

Cambridge English: Proficiency Writing Examiners use the following assessment scale, extracted from the one on the previous page:

C2	Content	Communicative Achievement	Organisation	Language
5	All content is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed.	Demonstrates complete command of the conventions of the communicative task. Communicates complex ideas in an effective and convincing way, holding the target reader's attention with ease, fulfilling all communicative purposes.	Text is organised impressively and coherently using a wide range of cohesive devices and organisational patterns with complete flexibility.	Uses a wide range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, with fluency, precision, sophistication and style. Use of grammar is sophisticated, fully controlled and completely natural. Any inaccuracies occur only as slips.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>			
3	Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is on the whole informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task with sufficient flexibility to communicate complex ideas in an effective way, holding the target reader's attention with ease, fulfilling all communicative purposes.	Text is a well-organised, coherent whole, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns with flexibility.	Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, effectively and precisely. Uses a wide range of simple and complex grammatical forms with full control, flexibility and sophistication. Errors, if present, are related to less common words and structures, or occur as slips.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>			
1	Irrelevances and misinterpretation of task may be present. Target reader is minimally informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task effectively to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward and complex ideas, as appropriate.	Text is well organised and coherent, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns to generally good effect.	Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, appropriately. Uses a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with control and flexibility. Occasional errors may be present but do not impede communication.
0	Content is totally irrelevant. Target reader is not informed.	<i>Performance below Band 1.</i>		

Writing mark scheme

Glossary of terms

1. GENERAL

Generally	Generally is a qualifier meaning not in every way or instance. Thus, 'generally appropriately' refers to performance that is not as good as 'appropriately'.
Flexibility	Flexible and flexibly refer to the ability to adapt – whether language, organisational devices, or task conventions – rather than using the same form over and over, thus evidencing better control and a wider repertoire of the resource. Flexibility allows a candidate to better achieve communicative goals.

2. CONTENT

Relevant	Relevant means related or relatable to required content points and/or task requirements.
Target reader	The target reader is the hypothetical reader set up in the task, e.g. a magazine's readership, your English teacher.
Informed	The target reader is informed if content points and/or task requirements are addressed and appropriately developed. Some content points do not require much development (e.g. 'state what is x') while others require it 'describe', 'explain'.

3. COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Conventions of the communicative task	Conventions of the communicative task include such things as genre, format, register and function. For example, a personal letter should not be written as a formal report, should be laid out accordingly, and use the right tone for the communicative purpose.
Holding the target reader's attention	Holding the target reader's attention is used in the positive sense and refers to the quality of a text that allows a reader to derive meaning and not be distracted. It does not refer to texts that force a reader to read closely because they are difficult to follow or make sense of.
Communicative purpose	Communicative purpose refers to the communicative requirements as set out in the task, e.g. make a complaint, suggest alternatives.
Straightforward and complex ideas	Straightforward ideas are those which relate to relatively limited subject matter, usually concrete in nature, and which require simpler rhetorical devices to communicate. Complex ideas are those which are of a more abstract nature, or which cover a wider subject area, requiring more rhetorical resources to bring together and express.

4. ORGANISATION

Linking words, cohesive devices, and organisational patterns	<p>Linking words are cohesive devices, but are separated here to refer to higher-frequency vocabulary which provides explicit linkage. They can range from basic high-frequency items (such as 'and', 'but') to basic and phrasal items (such as 'because', 'first of all', 'finally').</p> <p>Cohesive devices refers to more sophisticated linking words and phrases (e.g. 'moreover', 'it may appear', 'as a result'), as well as grammatical devices such as the use of reference pronouns, substitution (e.g. <i>There are two women in the picture. The one on the right...</i>), ellipsis (e.g. <i>The first car he owned was a convertible, the second a family car</i>), or repetition.</p> <p>Organisational patterns refers to less-explicit ways of achieving connection at the between-sentence level and beyond, e.g. arranging sentences in climactic order, the use of parallelism, using a rhetorical question to set up a new paragraph.</p>
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5. LANGUAGE

Vocabulary	<p>Basic vocabulary refers to vocabulary used for survival purposes, for simple transactions, and the like.</p> <p>Everyday vocabulary refers to vocabulary that comes up in common situations of a non-technical nature in the relevant domain.</p> <p>Less common lexis refers to vocabulary items that appear less often in the relevant domain. These items often help to express ideas more succinctly and precisely.</p>
Appropriacy of vocabulary	Appropriacy of vocabulary: the use of words and phrases that fit the context of the given task. For example, in <i>I'm very sensible to noise</i> , the word <i>sensible</i> is inappropriate as the word should be <i>sensitive</i> . Another example would be <i>Today's big snow makes getting around the city difficult</i> . The phrase <i>getting around</i> is well suited to this situation. However, <i>big snow</i> is inappropriate as <i>big</i> and <i>snow</i> are not used together. <i>Heavy snow</i> would be appropriate.
Grammatical forms	<p>Simple grammatical forms: words, phrases, basic tenses and simple clauses.</p> <p>Complex grammatical forms: longer and more complex items, e.g. noun clauses, relative and adverb clauses, subordination, passive forms, infinitives, verb patterns, modal forms and tense contrasts.</p>
Grammatical control	<p>Grammatical control: the ability to consistently use grammar accurately and appropriately to convey intended meaning.</p> <p>Where language specifications are provided at lower levels (as in <i>Cambridge English: Key (KET)</i> and <i>Cambridge English: Preliminary (PET)</i>), candidates may have control of only the simplest exponents of the listed forms.</p>
Range	Range: the variety of words and grammatical forms a candidate uses. At higher levels, candidates will make increasing use of a greater variety of words, fixed phrases, collocations and grammatical forms.
Overuse	Overuse refers to those cases where candidates repeatedly use the same word because they do not have the resources to use another term or phrase the same idea in another way. Some words may unavoidably appear often as a result of being the topic of the task; that is not covered by the term overuse here.
Errors and slips	Errors are systematic mistakes. Slips are mistakes that are non-systematic, i.e. the candidate has learned the vocabulary item or grammatical structure, but just happened to make a mistake in this instance. In a candidate's response, where most other examples of a lexical/grammatical point are accurate, a mistake on that point would most likely be a slip.
Impede communication	<p>Impede communication means getting in the way of meaning.</p> <p>Meaning can still be determined indicates that some effort is required from the reader to determine meaning.</p>