



## Sample Mark Scheme: P000298

NCFE Functional Skills Qualification in English at Level 1 – Writing (501/1660/5)

### Markers' Briefing Note

Marks in the English Writing component are awarded for 'independent construction of written text to communicate in a purposeful context'. Whilst the learner may use the content of any Source Documents to inform their writing, the Writing Activities do not assess Reading skills.

Learners are expected to produce an open response. Depending on the context of the activity, a learner may support either side of an argument, or adopt any well-reasoned stance, using the Source Documents and/or their own ideas and experiences. What should be assessed is their ability to do so whilst meeting all the coverage and range criteria of the Writing Skill Standard.

### SPaG Mark Scheme

Each writing paper consists of two activities. There are 9 marks awarded for Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation (SPaG) for **each** activity. These are evenly distributed with 3 marks awarded for each skill. The tiered scheme for awarding marks is detailed in this document.

Activity 1: Write a factual report.	Marks	Coverage and Range
<p><b>Content:</b></p> <p>Learners have some freedom to use their own ideas, for example, whether there was actually impact between the car and the cyclist, as well as the nature of the cyclist's injuries, but essentially this activity should be a <b>factual</b> report about what actually happened. Any statement as to blame is irrelevant.</p> <p>The report should contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a brief explanation of when and where the accident took place, as well as the writer's contact details <b>1 mark</b></li> <li>• a clear explanation of what they saw, including the build up to the accident, a description of the driver and an account of what happened to the cyclist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>1 mark</b> for a simple explanation</li> <li>○ <b>2 marks</b> for a full explanation</li> <li>○ <b>3 marks</b> for a fully comprehensive response.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Award additional mark for a very convincing report. This might include any further plausible/reasonable information which focuses on the prescribed purpose. <b>1 mark</b></li> </ul>	<p>5 (max)</p>	<p>1.3.1 Write clearly and coherently, including an appropriate level of detail</p>
<p><b>Structure:</b></p> <p>The report should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a clear structure with writing organised into <b>meaningful</b> paragraphs <b>1 mark</b></li> <li>• contain complete sentences to convey thoughts and ideas. <b>1 mark</b></li> </ul>	<p>2 (max)</p>	<p>1.3.2 Present information in a logical sequence</p>
<p><b>Format and Style:</b></p> <p>The report should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be formatted as a report, with an appropriate heading <b>1 mark</b></li> <li>• use appropriate tone <b>1 mark</b></li> <li>• be written in a logical sequence <b>1 mark</b></li> <li>• be written in an appropriate formal style. <b>1 mark</b></li> </ul>	<p>4 (max)</p>	<p>1.3.3 Use language, format and structure suitable for purpose and audience</p>

## Notes concerning Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)

- Learners must write a minimum of 100 words at Level 1, otherwise they will not be considered for the **full 9 SPaG marks**. Examiners should use their judgement, though. For example, a poor SPaG response under 100 words should not be granted more than 3 overall, whereas an answer which is marginally under 100 words but is good on SPaG may be awarded 6 as a maximum.
- Examiners are discouraged from focusing on the negatives in relation to SPaG, such as the number of errors. Although important, examiners are encouraged to give priority to the positive elements.

## Spelling

What's expected at Level 1?

Learners should correctly spell regular, common words used most often in work, studies and daily life, such as:

- helping verbs, like *would, should, could*
- two-syllable words with double consonants: *common, kettle*
- words using suffixes: *-ly, -er, -age -al, -ary, -ship, -ness, -ible, -able, -tion, -sion*, such as *sincerely, definitely*
- homophones: *four/for, were/we're, sea/see*
- single vowels plus consonant: *adventure, tickets*
- two different vowels in the middle of a word: *social, leave, await*
- unstressed vowels: *separate, restaurant, interesting*
- *ie* or *ei* confusions: *receive, believe*
- pluralised words ending in *y, f, fe* or *o*: *babies, halves, potatoes.*

Learners should not be penalised for failing to spell correctly words which are associated with a higher level than Level 1 but zero marks can be awarded if there is no progression from Entry 3. All words provided in the assessment should be spelled accurately. The same spelling error repeated is counted as one error.

1.3.5i  
Ensure written work includes generally accurate spelling and that meaning is clear

### Statement

### Score

Spelling should be correct throughout, including some ambitious/irregular words. Meaning is clear. Errors stand out as one-off slips and are not repeated.

3

Invariably, common words and regular compound words are correct and their meaning is accurate. There will be some errors which may be repeated.

2

Spelling of simple, everyday words, including some plurals, may be correct but there will be frequent errors in more complex words. These errors are usually repeated. Errors may affect meaning.	1
Some attempt to spell very simple, everyday words correctly, but there will be frequent errors and inconsistencies, usually in every sentence. Errors may affect meaning. No clear progression from Entry Level.	0
<b>Punctuation</b>	
<p>What's expected at Level 1?</p> <p>The expectations of the punctuation standards are limited, extending to accuracy in the use of capital letters, full-stops, question marks and exclamation marks. Because commas are not part of the standard, relatively short sentences are acceptable.</p> <p>Learners should not be penalised for misuse or absence of a Level 2 skill, for example, commas, apostrophes, colons, semi-colons, or speech marks.</p>	1.3.5ii Ensure written work includes generally accurate punctuation and that meaning is clear
<b>Statement</b>	<b>Score</b>
Capital letters, full-stops and question marks are used accurately throughout. Meaning is clear. There may be a few, infrequent errors.	3
Invariably, punctuation is accurate and meaning is clear. There may be some errors with capital letters where the learner has used proper nouns and in beginning a sentence. The first person singular may occasionally be seen as 'i'.	2
Some accuracy with punctuation but there may be a lot of errors. There may be a frequent incorrect use of capital letters, seen in their absence from proper nouns and their inclusion for some common nouns. Commas may be used for fresh sentences instead of full stops. The personal pronoun is lower case more often than not.	1
Rare if any accuracy with punctuation. There may be a frequent absence of capital letters or no capitalisation at all. Commas will be used for fresh sentences instead of full stops. The personal pronoun is always lower case. No progression from Entry Level.	0

