

O-Level English Paper 1:

1. Paper layout (70 marks, 35%)

1. **Sec A Editing** [10m]: find and correct grammar errors
2. **Sec B Situational Writing** [30m]: 250–350 words, uses a visual text
3. **Sec C Continuous Writing** [30m]: 350–500 words, 1 of 4 topics

2. Situational Writing (Sec B)

Always:

1. Identify **PAC** (purpose, audience, context)
2. Audience decides register: formal = principal, teachers, officials, strangers; informal = friends, family
3. Cover **all 6 points** from the question paper
4. Support every point with info from the visual text, in your own words
5. Use PEEL for each point; a missing point badly caps your content marks
6. Formal: no contractions, no slang, no exclamation marks

Formal letter/email layout

- Intro: Dear [Title + Surname], → I am [full name], [position + organisation]. I am writing to [purpose].
- Body: 6 points in PEEL
- Conclusion: restate purpose + summarise points. Thank you for your time and attention.
- Close: Yours sincerely (named person) / Yours faithfully (Sir/Madam), [full name]

Informal letter/email layout

- Intro: Dear [name], → How have you been? I'm writing to [purpose].
- Body: 6 points in PEEL
- Conclusion: restate purpose. Thank you!
- Close: Sincerely / Yours lovingly, [name]

Email layout

- To / Subject / Date → Salutation → Content → Closing → Name
- Formal: add Dept + Organisation + email
- Subject line is clear and specific
- "Re:" is only for replying to a previous email

Letter layout

- Internal formal: Recipient (title + full name, designation) → Date → Dear [Title Surname] → **Title (underlined)** → Content → Yours sincerely → Name + signature + designation + dept
- External formal: also add your address (top), recipient's organisation + address, and your organisation
- Informal: your address → date → Dear [name] → "How are you?..." → contractions OK → Yours lovingly, signature

Report layout

- To: (title + name, designation) / From: (name, designation, dept) / Date / **Title** / Content / Signature
- External: add organisation + address for both sides

Other formats

- **Speech:** 1st person, address the audience throughout
- **Article:** open with "By [full name]", add commentary, headline at top
- **Blog:** include the date of the post
- **Brochure:** heading, then sub-heading, then content

3. Continuous Writing (Sec C)

Marking split (from your other sheet): Content ~13, Language ~13, Organisation ~9.
Argumentative and discursive each have their own structure below.

Argumentative

Pick one distinct stance (support or do not support) and defend it. Cues: "How far do you agree?" / "Do you agree..." / "Should..."

1. **Intro**
 - Hook
 - Thesis: state your stance, linked to the hook (e.g. "It is with this notion that...")
 - Roadmap: summarise your 3 distinct points (not too similar)
 - Link to question: link back to the topic and what it asks for
2. **Body 1 (supporting)**
 - Point 1 (PEEL)
 - Point 2 (PEEL)
 - Link back to the question
3. **Body 2 (not supporting)**
 - Point 3: goes against your stance

- Phrase it as a con that does not override your stance
 - e.g. "With [supporting point] in mind, it is worth noting that..."
4. **Conclusion**
- Restate stance
 - Summarise points from the body
 - Evaluate both sides (why you chose this stance)
 - Link back to the question

Discursive

Stay balanced and overall neutral, and show both sides fairly. Cues: "advantages and disadvantages of..." / "What are your views?"

1. **Intro**
 - Hook
 - Thesis: neutral position, linked to the hook (e.g. "It is with this notion that...")
 - Roadmap: summarise your 4 distinct points (not too similar)
 - Link to question: link back to the topic and what it asks for
2. **Body 1 (supporting)**
 - Point 1 (PEEL)
 - Point 2 (PEEL)
 - Link back to the question
3. **Body 2 (against)**
 - Point 3 (PEEL)
 - Point 4 (PEEL)
 - Show the other side fairly
 - e.g. "With [supporting point] in mind, it is worth noting that..."
4. **Conclusion**
 - Summarise points from the body (both pros and cons)
 - Evaluate the validity of both sides
 - Open-ended ending (e.g. a rhetorical question)
 - Do **NOT** show a stance, or you are not answering the question

Descriptive

Detail-heavy writing that immerses the reader through the 5 senses.

1. Organise by space (near to far), sense, or time
2. ¶1 overall impression → ¶2–4 one focus each → ¶5 final image tied to mood
3. Pick **ONE dominant mood** and keep it consistent

Narrative / Personal Recount

Tell an interesting story that shows character development or a lesson, linked to what the question asks.

1. Shape: Orientation → Rising action → Climax → Falling action → Resolution/Reflection
2. Hook with action mid-scene or a flashback
3. Climax gets the most detail and sensory language
4. End with a lesson or character development
5. **Show, don't tell** (e.g. "my hands trembled")
6. Use dialogue, varied sentence length, and figurative language (don't force it)

4. Pitfalls

1. Wrong register
2. Skipping a point in situational writing
3. Narrative with all plot and no reflection
4. Over-long intro
5. Repeated sentence starters ("I... I... I...")
6. Conclusion that copies the intro word for word
7. Discursive essay that shows a stance