NZQA Assessment Support Material

Unit standard	30507				
Title	Write a short text under test conditions in English for an academic purpose				
Level	3	**Credits**	5	**Version**	1

Note

The following guidelines are supplied to enable assessors to carry out valid and consistent assessment using this internal assessment resource.

Assessors must manage authenticity for any assessment from a public source, because students may have access to the assessment schedule or student exemplar material. Use of this assessment resource without modification may mean that students' work is not authentic. The assessor will need to change figures, measurements or data sources or set a different context or topic.

See Generic Resources and Guidelines at https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/assessment-and-moderation-of-standards/assessment-of-standards/generic-resources/.

Assessor guidelines

Assessors need to be very familiar with the outcome being assessed by the unit standard. The outcomes, performance criteria and the guidance notes contain information, definitions, and requirements that are crucial when interpreting the standard and assessing learners against it.

CONDITIONS OF ASSESSMENT

This is an **open book assessment** that will take place over a maximum of 90 minutes including planning and proof-reading.

- Competence for this standard must be assessed under test conditions.
- Writing must be in the candidate's own words.
- The candidate must write one piece of writing of approximately 300 words.
- Candidate must not be given the question prior to the assessment.
- Only an unannotated copy of the resource document(s) may be used during the assessment.

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- Monolingual or bilingual dictionaries may be used. It is recommended that electronic devices are not used for summative assessment purposes, except for word processing.
- Candidates cannot resubmit this piece of writing.
- The assessor must be satisfied that the candidate can independently demonstrate competency against the unit standard.

Resource requirements

Resource documents used by the candidate:
- must be at a level of sufficient complexity to satisfy the English Language academic requirements of study at New Zealand Qualifications Framework Level 3, 4 and 5 - for example, course text book, introductory academic text, non-fiction book, journal article.
- should use vocabulary which is based on a text of an academic nature.

Context/setting

- Candidates should be assessed after they are familiar with the topic of learning strategies.
- It is recommended that assessment against this unit standard is conducted in conjunction with assessment against other Level 3 English for Academic Purposes unit standards. By linking with a reading standard on a similar topic and text type (e.g. unit standard 30511, *Read and apply understanding in English for academic purposes*) candidates will become familiar with content, text structure, language features and specialised vocabulary.
- Assessment may occur in conjunction with study and assessment in other learning areas.

Notes for assessors

- The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) describes language proficiency at six levels. This unit standard is at CEFR level low B2. Teachers and assessors are encouraged to refer to these descriptors to gain a clearer understanding of the competencies required by these standards. A structured overview of all CEFR related scales can be found at http://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio/overview-of-cefr-related-scales.
- It is important that both assessors and candidates are familiar with the outcome, guidance information and performance criteria of the unit standard.
- Writing must be in response to a question, based on resource document(s) given out previously, with which candidates have been given the opportunity to become familiar prior to assessment.
- Candidate's writing may contain inaccuracies in surface features, few of which interfere with meaning.
- This standard focuses on assessment of writing. It is acknowledged that a significant amount of reading is required, but the reading is not to be assessed for this unit standard.

Assessment activity

The academic purpose is a discussion followed by an evaluation.

Candidates have read about learning strategies. They will use prior knowledge and the resource materials provided to write an essay answering the following research question.

Research question

Some people suggest that new information can be learnt through memory techniques including using our senses. However, others argue that many of these strategies do not improve students' learning. Discuss both points of view and evaluate the effectiveness of some of the different strategies.

Assessment Schedule

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PC	Evidence for achievement	Judgements for achievement
1.1 Writing addresses the topic in a manner appropriate to audience and academic purpose.	Writing is appropriate in style and content for an academic audience. Writing shows an understanding of the academic purpose and the topic. Writing follows the structure of a discussion focusing on the issue from different perspectives and includes an evaluation. The introduction identifies the topic and outlines the different viewpoints on the issue e.g. *There are many different strategies for helping learn new information. Although some argue that strategies involving the use of senses can help us to remember things better, others suggest that not all of these strategies result in improved learning. This essay will discuss both viewpoints and discuss how effective different strategies may be.* This is followed by discussion of two different points of view and an evaluation. The evaluation may be included in the conclusion e.g.	Writing addresses the topic in a manner appropriate to audience and academic purpose.

