

## Writing Genres:

What to consider when writing in a specific genre

Genre	Target reader	Organisation/format	Type of language
<b>Letters</b>	The target reader can vary greatly and will be specified in the question e.g. the editor of a newspaper, the director of an international company or a friend	Letters should have an appropriate opening and closing phrase and clear paragraphing. The first paragraph should outline the purpose for writing.	Register and tone depends entirely on target reader and context.
<b>Formal letters</b>	The reader is likely to be either someone superior to the writer or someone who the writer does not know.	The following opening and closing formulae should be used: <i>Dear Mr Brown/Mrs Smith/Ms Carter</i> (name is used) ..... <i>Yours sincerely,</i>  <i>Dear Sir/Madam,</i> ..... <i>Yours faithfully,</i>  In a formal letter a final sentence such as 'I look forward to hearing from you.' Is often used to conclude the letter.	Formal register is used. This includes using appropriate grammar (e.g. no contractions such as 'I'm' or 'doesn't') vocabulary (e.g. 'dissatisfied with' and <u>not</u> 'fed up with')  Register and tone MUST be consistent.
<b>Informal letters</b>	The reader is likely to be a friend or a peer.	The opening and closing structures should reflect the register, i.e., <i>Dear Tom, Hi Tom,</i> ..... <i>Bye, See you soon,</i>	Informal register is used. This means colloquial language and contractions can be used and formal language is inappropriate.  Register and tone MUST be consistent.

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<b>Emails</b>	As with letters, the target reader can vary greatly and will be specified in the question e.g. a teacher, a friend, an organisation/company	Again, as with letters, emails should have an appropriate opening and closing phrase and clear paragraphing. The first paragraph should outline the purpose for writing.	Register and tone depends entirely on target reader and context.
<b>Formal emails</b>	The reader is likely to be either someone superior to the writer or someone who the writer does not know.	<p>The following opening and closing formulae should be used:</p> <p><i>Dear Mr Brown/Mrs Smith/Ms Carter,</i> (name is used)</p> <p><i>Dear Kate,</i> (it is the generally accepted practice in British companies to use the first name only of colleagues, while still using a formal register for the email)</p> <p>.....</p> <p><i>Kind regards,</i> <i>Best regards,</i></p> <p><i>Dear Sir/Madam,</i> is not often used in an email as writers generally know the person to whom they are writing.</p> <p>As in a formal letter, a final sentence such as 'I look forward to hearing from you.' Is often used to conclude the email.</p>	<p>Formal register is used. This includes using appropriate grammar (e.g. no contractions such as 'I'm' or 'doesn't') vocabulary (e.g. 'dissatisfied with' and <u>not</u> 'fed up with')</p> <p>Register and tone MUST be consistent.</p>
<p><b>Letters at ISE foundation are likely to be informal and due to the length of output (100-130 words) will consist of fewer paragraphs.</b></p>			

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<p><b>Informal emails</b></p>	<p>The reader is likely to be a friend or a peer.</p>	<p>The opening and closing structures should reflect the register, i.e., Dear Tom, Hi Tom, ..... Bye, See you soon</p>	<p>Informal register is used. This means colloquial language and contractions can be used and formal language is inappropriate. Note that abbreviations such as those used in texting are NOT appropriate, e.g. 'Thanx' or 'R U going?'</p> <p>Register and tone <b>MUST</b> be consistent.</p>
<p><b>Emails at ISE foundation are likely to be informal and due to the length of output (100-130 words) will consist of fewer paragraphs.</b></p>			

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<b>Essays</b>	A teacher or tutor.	A good essay requires clear paragraphing and should use linking devices.	The type of language used depends on the purpose and context.  Essays are usually either neutral or formal in register.
<b>Descriptive essay</b>	A teacher or tutor.	Essay should have a title. Ideas should be arranged in a logical manner.	Wide range of descriptive language. There should be good use of adjectives and adverbs that make the description interesting to read.
<b>Discursive essay</b>	A teacher or tutor.	Essay should include a title, introduction, body and conclusion. Equal attention should be given to positive and negative points and should be clearly organised into paragraphs.  The essay must include a conclusion in which the candidate expresses his or her own views on the topic.	Candidate should use language of justification and agreeing and disagreeing.
<b>Argument essay</b>	A teacher or tutor.	Again essay should include a title, introduction, body and conclusion. Ideas and supporting arguments should be clearly organised into paragraphs.	Candidate should use language of justification and agreeing and disagreeing.
<b>Essays at foundation level are more likely to be descriptive essays and examiners should not expect the same level of development of ideas or use of discourse markers.</b>			

