consistently and accurately in complex sentences, using paragraphs where appropriate

Department for Education Subject Content Functional Skills English, 2018

Marking of a candidate's responses is broadly split into two categories:

- composition (55% of available marks)
- spelling, punctuation and grammar (45% of available marks)

As indicated above, the writing composition category is made up of four separate subject content statements. Each of these statements is individually assessed and placed within one of the four following bands reflecting performance: *consistently; most of the time; some of the time; with limited accuracy*. Based on these initial bandings, the composition of the response as a whole is placed into one of the four bands and marks allocated accordingly – see mark scheme for further details. Examples of mark schemes are available on City & Guilds' [Functional Skills qualification documents webpage](#).

Consistently: almost wholly accurate and/or entirely meeting the subject content statement, with only a very few minor lapses.

Most of the time: very accurate and/or meeting the subject content statement most of the time, but frequency of errors demonstrates that knowledge is not absolutely secure.

Some of the time: the subject content statements are met at times throughout the response, but there are many instances where this is not the case.

Limited: subject content statements are generally not met in many instances throughout the response.

The performance in each of the spelling, punctuation and grammar categories is also placed within one of the four bands and marks allocated accordingly – see mark scheme for further details.

Examples of mark schemes are available on City & Guilds' [Functional Skills qualification documents webpage](#).

Assessment advice for centres

Section 1

Composition requirements for Level 1

1. Communicate information and ideas clearly, coherently and accurately (SCS22)

1.1 Clearly

This is about clarity of expression. Is the point that is being put across understandable, or is it muddled, ambiguous or incomprehensible? An example of a clarity issue would be the following sentence:

I am writing to say my car is bought on Monday and shall be late.

OR

When going to work in the morning the local roads already contain a great amount of traffic, which will be a lot more useful to the pupils already at the school.

It is unclear what these sentences mean and would be difficult to make an accurate judgement.

1.2 Coherently

This is about how the candidate's thinking, underpinning standpoint and approach to the writing is consistently maintained throughout, moving logically from one point to the next.

Candidates should aim to demonstrate coherence within, and between, the points being made. A piece of writing that addresses each individual bullet point provided in the question brief without reference to the previous point(s), either through inference or explicit reference or without any attempt to link the points with devices and language that show logical progression, lacks coherence.

1.3 Accurately

Accurately, in this context, refers to the candidate's ability to accurately convey the specific information required; it is not to do with accuracy of spelling, punctuation or grammar but is about the accuracy (linked with clarity and coherence) of the information being presented.

2. Writes text of an appropriate level of detail and length to meet the needs of purpose and audience (SCS 23)

2.1 Detail

Each question brief will contain an indication of the detail that should be expanded upon in the response.

Band 4 - Consistently:	all bullet points or required detail sufficiently expanded upon.
Band 3 - Most of the time:	probably only one significant omission of required detail in the body of the text or, in the case of a letter requiring a response, an omitted sender's address/contact details at any place in the letter.
Band 2 - Some of the time:	significant omissions that render the response incomplete and only partially suited to purpose and audience.
Band 1 - Limited:	very limited coverage; significant omissions of the majority of required detail; perfunctory attempts to cover detail, with little or no expansion; a document that is not suited to purpose or audience. a text that writes about something unrelated to the given task.

2.2 Length

Each question brief will contain guidance about the expected length of response. At Level 1, this will be given either in paragraphs, eg, *write 5-6 paragraphs*, or a word count, eg, *write approximately 250 words*. As a general rule, each response at Level 1 should be approximately 250 words long, even if the guidance is given in paragraphs. A response significantly shorter than this may be penalised to a lesser or greater degree. A response that is significantly higher in word count than 250 will not be penalised because of length per se, but candidates should make sure that the response is still suitable for its purpose and audience.

Planning and drafting of responses will not be marked.

Please note: a response that does not address the question brief will be awarded zero marks.