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	Many strategies are used by students to help them … *However research also indicates that some strategies are …* Writing ends with a conclusion that restates the viewpoints and may include an evaluation and recommendations e.g. *Overall, strategies involving the use of different senses to help improve the learning of new information do seem to be of some value. Learners should experiment with different strategies until they find the ones that work best for them. Using strategies that help improve both short-term and long-term memory will also be of great benefit to learners.* An awareness of audience is shown in style and content. Refer to examples above.	
1.2 Ideas are developed and include material from the resource document(s) to achieve the academic purpose.	Each body paragraph contains a topic sentence e.g. *Research suggests using our five senses can assist us in storing and recalling information.* The topic sentence is explained, expanded on and supported with evidence from the resource documents e.g. *The Open Polytechnic (2017) reports that the use of mnemonics, where patterns, rhymes or pictures are used to help the learner remember things, can be particularly useful.* Evidence from source material is paraphrased, summarised or quoted. *Dunlosky et al. (2013) also note that strategies such as using mnemonics only help short-term memory and may not be effective for improving long-term memory.*	Writing develops ideas and uses material from resource documents to support the point of view in order to achieve the academic purpose.

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	...*and then a student "tries to associate the taste and smell with the information" (The Open Polytechnic, 2017).*	
1.3 Text structure has overall progression, paragraphing and some use of cohesive devices. These devices include but are not limited to – grammatical, lexical and referential.	Writing follows a discussion structure with an introduction followed by paragraphs that develop ideas logically and ends with a conclusion. Ideas are linked with cohesive devices within paragraphs and between paragraphs e.g. *In addition, visual imagery such as mind maps can be an effective way to assist learning.* *However, although some learners support the learning techniques suggested …* Grammatical cohesive devices maintain clear links between ideas. These may include: • connectives e.g. *However, In addition* • conjunctions e.g. *because, and* • substitution e.g. *Learners should experiment with different strategies until they find the one that work best for them.* • ellipsis e.g. *...simply because these are the strategies [that] they have always used...* Lexical cohesive devices are appropriate to the meaning of the text. These include word associations such as: • synonyms e.g. *techniques / strategies* • antonyms e.g. *work best / have little effect* • repetition e.g. *improve / improved* • collocation e.g. *long-term memory* • word sets e.g. *patterns, rhymes or pictures* Referential cohesive devices are used to refer back to previous information or point forward. These may include: • personal pronouns e.g. *they, it, them* • demonstratives: *these; the* (definite article) • comparatives: *better, less effective*	The text structure is clear, with paragraphs in a logical progression. Ideas are related and linked with a range of cohesive devices.

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1.4 Writing uses a formal style appropriate to the academic context. Formal style includes but is not limited to – lexical and grammatical features, and a variety of sentence structures.	Vocabulary used is formal in choice and use. This may include: Appropriate vocabulary • academic vocabulary e.g. *experiment, associate* • specialised vocabulary e.g. *mnemonics* • correct word choice and part of speech e.g. *visual imagery.* Appropriate grammar includes a variety of language features. These may include: • verb forms e.g. *There are many different strategies to help the learner learn new information (*active) *...research also indicates that learning is not improved by all strategies.* (passive), *Learners should experiment with different strategies* (modals) • the use of ellipsis and substitution to avoid repetition e.g. *research suggests that these techniques...* • nominalisation e.g. *recording information and then listening to it again later can be a helpful strategy.* Formal tone e.g. • objective language e.g. *Using strategies that help improve both short-term and long-term memory will also be of benefit to learners.* • the use of hedging or imprecise language e.g. *Research suggests using our five senses can assist us in storing and recalling information.* • formal language instead of slang or colloquial expressions e.g. *information* (instead of 'info') • the full form of words instead of contractions or abbreviations e.g. *research also indicates that learning is not improved by all strategies* (instead of *isn't*).	The vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure and tone are appropriate to the academic context.
1.5 Writing uses simple, compound, and complex sentence structures and makes	A variety of sentence structures is used. These include: • simple sentences e.g. *There are many different strategies for helping learn new information.* • compound sentences e.g. *This essay will discuss*	Writing uses a range of sentence structures including simple, compound and complex.

