

English for Academic Purposes 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	3

Assessor Guidelines

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

Note:

These 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. While this resource exemplifies how to assess writing of an English language text in an academic context, other assessment activities and approaches could be taken to make the context relevant to students in their environment and ensure that submitted evidence is authentic.

See [Gathering evidence of learner achievement](#)

Assessors should use innovative, valid and fair ways of recognising achievement, without overburdening themselves or the learner with too much assessment.

Context/Setting

This activity requires students to write a short text under test conditions in English for an academic purpose.

It is recommended that:

- the outcomes are assessed as part of an integrated unit of work, relevant to the learning context of the learner;
- 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) learners will become familiar with content, text structure, language features and specialised vocabulary.

Award of Grades

This unit standard can be awarded with an Achieved grade only.

For Achieved, learners must:

- Write a short text under test conditions in English for an academic purpose.

Conditions of Assessment

This assessment will take place over a timeframe set by the assessor.

- Competence for this unit standard must be assessed under test conditions in one sitting:
 - learners must complete one piece of writing of at least 300 words;
 - writing, planning and proof-reading must be done in three hours maximum;
 - writing may contain errors and inaccuracies, but these must not significantly impede meaning;
 - learners cannot resubmit this piece of writing.
- Writing must be in response to a research question, based on resource document(s) and may include but is not limited to – comparing, contrasting, problem solving, discussing, explaining cause and effect and presenting an argument.
 - The question must not be given to learners prior to assessment.
 - It must refer to resource document(s) given out previously, which learners have been given the opportunity to become familiar with prior to assessment.
 - An unannotated copy of the resource document(s) can be consulted during the assessment.
- Learners may use a bilingual and/or an English dictionary. It is recommended that electronic devices are not used for summative assessment purposes, except for word processing.
- The assessor must be satisfied that the learner can independently demonstrate competency against the unit standard.

Resource Requirements

The resources that link to this task are included and can be found in the **Assessment activity** section of this document.

Additional Information

- The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) describes language proficiency at six levels. This unit standard is at a level informed by the CEFR. Teachers and assessors are encouraged to refer to the descriptors in the *Supporting Document* to gain a clearer understanding of the competencies required by these standards.
- Resource documents for the writing task:
 - must be at a level of complexity appropriate to the academic context – for example, course text, introductory academic text, journal article, appropriate oral source;
 - should use vocabulary which is based on texts of an academic nature;
 - may be abridged and/or adapted versions designed for this level.
- It is recommended that prior to assessment learners have prepared by:
 - studying a model text on a parallel topic, such as *Mobile Phones* found at the back of this document
 - reading resource documents relevant to the academic purpose.
- The assessment schedule is for assessors only and not to be shared with learners during the assessment process.
- Refer to your organisation's policies before offering a further assessment opportunity.

Assessment Activity

Unit standard:	30507
Standard title:	Write a short text under test conditions in English for an academic purpose
Credits:	5
Resource title:	Learning strategies
Assessor guidance:	Use of this assessment resource without modification may mean that students' work is not authentic. The assessor will need to set a different context or topic and develop fresh and relevant texts that reflect the interests and circumstances of their students. The text example and questions in this assessment activity provide models of possible approaches.

Model Assessment

Assessor instructions for students

Introduction

This assessment activity requires you to write a short text under test conditions in English for an academic purpose. Before the assessment, you need to be familiar with the resource materials. During the assessment, you will produce a text under test conditions, where you integrate information from your resource materials and address the research question. You will need to show that you can structure your essay, use cohesive devices, and use appropriate, correct, formal language. You will also need to paraphrase, quote or summarise your sources, and acknowledge these within the text.

Task

You will write an essay in response to 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.

Student Checklist

In this assessment task, you will need to show you can do the following:	PC
Write at least 300 words.	—
Answer the question by defining and developing the topic as required by the research question.	1.1
Develop the ideas. This includes paragraphs with topic sentences. The topic sentence will be followed by supporting detail that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clarifying and expanding upon ideas drawing conclusions 	1.2
Include material from the resource document(s) to address the research question. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exemplification paraphrasing direct quotes citation summarising. 	1.2
Ensure your writing has a clear overall structure with an introduction followed by paragraphs organised in logical order and a conclusion. Include logical connections between paragraphs and within paragraphs.	1.3
Use some cohesive links. These may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conjunctions connectives pronoun reference collocation synonyms. 	1.3
Generally use a formal writing style appropriate to the academic context. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adopting a formal tone using objective language not using slang or colloquial expressions not using contractions. 	1.4
Use specialised and academic vocabulary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> correct word choice correct part of speech. 	
Use appropriate grammar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the use of reference, such as pronouns, to maintain clear links the use of ellipsis and substitution to avoid repetition appropriate tense. 	

