

NQ English Writing Folio

Marking Instructions – Intermediate 1

The Marking Process

1 Judging against the Performance Criteria

Each piece of writing should first be read to establish whether it achieves success in all the Performance Criteria below, including the standards for technical accuracy (see 2 below).

Content

Content is mainly relevant and appropriate for purpose and audience; there is an attempt to develop a number of ideas/points of information.

Structure

There is a degree of organisation of content and a straightforward structure which is in the main appropriate for purpose, audience and genre.

Expression

Some use of basic techniques relevant to the genre, mainly accurate choice of words and some variety of sentence structures indicate an attempt to adopt an appropriate tone and convey a point of view.

2 Confirming Technical Accuracy

A piece of writing which does not satisfy the requirement to be “mainly accurate” cannot pass. If, however, technical accuracy is deemed “mainly accurate”, then there are no penalties or deductions for any errors.

Mainly accurate

Although a few errors may be present, spelling, vocabulary and sentence structures will be sufficiently accurate to convey the candidate’s meaning at first reading.

3 Assigning a Category and Mark

Each piece of writing should then be assigned to the appropriate Category as outlined in the Broad Descriptors, supported by reference to the Detailed Descriptors.

(a) Broad Descriptors

Pieces of writing which **pass** (ie meet the minimum requirements of the Performance Criteria) should be assigned to one of four categories as follows:

Category	Mark(s)	Broad descriptor
I	25	Outstanding
II	21 or 23	Very sound
III	17 or 19	Comfortably achieves all Performance Criteria
IV	13 or 15	Just succeeds in achieving the Performance Criteria

Pieces of writing which **fail** to meet the minimum requirements of one or more than one Performance Criterion should be assigned to one of two categories as follows:

Category	Mark(s)	Broad descriptor
V	11 or 9	Fails to achieve one or more than one Performance Criterion and/or to achieve consistent technical accuracy
VI*	7 or 5**	Serious shortcomings

In Categories II – VI, the choice of which mark to award should be determined by the level of certainty with which the piece of writing has been assigned to the Category.

* Pieces of writing in this Category will be extremely rare. It should be used only in cases of extreme thinness or serious weaknesses in expression and/or technical accuracy.

** Marks below 5 can, in exceptional circumstances be awarded, for example to a piece of writing which is of extreme brevity, perhaps just a few lines.

(b) Detailed descriptors

In order to avoid excessive length in these descriptors, Argumentative, Persuasive and Report have been treated generically as “Discursive”. To assist Markers, some key statements about the three types are given on page 5.

Category I (25 marks):

This will be, for work at Intermediate 1 level, an impressive and wholly relevant piece of writing in which the content is well selected. The structure is appropriate and content is sensibly organised. Expression is confident. Word choice is mostly appropriate and there is some variation in sentence structures. Techniques associated with the genre are used competently.

Imaginative writing in this Category will be characterised by a sense that the writer has a basic knowledge and understanding of the genre and is attempting to exploit some of its conventions; the writing is consistently competent.

Personal/Reflective writing in this Category will be characterised by a clear sense of appropriate reflection; a sense of the writer’s personality is communicated; the writing is consistently competent.

Discursive writing in this Category will, as appropriate to the specific genre and purpose, be characterised by a secure understanding of the ideas/issues; the line of thought is clear with evidence of some development; the writing is consistently competent.

Category II (21 or 23 marks):

This will be, for work at Intermediate 1 level, a sound, relevant piece of writing in which the content is sensibly selected. The structure is appropriate and content is clearly organised. Expression is competent. Word choice is mostly appropriate and there is some variation in sentence structures. Techniques associated with the genre are used appropriately.

Imaginative writing in this Category will be characterised by a sense that the writer has a basic knowledge and understanding of the genre and is attempting to exploit some of its conventions; the writing is mostly competent.

Personal/Reflective writing in this Category will be characterised by a sense of appropriate reflection; a sense of the writer’s personality is communicated; the writing is mostly competent.