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<p><b>Articles</b></p>	<p>A reader of a newspaper, magazine or website.</p>	<p>Must have a title or headline May have a sub-title/sub-headline or start with a rhetorical question.</p> <p>Articles should be clearly organised into paragraphs, including an introduction, main body and conclusion. Articles should include the writer's opinion and often have a persuasive element. The conclusion should sum up the main point of view that the writer wants to express.</p>	<p>Articles should always be engaging and the opening lines should catch the reader's interest. Articles often contain language of description with examples and anecdotes provided. As articles should engage the reader, language should be varied and colourful.</p> <p>The register depends on the topic and target reader and so can be informal or formal. Whatever register the candidate chooses to adopt <u>must</u> be used consistently throughout the article.</p>
<p><b>At ISE Foundation introductions and conclusions are likely to be a single sentence rather than a complex paragraph, which is acceptable at this level.</b></p>			

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<b>Reviews</b>	Usually the reader of a magazine or website.	Often similar to an article with a headline/title and clearly organised into paragraphs.  There should be a description of the event, book, film etc and the writer's personal opinion should be clear. There should also be a recommendation to the reader.	Descriptive language is essential with a variety of adjectives and adverbs used. Also language to express opinion, with justification should be used.  Reviews are generally neutral or informal. An overly formal register would generally be inappropriate.
<p><b>At lower levels, reviews will be less developed and are likely to be a simple description, with some opinion and a simple recommendation, e.g. 'I think everyone should read this book.'</b></p>			

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<b>Reports</b>	Usually someone in a higher position of authority such as a teacher, employer or college principal.	Report should have a title explaining its purpose. It should be clearly organised into paragraphs and may include headings. Recommendations or suggestions are often made in the final paragraph.	Language should be formal and impersonal as information presented is based on facts and not opinion. Any suggestions or recommendations should be based on factual information.
<p><b>The language required for the genre of reports is above level for ISE Foundation and ISE I and so should not be assessed at these levels.</b></p>			

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<b>Proposals</b>	Usually a superior, a boss or college principal.	Proposals should have a title expressing the purpose of the proposal and should be clearly organised into paragraphs. Proposals may include headings to aid organisation.	Candidates should make suggestions supported by factual information, in order to persuade the reader of a course of action. The register should be formal.
<p><b>The language required for the genre of proposals is above level for ISE Foundation and ISE I and so should not be assessed at these levels.</b></p>			

\*\*Reports and proposals are very similar, but their main difference is that reports generally evaluate past or present situations, whereas proposals focus on projects or ideas for the future.

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### **Appendix:**

Sources referred to:

- 1) [http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/projects/examreform/into\\_europe/writing.pdf](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/projects/examreform/into_europe/writing.pdf)
- 2) [http://www.webbervilleschools.org/wp-content/iisd/www\\_webbervilleschools\\_org/uploads/2011/07/Writing-Genres.pdf](http://www.webbervilleschools.org/wp-content/iisd/www_webbervilleschools_org/uploads/2011/07/Writing-Genres.pdf)
- 3) [http://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource\\_files/49\\_2\\_2\\_millar\\_0.pdf](http://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/49_2_2_millar_0.pdf)
- 4) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english/writing/genreaudiencerev4.shtml>
- 5) <http://www.uefap.com/writing/genre/genrefram.htm>
- 6) <http://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/Excellent-Writing-Checklist-All-Genres-Explained-3004897/>
- 7) [http://www.v-i-s.dk/UserFiles/file/Cambridge/Primary\\_English\\_as\\_a\\_Second\\_Language\\_Curriculum\\_Framework.pdf](http://www.v-i-s.dk/UserFiles/file/Cambridge/Primary_English_as_a_Second_Language_Curriculum_Framework.pdf)
- 8) <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/ell/standards.pdf>
- 9) <https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/ell/policy/special.pdf>
- 10) Genre theory: A horn of plenty for EFL learners, Andrzej Cirocki, Anglia Ruskin University, UK