

Moderators' report

ENTRY LEVEL

ENGLISH

**OCR Entry Level Certificate
in English**

R393

For first teaching in 2016

R393/01/02 Summer 2025 series

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Introduction

Our Moderators' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on centres' assessment of moderated work, based on what has been observed by the moderation team. These reports include a general commentary of accuracy of internal assessment judgements, identify good practice in relation to evidence collation and presentation, and comment on the quality of centre assessment decisions against individual Learning Objectives. The report also highlights areas where requirements have been misinterpreted and provides guidance to centre assessors on requirements for accessing higher mark bands. Where appropriate, the report will also signpost other sources of information that centre assessors will find helpful.

OCR completes moderation of centre-assessed work in order to quality assure the internal assessment judgements made by assessors within a centre. Where OCR cannot confirm the centre's marks, we may adjust them in order to align them to the national standard. Any adjustments to centre marks are detailed on the Moderation Adjustments report, which can be downloaded from Interchange when results are issued. Centres should also refer to their individual centre report provided after moderation has been completed. In combination, these centre-specific documents and this overall report should help to support centres' internal assessment and moderation practice for future series.

Online courses

We have created online courses to build your confidence in delivering, marking and administering internal assessment for our qualifications. Courses are available for Cambridge Nationals, GCSE, A Level and Cambridge Technicals (2016).

Cambridge Nationals

All teachers delivering our Cambridge Nationals suite are asked to complete the Essentials for the NEA course, which describes how to guide and support your students. You'll receive a certificate which you should retain.

Following this you can also complete a subject-specific Focus on Internal Assessment course for your individual Cambridge Nationals qualification, covering marking and delivery.

GCSE, A Level and Cambridge Technicals (2016)

We recommend all teachers complete the module on Online courses – NEA for their subject. These courses provide subject-specific information about course content; how to prepare for planning, marking and submitting; and support with understanding the marking criteria.

Accessing our online courses

You can access all our online courses from our teacher support website [Teach Cambridge](#).

These free online courses currently cover the end-to-end NEA process for teachers. You'll find the link to the **Online courses** under the **Assessment** or **Training** tab – hover over **Assessment** or **Training** on the horizontal menu and select **Online courses** from the dropdown.

These self-paced online courses are intended for any teachers. During the course, you will engage with interactive content on subjects such as guidance on unit content, structure and administrative processes.

If you have any queries, please contact our Customer Support Centre on 01223 553998 or email support@ocr.org.uk.

General overview

R393/01/02 Entry Level Certificate in English is a qualification that covers three components: spoken language, reading and writing. It is made up of 100% internally assessed tasks and tests, which allows a thoroughly flexible approach to assessments.

Centres delivering the R393 Entry Level Certificate in English in 2025 submitted entries for candidates with a range of abilities across the three Entry Levels – Entry Level 1, Entry Level 2 and Entry Level 3. Higher ability Entry Level 3 candidates demonstrated readiness to move to the next level of study, such as OCR GCSE English Language (9-1), J351.

Most teachers chose some good and challenging topics for the spoken language and writing components, which motivated and engaged the candidates to perform to their best ability and to achieve to their full potential.

In the main, the teachers' assessment decisions were accurate. The Internal Assessment Forms were generally completed in a detailed way, giving some excellent justification for the allocation of marks.

Many teachers also included copies of the spoken language and writing marking criteria grids, with highlighted sections to provide reasoning as to how the marks had been given. This was extremely helpful for the external moderation team.

Overall, the administration was good, although there were instances of delays when centres either:

- entered marks on Submit for Assessment, but did not send the candidates' assessment work to the external moderator
- sent the assessment work to the external moderator but did not enter the marks on Interchange
- submitted the practice reading papers instead of the unseen ones.

To make sure that the external moderation process runs smoothly, centres should enter the candidates' marks on Interchange and then make sure that the external moderator is in receipt of the candidates' assessment work as quickly as possible. The candidates' work can be submitted by:

- using a secure postal service, such as recorded delivery
- uploading the work to the Submit to Assessment.

It is vital that centres submit work for all components undertaken by the candidates, e.g. the spoken language recording(s), the reading assessments and the imaginative and informative written work.

Where there is a problem in submitting any of the marks, for example in spoken language, please contact OCR as soon as possible, so that advice can be sought, and information can be included as to why there may be missing marks when you send your packs to the external moderator.

The external moderation team enjoyed listening to and watching some lively spoken language assessments and reading some very interesting pieces of writing.

