



# Skills for Life

## Writing Entry 1 Examination Report

2007 – Test 067

## Skills for Life Writing Examination Report: Entry 1

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This report is based on candidate performance on one version of the Skills for Life Writing Entry 1 tests in 2006/7.

The report is intended as an aid to teachers and colleges in preparing candidates for future Cambridge ESOL Skills for Life Writing tests. It includes a number of sample candidate answers accompanied by examiner comments.

### Test 067

The three tasks in this test were an application form for a college ID card, a description of a favourite place and a note to a friend about daily college activities.

There were 27 marks available on the paper, 6 for Task 1, 9 for Task 2 and 12 for Task 3. The breakdown of marks available for each assessment focus (Text, Sentence and Word) is shown below:

	Text	Sentence	Word	Total
Task 1	0	0	6	6
Task 2	3	3	3	9
Task 3	6	3	3	12
Total	9	6	12	27

Candidates scored most highly on Word focus and found Sentence focus the most challenging.

### Task 1 ID Application Form

Candidates were assessed exclusively on Word focus in this task and generally performed very well, scoring an average of 4.8 marks out of the maximum 6 available. This task was a simple form filling exercise that caused no problems to the majority of candidates. Candidates from centres that had been well prepared on address conventions scored very well. The layout of the two questions 'What course...' and 'When come...' led the majority of students to attempt to write in sentences although this was not asked for in the rubric. This enabled better students to produce more lexis which could be rewarded.

### Task 2 Description of a Place

This task was also generally done very well, with candidates scoring an average of 7.2 out of the 9 available marks. Candidates scored most highly in the Text focus. The interpretation of 'place' produced a variety of answers – usually the college, the home or town/country, all of which were valid. Stronger candidates had the opportunity to produce answers considerably longer than 30 words – and many did. In the Sentence assessment focus, the task provided candidates with the opportunity to produce a variety of basic sentences. The second bullet point, 'why', allowed candidates to produce compound sentences, with varying degrees of success. For Word focus, generally a good range of candidates' own vocabulary was produced. Better candidates produced vocabulary above the level and the task generally produced a mix of vocabulary.

### Task 3 College Activities

This task was done the least well of the three tasks in the paper, with candidates scoring, on average, 8.8 marks out of the 12 available. Candidates scored most highly in the Word focus and were able to produce a good range of vocabulary relating to college facilities and studying, with opportunities for better candidates to demonstrate their abilities. In the Text assessment focus, the note format was often not used by both weak and stronger candidates. While some strong candidates used this format well, others just answered the bullet points and missed out on the top scores. Most candidates covered all bullet points but

a small number omitted 'dislikes'. Candidates generally produced the required number of words with better ones having scope to produce more.

For Sentence focus, weaker candidates were able to use the rubric to produce simple sentences but most produced sentences of their own, with stronger ones able to attempt compound sentences.

## Recommendations for Candidate Preparation

All Cambridge ESOL Skills for Life tests are based on the *Adult ESOL Core Curriculum* and cover all the Basic Skills Standards in each mode at each level. Therefore, by following the *Adult ESOL Core Curriculum*, teachers will be preparing their students for the tests. Candidates will benefit from being reminded of the following Dos and Don'ts:

### Do

- complete all the tasks in the paper.
- make use of the guidelines which tell you how much to write and how much time to spend on each task.
- make sure that your handwriting is clear and easy to read.
- read the task instructions carefully and check that you have done what the instructions say.
- think carefully about your relationship to the intended audience and your reason for writing.
- write in sentences where you are asked to do so.
- make use of appropriate opening and closing formulae (such as *Dear Fatima* and *Yours sincerely*) in notes and messages.
- spend time planning your answers.
- spend time checking your answers for accurate spelling and grammar.

### Don't

- worry if you run out of space: your Centre will provide extra paper which will be marked in the normal way.
- write a full, rough copy of your answer. Just write a few notes to plan your answer.
- write in pencil.
- spend too long on one answer.