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use of appropriate grammatical forms for the academic context.	*both viewpoints and discuss how effective different strategies may be.* • complex sentences e.g. *Overall, strategies involving the use of different senses to help improve the learning of new information, do seem to be of some value.* The grammatical form of sentences is appropriate to an academic text e.g. passives: *... patterns, rhymes or pictures are used to help the learner remember things …*	
1.6 Source material is acknowledged within the text. Acknowledgement may include but is not limited to - quotation, citation and paraphrasing.	Source material used is acknowledged in appropriate academic style. This may include: • quotation e.g. *...and then a student "tries to associate the taste and smell with the information" (The Open Polytechnic, 2017).* • citation e.g. *However, according to Dunlosky et al., (2013), research suggests that these techniques have little effect on how much we learn.* • paraphrasing e.g. *Research suggests using our five senses can assist us in storing and recalling information.*	Source material used is acknowledged within the text.

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Model text on a parallel topic

Model research question

Mobile phones have become increasingly popular around the world, and can be useful tools for language learning. However, they can also cause problems for the learner. Outline the advantages and disadvantages of using mobiles for language learning, and suggest how they could best be used.

Writing addresses the topic in a manner appropriate to audience and academic purpose (1.1)	**Many students own mobile phones, and these can be used to improve language learning.** The use of mobile phone cameras, dictionaries and even social media can help students learn more quickly. However, there are also some disadvantages, such as students being distracted or becoming dependent on the phone. Mobile phones need to be used appropriately in order to be useful for language learning.	Writing uses compound sentences (1.5))
Text structure has a clear overall progression, paragraphing and some use of cohesive devices (1.3)	Mobile phones **can assist** language learning in several ways. **Firstly,** the mobile phone camera **can be used** by the student to take photos of signs or advertisements **to share** with the class and teacher. This **will help** "learners to 'notice' grammar around them" (Norton, 2014) even when they **are** not in class. **Also**, mobile phones are useful for practicing pronunciation. Students can record themselves and more clearly hear their mistakes. **Further**, the teacher can encourage students to use social media such as Twitter and Facebook to practice writing in English (Norton, 2014) and chat apps to practice talking to others in English. Using mobile phones means that students can continue their learning outside the classroom.	Writing uses appropriate tenses (1.4)
		Resource material is integrated into the text (1.2)
There is logical progression between paragraphs (1.3)	Though mobile phones can be useful, there are also some disadvantages. Mobile phones are always connected to social media, and this can mean that students start "multi-tasking" **(Morgan, 2017),** which means that they get distracted and do not concentrate on their language learning. In addition, not all mobile phones are the same. **If a teacher decides to use a specific app or piece of software, it may not work on some mobile phones.** This could mean that some students are **disadvantaged**. The same **issue** can **occur** if there is a problem with the internet connection. Even with a good phone, spending time focusing on a small screen can cause eye problems and **difficulty concentrating**, and this will **disrupt** learning (Morgan, 2017). Further, some students may become too dependent on their phones and **may be unable** to talk or write without using the phone dictionary, which will **reduce** their fluency.	Sources are acknowledged in the text (1.6)
		Writing uses complex sentences (1.5)
		Writing uses formal vocabulary (1.4)

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| | If used appropriately, mobile phones can indeed be useful for language learning. The phone should not become the only tool that students use, and should not be used during classroom activities or conversations. Students will receive the greatest benefit if mobile phones are used for specific learning tasks for limited periods of time, and are mostly used outside the classroom.

384 words | |

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