<p>Use a variety of sentence structures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple sentences • compound sentences • complex sentences. 	
<p>Acknowledge source material used in the text. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paraphrasing • summary • synthesis • direct quotation • citation. 	1.5
<p>Proofread and edit your work.</p> <p>Read through your writing using the checklist above to ensure you have met all the requirements.</p>	

Resource documents to use for this assessment

Text 1: Improving learning: Strategies that work

Students of all ages use a range of strategies to learn information; however, research suggests that many of these strategies do not improve students' learning. Some strategies result in more learning than others and students should be trained to use these.

Two of the best strategies for learning are completing practice tests and spaced, repeated practice. Practice tests involve students taking tests or testing themselves, for example, by using vocabulary cards. Spaced, repeated practice involves learning information several times over a longer period of time as opposed to learning lots in a short period of time for an assessment. Spaced, repeated practice has been shown to result in better long-term recall of information. These two strategies benefit students of different ages and abilities and have been shown to boost students' performance across many tasks and in different educational settings.

One way to apply spaced, repeated practice is to use flashcards. Flashcards, either actual or online cards can be better than learning from lists if students set up a system of repetitions with longer periods of time between each repetition. A further advantage of this method is that, unlike lists, a flashcard system is flexible and allows learners to remove items they already know.

The keyword mnemonic strategy does appear to benefit some types of learning. An example of a mnemonic is remembering the sentence My Very Excited Mother Just Served Us Nine Pies to help remember the order of the planets – Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. Research indicates that mnemonics can be useful for learning information but that this strategy helps short-term, rather than long-term, memory. This is because memory type strategies help learners link ideas but do not necessarily involve deep understanding, which is needed if the information is to be stored in long-term memory.

According to one piece of research there are a number of commonly used techniques that do not appear to be very helpful for learning information. These include:

Summarising: writing summaries of information and learning them

Highlighting: highlighting or underlining important sections of information and learning these

Using images: attempting to form mental images of text materials while reading or listening

Re-reading: reading information more than once.

Re-reading and highlighting are strategies that a large number of students use. However, research indicates that they do not significantly improve students' learning.

There are a number of reasons why students use strategies that do not always work well. This may be because they are familiar with, or have been taught to use, these strategies. It may also be because students have not been taught different ways to learn information, or that teachers do not know that some learning strategies are better than others. In addition, teachers may concentrate on content rather than ways to learn that content, in their lessons.

470 words

Adapted from the following resource:

Dunlosky, J., Rawson, K. A., Marsh, E. J., Nathan, M. J., & Willingham, D. T. (2013). Improving students' learning with effective learning techniques: Promising directions from cognitive and educational psychology. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 14(1), 4–58.

Text 2: Improve your memory

We use a range of things to help us store memories and recall them when they are needed, including pictures and colours, language, organisation, repetition, emotions, spatial awareness, and all five senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. There are many techniques and strategies that make use of these features and that can help people to concentrate, understand and remember things they need to learn.

A mnemonic is a pattern, rhyme or picture, which is used to help remember things that may otherwise be difficult to remember. A simple mnemonic to remember a list of things is to make up a sentence where the first letter of each word is a cue for the items you have to remember. If you have to remember the order of the planets from the Sun (**M**ercury, **V**enus, **E**arth, **M**ars, **J**upiter, **S**aturn, **U**ranus, **N**eptune, **P**luto) you can make up a sentence where each word starts with the same initial letter, in the same order, for example: **M**ost **V**olcanoes **E**xpel **M**ulberry **J**am **S**andwiches **U**nder **Normal **P**ressure. It may seem ridiculous, but that makes the list more memorable.**

People also use their senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch – to take in information about the world. This can be applied to help you remember what you are studying. People often think in pictures so using pictures and visualisation can help students to remember information. This might include creating a mind map, trying to see the headings and where the different bits of information are on the page or creating a picture to illustrate the information can help learning. Using sound can also help learning. Another strategy is to use your sense of hearing by saying the information out loud, recording the information and then listening to it. Other people learn best when they are moving. For them, walking around while studying and saying the information out loud can help memory. Even the sense of smell can help memory. For example, if someone eats a lemon lolly while studying and tries to associate the taste and smell with the information, then taking a similar lolly into the exam room may be of help to remember the information.

