



PROSPERITY EDUCATION

How to utilise the Cambridge mark scheme in the classroom

P.A.R.K. conference, Brno: March 2026

How my students feel about writing...

How I feel about teaching writing skills...

Extract from C1 Writing Masterclass

Introduction

The assessment criteria

Each piece of writing is marked against four assessment criteria, each carrying a maximum of five marks.

Content

This criterion focuses on whether you have answered the question and whether the reader would have all the information they need. You must make sure that you identify what the question is asking you to do and plan your answer so that you stay on the topic. In Part 1 you must cover two ideas from the question, make a choice from them and give reasons for your choice. In Part 2 questions you must identify what you will need to write about from the question.

Max. 5 marks

Communicative achievement

This criterion focuses on how well you communicate with the reader. This includes whether your writing is suitable for the task you are writing and that it also involves register. Register means whether your writing is more formal (e.g. writing for someone you don't know) or less formal (e.g. writing for your classmates).

Max. 5 marks

Organisation

This criterion focuses on how your ideas are organised into paragraphs, if these are needed. It includes the use of discourse markers (e.g. 'and', 'but', 'so' at a basic level; and 'therefore', 'despite this' at a higher level). It also includes things like how pronouns are used to refer to nouns to avoid repetition. For example: 'He never liked school and hated going there...'. In this sentence 'there' means that the student doesn't repeat the word 'school'.

Max. 5 marks

Language

This criterion focuses on vocabulary and grammar. It isn't just about using vocabulary and grammar without making mistakes. It also considers whether your writing uses more difficult grammar and more unusual words and phrases. It is sometimes hard to focus on both, and, of course, it's great if you don't make any mistakes! However, if this means that your language is very simple, it may mean that you can't get to the top marks here.

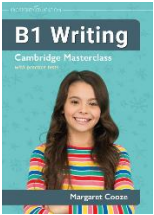
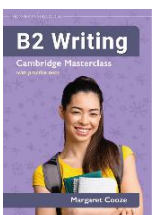
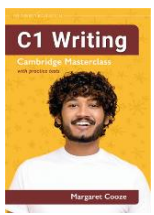
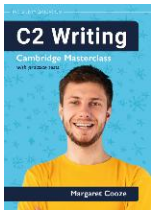
Max. 5 marks

When all four criteria have been assessed your total mark is given out of 20.

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Common European Framework of Reference

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/uses-and-objectives>

	<p>I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.</p> <p>I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.</p>
	<p>I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests.</p> <p>I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view.</p> <p>I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.</p>
	<p>I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length.</p> <p>I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues.</p> <p>I can select style appropriate to the reader in mind.</p>
	<p>I can write clear, smoothly flowing text in an appropriate style.</p> <p>I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.</p> <p>I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.</p>



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Paraphrasing

He's very argumentative.	He argues all the time. He is always arguing.

And finally...

How I can help my students to prepare for Cambridge writing exams...
What I can do help myself teach writing skills for Cambridge exams...