3. Use format, structure and language appropriate for audience and purpose (SCS 24)

Format and structure

In each Level 1 Functional Skills English Writing paper, candidates will be asked to write two of the following document types:

- a letter
- an email
- a narrative
- a report
- an explanation
- instructions

Format and structure requirements

Document type	Level 1	Format and structure requirements
Formal letter	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sender's address• recipient's address• date• salutation• appropriately matched valediction• name/signature• paragraphs where appropriate
Email	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• recipient's email address• subject line• salutation• a valediction• name• paragraphs where appropriate
Narrative	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• title• a sensible sequence to the text, often chronological• an obvious ending or conclusion• paragraphing
Report	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• title• logical sequencing of information• subheadings• bullet points, if appropriate• paragraphs

Instructions*	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • title • logical sequencing of information • section demarcation, eg numbers, bullet points, sub-headings • paragraphs, if appropriate
Explanation*	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • title • logical sequencing of information • section demarcation, eg numbers, bullet points, sub-headings • paragraphs, if appropriate

* The question may ask candidates to incorporate instructions or explanations into another type of document, such as an email, in which case candidates should format and structure the response based on both the email and instructions or explanation requirements.

Additional information regarding document types

3.1 Formal letter

A formal letter is a letter written using formal language. It is often sent to a business or public body, and usually to someone who is not personally known by the writer.

A typical example of a question is as follows:

You travel by train every day and are fed up that the trains are often late, overcrowded and regularly cancelled. You pay £150 a month for a railcard and now feel you should have part of this refunded.

Write a formal letter to Sue Phillips, the Customer Services Manager. Her address is Bank House, 12 Stevens Street, Rochley, RC4 6YG.

You should cover:

- *Why you are writing*
- *What you experience daily*
- *Why this is unacceptable*
- *How they should improve*
- *Request a refund.*

You should write approximately 250 words.

3.2 Email

A piece of written communication between two people, sent electronically using the internet and email servers. It may be formal or informal in nature.

A typical example of a question is as follows:

You work in an office and have been asked to organise the Christmas party.

Write an email to your colleagues outlining your first ideas about where to hold it and what entertainment to have. You also need help to organise the event.

You should cover:

Why you are writing the email

What your first ideas are

What sort of entertainment you are planning

What you would like help with

The email address is colleagues@typ.co.uk

You should write approximately 250 words.

3.3 Narrative

This is essentially a story or an account of a day or an event, most likely to be most effectively written in a chronological order.

Centres should be aware that the question brief may refer directly to a narrative but may also ask candidates to write *'the story of their day'* or the *'sequence of events'* or something similar.

For example:

You have started a work placement for a company that sells VIP hot air balloon rides. One of your tasks is to go on the balloon ride and then write a description of the day out for the website, to help readers of the website understand what the experience is like.

Write approximately 250 words telling the story of your experience.

You should cover:

- *how the day started*
- *how you felt before the balloon took off*
- *how you felt when high up above the ground*
- *what you could see*
- *the highlight of the day*
- *how the day ended.*

3.4 Explanation

A text that explains something in order to make it clear to the reader.

Candidates will be asked to provide an explanation. Examples of the types of explanations required are:

- *explaining something they witnessed*
- *explaining a process or procedure that has to be carried out*
- *explaining the benefits of an item or a course of action*

At times, this will form a part of another document type, for instance an email.

For example:

Write an email to a friend to explain the type of event you want to hold and the role you would like them to have in organising the event. Choose one of the following events:

*a wedding reception
a charity fundraising day
a family sports day
a 21st birthday celebration.*

Your email should explain the following:

- *what type of event you are planning*
- *specific details about the event (eg, theme, timings, guest numbers, seating arrangements or anything else relevant to the event)*
- *your friend's role in helping to organise the event*
- *your friend's role on the day.*

Your email should be approximately 250 words long.

3.5 Instructions

A written piece that provides clear, structured guidance about how to perform a task.

Candidates will either be asked to write a stand-alone set of instructions or to incorporate a set of instructions into another document type, for instance an email or a letter.

Candidates should use appropriate language and tone for the instructions, knowing that effective instructions:

1. use short sentences and short paragraphs
2. arrange points in logical order
3. contain specific statements
4. use the imperative mood
5. usually have the most important term in each sentence at the beginning
6. say one thing in each sentence.