## Sample Scripts

Sample scripts are provided for each task in the question paper. Please note that it is not possible to reproduce the candidate answers in the original handwriting, and so any references in the commentaries to quality of handwriting will not be reflected in the samples provided.

## Entry 1 (Test 067) Sample Scripts and Commentaries

### Entry 1 Script A Task 1

(About 10 minutes)

You want to get a college identity card.

Complete the form.

ID Card Application	
Family name	CHOWDHURY
First name(s)	DILSHAN
Address	3 GLOBE CLOSE OLD TRAFFORD, MANCHESTER
Postcode	M16 7PS
Telephone number	0161-2262248
What course(s) are you studying?	ESOL (2A)
When do you come to college?	At 9 -10 am
Signature	<i>D. Chowdhury</i>
Date	13/10/05

(Total: 6 marks)

**Entry 1 Script A**

Commentary		Band	Mark
Text focus	Text focus is not assessed in this task.		
Sentence focus	Sentence focus is not assessed in this task.		
Word focus	Address is in conventional order. Candidate's handwriting is very clear. There are no instances of illegibility. Capitalisation is acceptable.	3	<b>5</b>

**Entry 1 Script B  
Task 1**

**(About 10 minutes)**

You want to get a college identity card.

Complete the form.

<b>ID Card Application</b>	
<b>Family name</b>	SAM SAMi
<b>First name(s)</b>	nAJiBEH
<b>Address</b>	104 ARDAN ROAD Timperley W15 LH
<b>Postcode</b>	
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 9693799
<b>What course(s) are you studying?</b>	ESOL E2
<b>When do you come to college?</b>	6 i st
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	12/10/05

**(Total: 6 marks)**

Entry 1 Script B			
Commentary		Band	Mark
Text focus	Text focus is not assessed in this task.		
Sentence focus	Sentence focus is not assessed in this task.		
Word focus	Although candidate uses a mixture of upper and lower case letters (with problems with n), he has produced an address in conventional order with a postcode that is understandable and a legible phone number. Despite not answering the question about when he comes to college, this candidate just makes a 3.	2	<b>3</b>



<b>Entry 1 Script C</b>			
Commentary		Band	Mark
Text focus	Candidate covers all points coherently.	3	<b>3</b>
Sentence focus	Good control with evidence of ability to produce more complex sentences.	3	<b>3</b>
Word focus	Good range of appropriate vocabulary with clear handwriting and accurate spelling.	3	<b>3</b>



<b>Entry 1 Script D</b>			
Commentary		Band	Mark
Text focus	Candidate covers all points and intended audience would be informed.	3	<b>3</b>
Sentence focus	This is a weak 3. There are a number of inaccuracies but there is ambition in the use of more complex language and sufficient control for the meaning to be clear.	3	<b>3</b>
Word focus	There is a range of appropriate vocabulary, though there are a number of spelling mistakes which may confuse and therefore keep it in Band 2.	2	<b>2</b>



<b>Entry 1 Script E</b>			
Commentary		Band	Mark
Text focus	Note is not addressed to Ramesh. No attempt at opening and closing formulae. Although candidate covers first two content points, incoherence restricts answer.	1	<b>2</b>
Sentence focus	A weak 2. Candidate attempts basic compound sentences but with limited success.	2	<b>2</b>
Word focus	Meaning of vocabulary related to college is clear but not always correct.	2	<b>2</b>



<b>Entry 1 Script F</b>			
<b>Commentary</b>		<b>Band</b>	<b>Mark</b>
Text focus	This is only just a 6 due to some incoherence. However, candidate addresses all points. Candidate uses appropriate opening and closing formulae.	3	<b>6</b>
Sentence focus	Candidate attempts basic and compound sentence structures but not always successfully. Some confusion regarding use of full stops.	2	<b>2</b>
Word focus	A range of appropriate vocabulary but some incorrect spelling of common words.	2	<b>2</b>