Another method of learning information is to create a story. A story that links a number of facts is much easier to remember than a list of facts. This is because as each part of the story leads on to the next, so each fact is a cue to remember the next part. The story links the facts together. The more memorable the story, the easier it is to remember the information.

Primacy, recency and chunking are three strategies that are known to improve learning. Primacy refers to remembering information at the beginning of a list. Recency is when people remember the words from the end of the list, the words that were seen most recently. Studies have shown that most people who try to remember a list of 30 words will recall some words from the beginning of the list and some from the end, but very few from the middle. People also recall the information better if the list is divided into a number of short meaningful lists. This is known as chunking. One of the best strategies to improve learning is to divide study time into chunks of about 30 to 45 minutes with a five-minute break between each chunk. Then learners should divide the things to be learned into short chunks or sections with a beginning and an ending.

585 words

Adapted from the following source:

The Open Polytechnic Kuratini Tuwhera (2017). *Improve your memory*. Retrieved from:

[Active Learning | How it Can Help Your Study | Open Polytechnic NZ](https://openpolytechnic.ac.nz/active-learning-how-it-can-help-your-study/)

Assessment Schedule

Unit standard	30507				
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Assessment Criteria

Performance criteria	Evidence for Achievement	Judgements for Achievement
Outcome 1 Write a short text under test conditions in English for an academic purpose. Range: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• one text of at least 300 words.	Refer to the evidence for 1.1–1.5 below.	Learner has completed one piece of writing of at least 300 words.
1.1 The research question is addressed appropriately.	<p>The text is a discussion. It contains an introduction of the topic which identifies and outlines the scope of the topic, e.g.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p>This is followed by paragraphs discussing two different points of view and an evaluation, e.g.</p> <p><i>Many strategies are used by students to help them...</i></p>	<p>The text answers the question by defining and developing the topic as required by the research question.</p> <p>Text contains an introduction that identifies and outlines the topic, followed by a discussion of two different points of view about effective learning strategies, and a conclusion and/or recommendations.</p>

	<p><i>However, research also indicates that some strategies are...</i></p> <p>Writing ends with a conclusion that restates the viewpoints and may include an evaluation and recommendations, e.g.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	
<p>1.2 Ideas are developed and include material from the resource document(s) to address the research question.</p>	<p>Ideas are developed. This includes paragraphs with topic sentences. Each body paragraph contains a topic sentence, e.g. <i>Research suggests using our five senses can assist us in storing and recalling information.</i></p> <p>The topic sentence is explained, expanded on and supported with evidence from the resource documents. Evidence from source material may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paraphrasing, e.g. <i>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.</i> • summarising, e.g. <i>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.</i> • quotation, e.g. <i>“Even the sense of smell can help memory” (The Open Polytechnic, 2017).</i> 	<p>Writing develops ideas and uses material from resource documents to support different points of view.</p> <p>The text contains material from the resource document(s) that is integrated into the discussion and references relevant examples from the two resource texts.</p>