A typical example of a question is as follows:

Write an email of approximately 250 words instructing a colleague how to cover your job for a week while you are away.

Your email should cover:

*what tasks need to be done
how to do them
when they need to be done*

or anything else that would allow them to carry out your job role effectively.

Or

Write a set of instructions for a website covering one of the following topics:

*how to cook a meal
how to carve a Halloween pumpkin
how to maintain a bicycle/car/scooter
how to perform a trick on a skateboard
how to apply makeup
how to create a hairstyle
how to play a game.*

You should aim to write between 200 and 250 words.

3.6 Report

A report is a written account of something that has been carried out, seen or investigated, written in formal language.

Candidates will be asked to write a report that will typically require them to present information on a generic topic such as the role of technology in modern life, or about a certain event that has taken place.

A formal report will usually contain several sections:

Introduction – explains the topic and purpose of the report

The body – often sub-divided into brief sections using additional sub-headings or numbers

Conclusion – summing up the main points and offering personal conclusions regarding the topic and may also suggest further recommendations or actions.

A report into an event, for instance reporting on a sports match, will have a less structured format and may contain only a title and paragraphs. There would be no requirement for sub-headings, but it is still important that there is an obvious introduction paragraph and a concluding paragraph that brings the report to a logical close.

A typical example of a question requiring a report is as follows:

Write a report of approximately 250-300 words about homelessness in your area. Your report is aimed at people who know very little about homelessness.

You should cover:

- *the scale of the problem in your area*
- *who it affects*
- *the effect on the community*
- *help available*
- *possible solutions.*

4 Use format, structure and language appropriate for audience and purpose (SCS 24)

Language

This category is principally concerned with tone and expression.

4.1

Tone (or register) relates to the candidates' abilities to use language with the correct degree of formality to suit the situation. If they are writing a letter to a friend, it is perfectly acceptable to start with *Hi John*. However, they should not sign off with *Yours faithfully*. If they are writing a formal letter, they should not be starting with *Dear John*, or *Hi*. Similarly, they should not close it with *Thanks*, for instance, but should use the correct formal closure of *Yours faithfully* or *Yours sincerely*. The correct degree of formality should be maintained throughout the piece of writing.

4.2

Language should be suited to the purpose and audience. At Level 1, a candidate may be asked to write a set of instructions, for example. Good instructions generally involve simple or compound sentences, or may even be in bullet point form, with articles omitted, all of which may be appropriate in the context. Markers must take account of the task and look for appropriate language use.

4.3

Clumsy or incorrect expression is also taken account of under the language category. For instance, if a candidate were to write *I am writing to complain on my car*, this would be an incorrect expression, as it should be *complain about*.

Similarly, if a candidate were to write *I work in that shop and the shop opens at 9 and the shop closes at 8*, it can be seen that the writing style is not succinct and contains unnecessary repetition of *the shop*. It is not grammatically incorrect but can be seen as clumsy.

5 Write consistently in complex sentences, using paragraphs where appropriate (SCS 25)

Candidates should aim to vary their sentence construction. Effective writing uses a combination of simple, compound and complex sentences. The frequency of complex sentences depends, to some extent, on the type of document that is being written. A set of instructions would normally contain succinct, simple sentences; a report would be characterized by fewer simple sentences.

Paragraphing also depends, to some extent, on the type of document being used. Candidates should know when it is appropriate to use paragraphs and when paragraph breaks should occur. Once again, some instructions may not contain paragraphs, but letters, reports, narratives, emails and explanations are very likely to require them.

Please note; for ease and standardisation of markers, certain elements of the subject content statements have been rearranged on the mark schemes.

Appropriate language (from SCS 24) has been paired with *Writes consistently and accurately in complex sentences* (from SCS 25); *using paragraphs where appropriate* (SCS 25) has been paired with *Use format and structure appropriate for audience and purpose* (SCS 24). See marks schemes here.

Examples of mark schemes are available on City & Guilds' [Functional Skills qualification documents webpage](#).

