2021 NCEA Assessment Report

Standard number: US 32405 Write texts to communicate ideas and information`

Outcome 1: requires evidence of the ability to write meaningful texts for different purposes and audiences

This outcome requires candidates to show they can produce writing of different text types, for different purposes and audiences. At least one text must use formal language and at least one text must be a continuous text of at least 200 words.

In the Common Assessment Activity (CAA), this outcome was assessed by requiring candidates to produce two written texts, one from each of two sections. One section was labelled 'formal writing'. Each section contained a range of options/topics, a stated length requirement, a planning space, and a reminder to use appropriate paragraphs and punctuation.

1.1 Select and use content that is appropriate to purpose and audience.

This includes addressing the topic/option by establishing a main idea/argument/point and providing details to support that focus.

Candidates who completed the CAA generally provided relevant and appropriate content for the selected purpose, audience and text type.

A few candidates did not meet this requirement because, for example, they went off topic, or did not use age appropriate details for the intended audience, or provided too little additional detail, apart from that which was provided for them.

1.2 Use text structures in ways that are appropriate to purpose, audience and text type.

This includes organising their ideas so that the text is meaningful to the reader.

Most candidates met this performance criterion by using an appropriate structure/format for the stated purpose and audience (e.g. a letter to an employer is structured differently from an email to a friend); sequenced content appropriately (e.g. introduction, conclusion, paragraphs), and linked ideas and details appropriately (e.g. firstly…, another way…).

Some candidates did not select an appropriate text structure for the given purpose, audience or text type (e.g. the text moved randomly from point to point) or did not use paragraphs or other devices to aid reader understanding (e.g. appropriate beginnings and endings).

1.3 Make language choices that are appropriate to purpose and audience.

This includes the appropriate use of vocabulary (e.g. precision, register, tone), sentence types (e.g. length, variety, complexity), and tense (e.g. past, present).

Most candidates used appropriate register, tone and vocabulary (e.g. differentiation between ending an email to a family member with *See you soon/Ka kite anō,* and ending a letter of application with *Yours faithfully/Nāku noa),* and used appropriate sentence structures and

word forms (e.g. using 'cannot' as opposed to 'can't'; using simple, compound and /or complex sentences).

Some candidates did not show evidence of thinking about word choice, and/or that different words may work better in different contexts and for different audiences and/or purposes (e.g.' kids' or 'children'). Some did not appear to consider the appropriateness of the tone and level of formality in the choices they made (e.g. politeness, civility and overuse of exclamation marks). Some candidates provided insufficient evidence of sentence variety (e.g. overuse of simple sentence patterns).

1.4 Write text that demonstrates sufficient technical accuracy to communicate meaning, without intrusive errors in spelling, punctuation, or grammar.

This includes having control of most writing conventions. Although some errors are acceptable, they should only occur when a student is attempting a more complex structure or using unusual or sophisticated vocabulary.

The candidates who met this requirement generally demonstrated control of writing conventions, such as sentence construction, subject-verb agreement, and the appropriate use of tenses, punctuation, pronouns and spelling. They also tended to answer most of the short answer questions (Outcome 2) correctly.

Many candidates had difficulty in meeting this requirement. The majority of the errors involved awkward and/or run on sentences, tense confusion and punctuation, grammar and spelling errors. Some of these candidates could often answer the short answer questions that tested the same language conventions quite accurately, although this apparent knowledge was not evidenced in their own writing. There was considerable evidence of a general lack of editing and/or proofreading their work.

Outcome 2: requires evidence of the ability to use written language conventions to support communication

This outcome requires evidence of control of specific language conventions to support communication.

In the CAA, this outcome was tested using a range of short answer questions.

2.1 Construct a variety of complete sentences.

This includes being able to correctly use a range of sentence types.

Most candidates were able to identify and write complete sentences, e.g. simple, compound and complex sentences, although they often had difficulty with the punctuation of the sentence.

Some candidates had difficulty recognising a complete sentence and/or had difficulty in writing one.

2.2 Punctuate correctly to support meaning.

This includes understanding the purposes and conventions of basic punctuation: what punctuation is required, where and when.

Many candidates did not use capital letters and full stops at the beginning and end of sentences.

2.3 Use grammatical conventions within sentences and paragraphs with sufficient technical accuracy to communicate meaning.

This includes observing the conventions associated with, for example, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference, appropriate use of word forms, and consistent tense use.

Most candidates answered these questions correctly, although some candidates had difficulty with some or all of these conventions.

2.4 Use and spell everyday high frequency vocabulary with technical accuracy.

This includes being able to use every day high frequency words accurately (e.g., words found in the Essential Spelling List 1-7, and/or the first 2000 words of the New General Service List).

Most student completed these questions correctly, although many of the same candidates miss-spelt the same words in their own writing (**Outcome 1**).

2.5 Make simple changes to improve text coherence and the organisation of the content.

This includes being able to recognise what had to be changed in order to clearly communicate the intended message.

Many candidates had difficulty with these questions, particularly, subject-verb agreement for example, Amyra and Cody enjoy/enjoys watching movies, pronoun reference for example, I removed the stereo from my car and sold it, and consistent tense use for example, I eat/ate an ice cream, then bought some popcorn.

Some candidates could not recognise the need for any changes.

IN SUMMARY

Areas of strength demonstrated by candidates who were clearly at, or above, the required standard:

- planned their written answers (e.g. used the planning space) by thinking carefully about their selected topic/s
- focused clearly on the topic/question and provided relevant and appropriate supporting detail/s
- met the text length requirements
- organised and linked their ideas so they met the writing purpose and audience
- used a confident, strong and/or personal voice /language style (as appropriate to purpose and audience)
- demonstrated knowledge and control of writing conventions appropriate to the purpose and audience in both Outcomes 1 (short answer section) and Outcome 2 (own writing)
- reviewed, edited, and proofread their written texts.

Areas requiring improvement demonstrated by candidates who were not at, or were borderline in meeting the required standard:

- completing all sections of the assessment (e.g. completing 2 pieces of writing and the short answer questions)
- meeting all requirements of the standard (e.g. text length, text formality)
- using the planning space to organise their ideas
- taking note of the reminders, such as 'use appropriate paragraphs and punctuation'
- addressing the topic/questions (Outcome 1) appropriately with sufficient examples and detail
- recognising the difference between 'written' and 'spoken' language: some answers, particularly in the formal writing section, used language that was not always appropriate for the context
- using the knowledge that they demonstrated in the short answer section (e.g. spelling 'believe' correctly in Outcome 2, but incorrectly in their own writing).
- editing and/or proofreading their work for content, structure, language appropriateness, and technical accuracy.

The marking team recommends that teachers focus on the following:

- Development of planning strategies to help candidates organise content/ideas prior to drafting texts, e.g. brainstorming, graphic organisers, note taking.
- Extension of idea development beyond listing of ideas or examples.
- Development of an understanding of 'appropriateness' for purpose and audience (e.g. what 'formal' means, paragraphing, language/sentence appropriateness).
- Developing familiarity with processes of reviewing, editing, and proofreading written work.
- Helping candidates develop wider vocabularies (e.g. access to a range of different text types).