Grammar		
<p>What's expected at Level 1?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurate use of subject/verb agreement.</li> <li>• Precise use of tenses.</li> <li>• Correct use of syntax and sentence structure.</li> </ul> <p>The obvious absence of a word in a sentence is marked as a syntax error.</p>		<p>1.3.4 Use correct grammar, including correct and consistent use of tense</p>
Statement		Score
Competent use of subject-verb agreement and tense, at times within complex sentences. Syntax and sentence structure are accurate and effective. Grammar used to good effect. Meaning is clear.		3
Subject-verb agreement and tense are accurate most of the time. Syntax and sentence structure is mostly accurate with only minor errors. Meaning is clear.		2
Tense used correctly in some cases but there may be frequent inconsistencies. Subject-verb agreement is correct some of the time. Some weakness in sentence structure, with some word absences. Inappropriate words may be used, although syntax may be generally accurate. Errors may affect meaning.		1
There will be inconsistent use of tense and subject/verb agreement. Sentence structure/syntax will be weak. Errors will probably affect meaning.		0
	<b>Total SPaG marks available:</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>Total marks available for Activity 1:</b>	<b>20</b>
Activity 2: Write a letter for a newspaper.	Marks	Coverage and Range
<p><b>Content:</b> Learners should use their own words and not simply 'lift' sentences from the newspaper article. The letter should:</p>	<p>5 (max)</p>	<p>1.3.1 Write clearly and coherently, including an appropriate level of detail</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explain why the learner is writing <b>1 mark</b></li> <li>give a clear explanation of what the learner feels about cycle lanes, for or against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1 mark</b> for a simple explanation with generic reasons</li> <li><b>2 marks</b> for a full explanation with justified reasons</li> <li><b>3 marks</b> for a fully comprehensive response.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Award an additional mark for a very persuasive/convincing letter. <b>1 mark</b></li> </ul>		
<p><b>Structure:</b></p> <p>The report should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have a clear structure with writing organised into <b>meaningful</b> paragraphs <b>1 mark</b></li> <li>contain complete sentences to convey thoughts and ideas. <b>1 mark</b></li> </ul>	2 (max)	1.3.2 Present information in a logical sequence
<p><b>Format and Style:</b></p> <p>The letter should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be dated <b>1 mark</b></li> <li>include the sender's address and the recipient's address <b>1 mark</b></li> <li>have a formal salutation and matching close, usually Dear Sir or Madam and Yours faithfully, although Dear Editor may be accepted in this instance <b>1 mark</b></li> <li>include suitable language, covering tone, vocabulary and register. <b>1 mark</b></li> </ul>	4 (max)	1.3.3 Use language, format and structure suitable for purpose and audience
<p>(SPaG should be marked the same as for Activity 1)</p>	Total SPaG marks available:	9
	Total marks available for Activity 2:	20

Overall marks:	40
Pass mark:	29

<b>Activity 1: Write a factual report.</b>				
<b>Activity type: Free response extended writing.</b>				
<b>Skill standard</b>	<b>Coverage and range</b>	<b>Marks available</b>	<b>Total marks</b>	
Write a range of texts to communicate information, ideas and opinions using formats and styles suitable for their purpose and audience	1.3.1 - Write clearly and coherently, including an appropriate level of detail	5	20	
	1.3.2 - Present information in a logical sequence	2		
	1.3.3 - Use language, format and structure suitable for purpose and audience	4		
	1.3.4 - Use correct grammar, including correct and consistent use of tense 1.3.5 (i-ii) - Ensure written work includes generally accurate punctuation and spelling and that meaning is clear	9		
<b>Activity 2: Write a letter for a newspaper.</b>				
<b>Activity type: Free response extended writing.</b>				
<b>Skill standard</b>	<b>Coverage and range</b>	<b>Marks available</b>	<b>Total marks</b>	
Write a range of texts to communicate information, ideas and opinions using formats and styles suitable for their purpose and audience	1.3.1 - Write clearly and coherently, including an appropriate level of detail	5	20	
	1.3.2 - Present information in a logical sequence	2		
	1.3.3 - Use language, format and structure suitable for purpose and audience	4		
	1.3.4 - Use correct grammar, including correct and consistent use of tense 1.3.5 (i-ii) - Ensure written work includes generally accurate punctuation and spelling and that meaning is clear	9		
<b>Coverage and Range</b>		<b>Marks available</b>	<b>Actual weighting</b>	<b>Weighting spec</b>
1.3.1 - Write clearly and coherently, including an appropriate level of detail 1.3.2 - Present information in a logical sequence. 1.3.3 - Use language, format and structure suitable for purpose and audience		22	55%	55-60%
1.3.4 - Use correct grammar, including correct and consistent use of tense 1.3.5 (i-ii) - Ensure written work includes generally accurate punctuation and spelling and that meaning is clear		18	45%	40-45%