

Paper 1: Reading and Writing

Paper Format

This paper contains 9 parts.

Number of questions

56

Task Types

Matching, multiple choice, multiple-choice cloze, open cloze, spelling, information transfer and guided writing.

Sources

Authentic and adapted-authentic real world notices,

newspaper and magazine articles, simplified encyclopedia entries.

Answering

Candidates indicate answers either by shading lozenges (Parts 1–5) or writing answers (Parts 6–9) on a machine markable answer sheet.

Timing

1 hour 10 minutes.

Marks

Each item carries one mark, except for question 56 which is marked out of 5. This gives a total of 60 marks, which is weighted to a final mark out of 50, representing 50% of total marks for the whole examination.

Part	Task Type and Format	Task Focus	Number of questions
1	Matching. Matching 5 prompt sentences to 8 notices, plus one example.	Gist understanding of real-world notices. Reading for main message.	5
2	Three-option multiple-choice sentences. Six sentences (including one integrated example) with connecting link of topic or story line.	Lexical. Reading and identifying appropriate vocabulary.	5
3	Three-option multiple-choice. Five discrete three-option multiple-choice items (plus an example) focusing on verbal exchange patterns. Matching. Five matching items (plus an integrated example) in a continuous dialogue, selecting from eight possible responses.	Functional language. Reading and identifying appropriate response.	10
4	Right/Wrong/Doesn't say OR Three-option multiple-choice. One long text or three short texts with maximum word length of 230 words adapted from authentic newspaper and magazine articles. Seven three-option multiple-choice items or seven Right/Wrong/Doesn't say items, plus an integrated example.	Reading for detailed understanding and main idea(s).	7
5	Multiple-choice cloze. A text adapted from an original source, for example encyclopedia entries, newspaper and magazine articles. Eight three-option multiple-choice items, plus an integrated example.	Reading and identifying appropriate structural word (auxiliary verbs, modal verbs, determiners, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions etc.).	8
6	Word completion. Five dictionary definition type sentences (plus one integrated example). Five words to identify and spell.	Reading and identifying appropriate lexical item, and spelling.	5
7	Open cloze. Text of type candidates could be expected to write, for example a short letter or postcard. Ten spaces to fill with one word (plus an integrated example) which must be spelled correctly.	Reading and identifying appropriate word with focus on structure and/or lexis.	10

Part	Task Type and Format	Task Focus	Number of questions
8	Information transfer. One or two short input texts, authentic in nature (notes, adverts etc.) to prompt completion of an output text (form, notice, diary entry etc.). Five spaces to fill on output text with one or more words or numbers (plus an integrated example).	Reading and writing down appropriate words or numbers with focus on content and accuracy.	5
9	Continuous writing. Either a short input text or rubric to prompt a written response. Three messages to communicate.	Writing a short message, note or postcard of 25–35 words.	1

Preparing for the Reading and Writing Paper

Introduction

The reading and writing part of the test together take 1 hour and 10 minutes with a total of 56 questions. Candidates have a question paper and a separate answer sheet on which they record their answers. Efforts are made to keep the language of instructions to candidates as simple as possible, and a worked example is given in every part of the test.

Reading texts are authentic texts, adapted where necessary so that most of the vocabulary and grammatical structures are accessible to students at this level. However, candidates are expected to be able to make use of interpretation strategies if they encounter unfamiliar lexis or structures.

Candidates do not need to follow a specific course before attempting KET. Any general English course for beginners of approximately 200 learning hours which develops reading and writing skills alongside instruction in grammar and vocabulary will be suitable.

In addition to course-book reading texts, teachers are advised to give their students every opportunity to read the type of English used in everyday life, for example short newspaper and magazine articles, advertisements, tourist brochures, instructions, recipes, etc. In dealing with this real life material, students should be encouraged to develop reading strategies to compensate for their limited linguistic resources, such as the ability to guess unfamiliar words, and the ability to extract the main message from a text. A class library consisting of English language magazines and simplified readers on subjects of interest to students will be a valuable resource.

Students should also be encouraged to take advantage of real-life occasions for writing short messages to each other and their teacher. They can, for example, write invitations, arrangements for meeting, apologies for missing a class, or notices about lost property. Here the emphasis should be on the successful communication of the intended message, though errors of structure, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation should not be ignored.

To ensure that candidates fully understand what they will

have to do in the Reading and Writing paper, it is advisable for them to become familiar in advance with the different types of test tasks. They should also make sure that they understand how to record their answers on the answer sheet (pages 29 and 30).

Part 1

In Part 1, candidates are tested on their ability to understand the main message of a sign, notice or other very short text. These texts are of the type usually found on roads, in railway stations, airports, shops, restaurants, offices, schools, etc. Wherever possible these texts are authentic and so may contain lexis which is unfamiliar to the candidates, but this should not prevent them from understanding the main message. This is a matching question, requiring candidates to match five sentences to the appropriate sign or notice.