Section 2

Spelling, punctuation and grammar requirements for Level 1

1. Spelling

Spelling marks (SCS 21) Spell correctly words used most often in work, study and daily life, including specialist words.	Marks
Spelling is consistently accurate, including ambitious and/or irregular words where used.	4
Spelling is mostly correct, with occasional errors.	3
Spelling is accurate some of the time, with some accurate spelling of more complex or irregular words.	2
Limited accuracy: some accurate spelling of simple or regular words.	1
Spelling errors significantly impair meaning, or insufficient evidence to judge ability.	0

Centres should be familiar with the spelling demands at the Entry Level of Functional Skills English Writing, detail of which can be found [here](#). This will inform centres of the spelling demands at the higher levels, as lower level demands are subsumed into the levels above.

In order to achieve 4 marks for spelling, candidates will have to spell accurately throughout the response. The response will also include accurately spelt ambitious and/or irregular words. 100% accuracy is not required, but only a few errors are permissible.

In order to achieve 2 or 3 marks, the response must contain words that are deemed to be ambitious and/or irregular. The frequency of errors in all word types and the frequency of accurate spelling of ambitious and/or irregular words will inform the mark to be awarded. Centres should be familiar with the spelling demands of Functional Skills English Entry Levels 1-3, as they will provide an indication of the levels required.

2. Punctuation

Punctuation marks (SCS 19) Use a range of punctuation correctly (e.g. full stops, questions marks, exclamation marks, commas, possessive apostrophes).	Marks
A range of punctuation (e.g. full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, commas and possessive apostrophes) is used consistently and accurately to mark the structure of sentences and give clarity and emphasis.	4
Punctuation is mostly accurate, including punctuation within the sentence if required, e.g. commas used correctly to mark phrases and clauses or within lists.	3
Some accuracy in punctuation: some sentences are correctly demarcated, with some correct use of other punctuation if required, e.g. commas to mark phrases or clauses and commas in lists.	2
Limited accuracy in the punctuation required for the document type.	1
Punctuation errors significantly impair meaning, or insufficient evidence to judge ability.	0

The punctuation demands at Level 1 are now higher than in the legacy Functional Skills English qualification (3748).

The standards specify the use of commas to mark phrases or clauses within a sentence as well as to separate items within lists, and the use of possessive apostrophes. These were previously Level 2 requirements.

In order to achieve full marks, a range of punctuation must be used accurately and consistently. Correctly demarcated sentences with some other types of punctuation within the sentence, eg, commas, apostrophes, capital letters on proper nouns, or other punctuation marks, must be evident. Whilst errors will be taken into account when awarding marks, the focus for markers is more on the frequency of accurate use of a range of punctuation as dictated by the type of document being written.

In order to achieve 2 marks or above, there must be some evidence of accurate use of punctuation other than sentence demarcation (ie correct beginning and end to a sentence).

3. Grammar

Grammar marks (SCS 20) Use correct grammar (e.g. subject–verb agreement, correct & consistent use of a range of tenses, definite & indefinite articles).	Marks
Grammar is consistently accurate: e.g. length, focus and structure of sentences are varied to add clarity and emphasis; tenses and verb forms are controlled; definite and indefinite articles are used accurately when needed.	4
Grammar is mostly accurate: e.g. a range of verb forms is used mostly correctly; a range of appropriate tense choices is mostly maintained; definite and indefinite articles are mostly correct when needed.	3
Some accuracy in grammar: e.g. some sentences are grammatically sound; there is some variation in verb forms; tense choice is appropriate some of the time; definite and indefinite articles are sometimes incorrectly used or omitted when needed.	2
Limited accuracy in grammar: e.g. errors in verb forms are frequent and tense choice is often incorrect; definite and indefinite articles are frequently incorrect or omitted when needed.	1
Grammar errors significantly impair meaning, or insufficient evidence to judge ability.	0

The examples of grammar requirements in the standards (SCS 20 in table above) are examples only; other errors will be taken into account, such as incorrect word order, omitted words, incorrectly repeated words, incorrect subject-verb agreement and incorrect verb-tense agreement.

100% accuracy is not required to achieve 4 marks, but candidates must be able to demonstrate consistently accurate grammar in order to do so.

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