Discursive writing in this Category will, as appropriate to the specific genre and purpose, be characterised by a secure understanding of the ideas/issues; the line of thought is clear; the writing is mostly competent.

Category III (17 or 19 marks):

A relevant piece of writing in which the structure is appropriate and content is organised. Expression is competent. Word choice is mostly appropriate and sentence structures are mostly accurate. Some techniques associated with the genre are used.

Imaginative writing in this Category will be characterised by a sense that the writer has a basic knowledge of the genre and is following its principal conventions in a recognisable way; the writing is mainly competent.

Personal/Reflective writing in this Category will be characterised by some appropriate reflection; some sense of the writer's personality is communicated; the writing is mainly competent.

Discursive writing in this Category will, as appropriate to the specific genre and purpose, be characterised by an understanding of the ideas/issues; the line of thought is mostly clear; the writing is mainly competent.

Category IV (13 or 15 marks):

A mostly relevant piece of writing with evidence of some appropriate structure. Expression is mostly competent. Word choice is reasonably appropriate and sentence structures are reasonably accurate. At least one technique associated with the genre is used.

Imaginative writing in this Category will be characterised by a sense that the writer has a basic knowledge of the genre and is making some attempt to follow its more basic conventions; the writing is, for the most part, acceptable.

Personal/Reflective writing in this Category will be characterised by minimal reflection; little sense of the writer's personality is communicated; the writing is, for the most part, acceptable.

Discursive writing in this Category will, as appropriate to the specific genre and purpose, be characterised by a basic understanding of the ideas/issues; a line of thought is discernible; the writing is, for the most part, acceptable.

Category V (11 or 9 marks):

A piece of writing will fall into this Category for a variety of reasons: it is not "mainly accurate", there is significant irrelevance, the structure obscures the writer's ideas, the language is too clumsy, the content is simply too thin.

Imaginative writing in this Category will be characterised by one or more of the following: inappropriate use of the genre, failure to communicate satisfactorily, inappropriate language, overall thinness of content.

Personal/Reflective writing in this Category will be characterised by one or more of the following: absence of any reflection or sense of the writer's personality, failure to communicate satisfactorily, inappropriate language, overall thinness of content.

Discursive writing in this Category will be characterised by one or more of the following: evidence that ideas/issues are not understood, a confused line of thought, serious weaknesses in structure, highly inappropriate language or tone, failure to follow the stated remit, overall thinness of content.

“Discursive” writing: key statements from the Arrangements document for Intermediate 1:

Argumentative Writing:

Argumentative writing will treat a topic or issue in a way which presents a line of argument, dealing with two or more varying viewpoints.

The main requirements of the **argumentative** essay are that it will:

- ◆ communicate a line of argument
- ◆ present two sides of an argument (or more, if applicable)
- ◆ attempt to convey an argumentative tone which is measured, reasonable and yet carries personal conviction
- ◆ attempt to communicate to the reader a sense that the writer has a clear line of thought which leads to a reasonable conclusion
- ◆ make use of argumentative techniques such as comparison, contrast, proof, disproof.

Persuasive Writing:

Persuasive writing will persuade to a purpose or point of view (for example, to sell a product, or influence opinion/belief), usually concerning itself with a single topic or issue.

The main requirements of the **persuasive** essay are that it will:

- ◆ carry a sense of conviction, commitment or belief by use of tone
- ◆ attempt to use persuasive techniques, such as assertion, statement of need, plea, use of ‘emotive’ words.

Report:

The report must contain a relevant selection of basic information drawn from at least two sources. In order to meet the requirements of the performance criteria, material drawn from sources must be recast and paraphrased appropriately for purpose. The report must achieve a specified purpose. The writer’s point of view and tone will depend on the nature of the purpose.

The writing should have clear structure and should be presented in a logical order. Where the convention of headings is used there will be obvious separation of the constituent sets of information to match the headings.

Diagrams, tables, charts and graphs may be included if appropriate to the chosen form. Headings, appendices, bibliographies and a lettering or numbering system to separate the constituent sections may also be used.