Part 2

In Part 2, candidates are tested on their knowledge of vocabulary. They are asked to fill the gap in each of five sentences with one of the three options provided. There is a completed example sentence at the beginning. The six sentences are all on the same topic or are linked by a simple story line. Candidates should deal with each sentence individually but be aware that the overall context will help them find the correct answer.

Part 3

In Part 3, candidates are tested on their ability to understand the language of the routine transactions of daily life.

Questions 1–15 are multiple-choice (3 options). Candidates are asked to complete five short conversational exchanges.

Questions 16–20 are matching exercises. Candidates are asked to complete a longer dialogue, by choosing from a list of eight options. These dialogues take place in shops, hotels, restaurants, etc., and in various work, study and social situations.

Part 4

In Part 4, candidates are tested on their ability to understand the main ideas and some details of longer texts (about 230

words). These texts come from authentic sources, such as newspaper and magazine articles, but are adapted to make them accessible to candidates. Texts may include vocabulary which is unfamiliar to the candidates, but this should not interfere with their ability to complete the task.

The questions in this part may be multiple-choice comprehension questions (with 3 options). Alternatively, candidates may be asked to decide whether, according to the text, each one of a set of statements is correct or incorrect, or whether there is insufficient information in the text to decide this.

Part 5

In Part 5, candidates are tested on their knowledge of grammatical structure and usage in the context of a reading text. As with Part 4, texts are adapted from newspaper and magazine articles, encyclopedia and other authentic sources. Words are deleted from the text and candidates are asked to complete the text by choosing the appropriate word from 3 options. Deletions mainly focus on structural elements, such as verb forms, determiners, pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions. Understanding of structural relationships at the phrase, clause, sentence or paragraph level is also required.

Parts 6–9 focus particularly on writing.

Part 6

In Part 6, candidates are asked to produce five items of vocabulary and to spell them correctly. The five items of vocabulary will all belong to the same lexical field, for example jobs, food, things you can find in a house, etc. For each word they have to write, candidates are given a 'definition' of the type you can find in a learner's dictionary, followed by the first letter of the required word and a set of dashes to represent the number of the remaining letters in the required word. There is a completed example at the beginning.

Part 7

In Part 7, candidates are asked to complete a gapped text. Texts are short and simple and are of the type candidates at this level may be expected to write, for example notes and short letters. A text may take the form of a note plus a reply to that note, or may be a single letter. Deletions in the text focus on grammatical structure and vocabulary. Candidates are only asked to produce words which students at this level can be expected to actively use. Correct spelling of the missing words is essential in this part.

Part 8

In Part 8, candidates complete a simple information transfer task. They are asked to use the information in one or two short texts (note, e-mail, advertisement, etc.) to complete a

form, notice, diary entry or other similar type of document. Candidates have to understand the text(s) in order to complete the task, and the focus is on both writing and reading ability. Candidates are expected to understand the vocabulary commonly associated with forms, for example surname, date of birth, etc. The required written production is at word and phrase level, not sentence level. Correct spelling and use of capital letters is essential in this part.

Part 9 – Question 56

In Part 9, candidates are given the opportunity to show that they can communicate a written message (25–35 words) of an authentic type, for example a note or postcard to a friend. The instructions indicate the type of message required, who it is for and what kind of information should be included. Candidates must respond to the prompts in all three bullet points. All must be addressed in order to complete the task fully. Alternatively, the candidates may be asked to read and respond appropriately to three elements contained within a short note from a friend.

Assessment

There are 5 marks for Part 9. Candidates at this level are not expected to produce faultless English, but, to achieve 5 marks, a candidate should write a cohesive message which successfully communicates all three parts of the message, with only minor grammatical and spelling errors. A great variety of fully acceptable answers is possible.

Mark scheme for Part 9

Mark	Criteria	
5	All three parts of message clearly communicated. Only minor spelling errors or occasional grammatical errors.	
4	All three parts of message communicated. Some errors in spelling, grammar and/or punctuation.	
3	All three parts of message attempted. Expression may require interpretation by the reader.	Two parts of message are clearly communicated. Only minor spelling errors or occasional grammatical errors.
2	Only two parts of message communicated. Some errors in spelling and grammar. The errors in expression may require patience and interpretation by the reader.	
1	Only one part of the message communicated.	
0	Question unattempted, or totally incomprehensible response.	

Candidates are penalised for not writing the minimum number of words (i.e. fewer than 25) and for ignoring the conventions of note-writing by not signing their notes. They are not penalised for writing too much, though they are advised not to do so.