<p>1.3 Writing is structured using paragraphing, and some use of cohesive devices to show overall progression.</p>	<p>Writing follows a discussion structure with an introduction followed by paragraphs that develop ideas logically and ends with a conclusion.</p> <p>Ideas are linked with cohesive devices within paragraphs and between paragraphs, e.g.</p> <p><i>In addition, visual imagery, such as mind maps, can be an effective way to assist learning.</i></p> <p><i>However, although some learners support the learning techniques suggested...</i></p> <p>Grammatical cohesive devices maintain clear links between ideas. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connectives, e.g. <i>However, In addition</i> • conjunctions, e.g. <i>because, and</i> • substitution, e.g. <i>Learners should experiment with different strategies until they find the ones that work best for them.</i> • ellipsis, e.g. <i>... simply because these are the strategies [that] they have always used...</i> <p>Lexical cohesive devices are appropriate to the meaning of the text. These include word associations such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • synonyms, e.g. <i>techniques/strategies</i> • antonyms, e.g. <i>work best/have little effect</i> • repetition, e.g. <i>improve/improved</i> • collocation, e.g. <i>long-term memory</i> • word sets, e.g. <i>patterns, rhymes or pictures.</i> <p>Referential cohesive devices are used to refer back to previous information or point forward. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal pronouns, e.g. <i>they, it, them</i> • demonstratives, e.g. <i>these; the</i> (definite article); comparatives, e.g. <i>better, less effective.</i> 	<p>The text structure has a clear logical progression between and within paragraphs.</p> <p>Cohesive devices are used effectively most of the time.</p>
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<p>1.4 A formal writing style appropriate to the academic context is generally used.</p>	<p>Vocabulary used is generally formal in choice and use. This may include:</p> <p>Appropriate vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> academic vocabulary, e.g. <i>experiment, associate</i> specialised vocabulary, e.g. <i>mnemonics</i> correct word choice and part of speech, e.g. <i>visual imagery</i>. <p>Appropriate grammar includes a variety of language features. These may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> verb forms and tenses, e.g. <i>There are many different strategies to help the learner learn new information</i> (active) <i>...research also indicates that learning is not improved by all strategies.</i> (passive), Learners <u>should</u> experiment with different strategies (modals) the use of ellipsis and substitution to avoid repetition, e.g. <i>research suggests that these techniques...</i> nominalisation e.g. <u>recording information and then listening to it again later can be a helpful strategy.</u> <p>A variety of sentence structures is used. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple sentences, e.g. <i>There are many different strategies.</i> compound sentences, e.g. <i>This essay will discuss both viewpoints and consider their effectiveness.</i> complex sentences, e.g. <i>Overall, strategies which involve the use of different senses to help improve the learning of new information, do seem to be of some value.</i> <p>Formal tone, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> objective language, e.g. <u>Using strategies that help improve both short-term and long-term memory will also be of benefit to learners.</u> 	<p>The tone, lexical and grammatical features and sentence structure are appropriate to the academic context most of the time.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the use of hedging or imprecise language, e.g. <i>Research suggests using our five senses can assist us in storing and recalling information.</i> formal language instead of slang or colloquial expressions, e.g. <i>information</i> (instead of 'info') the full form of words instead of contractions or abbreviations, e.g. <i>research also indicates that learning is not improved by all strategies</i> (instead of <i>isn't</i>). 	
<p>1.5 Source material is integrated and acknowledged within the text.</p> <p>Range:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may include but is not limited to – direct quotation, citation and paraphrasing 	<p>Source material used is acknowledged.</p> <p>This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> quotation, e.g. <i>...and then a student “tries to associate the taste and smell with the information”</i> (<i>The Open Polytechnic</i>, 2017). citation, e.g. <i>However, according to Dunlosky et al., (2013), research suggests that these techniques have little effect on how much we learn.</i> paraphrasing, e.g. <i>Research suggests using our five senses can assist us in storing and recalling information.</i> 	Source material used is acknowledged within the text.

Final grades will be decided using professional judgement based on a holistic examination of the evidence provided against the criteria in the unit standard.

Model text on a parallel topic

NB. This model text is not authentic learner work and therefore does not contain the errors and first language features that would be expected in work written by learners at this level.

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.

<p>1.1 <i>The research question is addressed appropriately.</i></p> <p>1.3 <i>Writing is structured using paragraphing and some use of cohesive devices.</i></p> <p>1.3 <i>There is logical progression between paragraphs.</i></p> <p>1.5 <i>Sources are acknowledged in the text.</i></p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 “multitasking” (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.</p> <p>If used appropriately, mobile phones can indeed be useful for language learning. The phone should not become the only tool</p>	<p>1.4 <i>Writing uses compound sentences.</i></p> <p>1.4 <i>Writing uses appropriate tenses.</i></p> <p>1.2 <i>Resource material is integrated into the text.</i></p> <p>1.4 <i>Writing uses formal vocabulary.</i></p> <p>1.4 <i>Writing uses complex sentences.</i></p>
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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.

387 words