Candidates who did well generally:	Candidates who did less well generally:
• used a motivating topic which suited their interests for the role-play or discussion • researched and planned for their spoken language activity • allotted sufficient time to carefully read the texts in both the literary and non-fiction tasks • made sure they were able to identify facts and opinions in texts • used interesting topics which suited their interests in both the informative and imaginative writing • made sure that there was clear and logical organisation of information and ideas in their writing.	• used a topic which did not provide enough scope to make developed contributions in the spoken language activity • did not spend sufficient time planning or researching before the role-play or discussion • did not read the literary and non-fiction tasks in detail • made little effort to summarise information from the reading texts • used a format for the writing which did not provide scope to demonstrate sustained writing • did not use accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Comments on Individual Components

Spoken Language

For the Spoken Language component, candidates are required to take part in either a role-play or a discussion. Topics can be chosen that best suit the candidates' interests. Some examples of interesting topics that were selected included:

- a discussion about whether or not zoos should remain open
- a discussion about a favourite TV show and why they enjoyed it
- a discussion around whether students have too many exams
- a discussion about the influence Tik-Tok might have on voters in an election
- a discussion about how redemption is presented in 'A Christmas Carol'
- a discussion about hopes and aspirations for the future post 16
- a discussion on the effects of natural disasters
- a discussion about what should go in a time capsule in 2025 and why.

Some topics chosen did not allow the candidates to make developed contributions, such as:

- a discussion around why homework is a good thing
- a role-play on returning an item to a store
- a discussion around how they started a particular hobby
- a role-play about a hotel complaint.

Reading

The reading component requires candidates to respond to two reading texts. They must be able to understand a non-fiction text and understand a literary fiction text. OCR provides a selection of six non-fiction texts and six literary fiction texts. This allows teachers to choose texts that they believe will suit the candidates the most. There are some sample practice texts, but the two submitted reading texts **must** be from one of the six texts provided for both elements and **not** the sample practice texts.

Writing

The writing component requires candidates to write an informative piece and an imaginative piece. As with the spoken language, topics can be chosen that best suit the candidates' interests. Some examples of interesting topics that were selected included:

- should Christmas be cancelled?
- a letter of complaint to a restaurant
- a leaflet on how to stay safe on the internet
- the opening to a ghost story
- a review of 'Blood Brothers'
- an alternative ending to 'Animal Farm'
- a suspenseful story or a newspaper report about a natural disaster
- a story with the opening line: 'When I lost my temper...'
- a theme park or resort leaflet
- a story entitled, 'At the Races'
- a persuasive speech about animal rights
- putting forward individual views on animal testing.

Some topics chosen did not allow the candidates to demonstrate sustained writing, such as:

- a review of a new computer game
- a description inspired by an image (E.g. a desert; a dystopian picture etc.)
- a story that creates a dramatic event
- a review of a holiday
- opinions about mobile phones
- a speech about football.

Stronger responses included effective paragraphing, correct spelling, basic punctuation, and grammar.

Assessment for learning



Encourage candidates to choose spoken language and writing topics that will motivate them to achieve to their best ability. Support candidates to spell common, monosyllabic, and polysyllabic words correctly and to use grammar and basic punctuation accurately.

Most common causes of centres not passing

The R393 Entry Level Certificate in English consists of 100% internally assessed tasks and tests, which are externally moderated by OCR. This means that only candidates who have achieved a pass are entered for the qualification.

Common misconceptions

It is optional to use the OCR exemplar topics on the R393 website for the Spoken Language and writing components, but not the reading exemplar material. Centres may choose any topic that will motivate and engage candidates to achieve their full potential.

Avoiding potential malpractice

Encourage candidates to take responsibility for their progress and signpost them to the marking criteria and Assessment Objectives.

Make sure all record keeping (e.g. the Internal Assessment Forms) is up to date and accurate. Make sure that all spoken language recordings are in a compatible audio/video format, e.g. MPEG (*.mp3) and are safely stored and ready to be provided to the OCR external moderator.

If written work is completed on a word processor, then the spelling, grammar and punctuation checker must be disabled. Internal assessors must annotate and sign the work to verify that these have been disabled.

Helpful resources

[The OCR Teacher's Handbook for the R393 qualification](#)

[Skills Guide: The OCR Guide to Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar](#)

[The OCR Entry Level Guide to Finding Out](#)

Supporting you

Teach Cambridge

Make sure you visit our secure website [Teach Cambridge](#) to find the full range of resources and support for the subjects you teach. This includes secure materials such as set assignments and exemplars, online and on-demand training.

Don't have access? If your school or college teaches any OCR qualifications, please contact your exams officer. You can [forward them this link](#) to help get you started.

Reviews of marking

If any of your students' results are not as expected, you may wish to consider one of our post-results services. For full information about the options available visit the [OCR website](#).

Keep up-to-date

We send a monthly bulletin to tell you about important updates. You can also sign up for your subject specific updates. If you haven't already, [sign up here](#).

OCR Professional Development

Attend one of our popular CPD courses to hear directly from a senior assessor or drop in to a Q&A session. Most of our courses are delivered live via an online platform, so you can attend from any location.

Please find details for all our courses for your subject on **Teach Cambridge**. You'll also find links to our online courses on NEA marking and support.

Signed up for ExamBuilder?

ExamBuilder is the exam paper builder platform for a range of our qualifications. [Find out more](#).

Free for all OCR centres with an Interchange account, it allows unlimited users per centre. We require an [Interchange](#) username to verify your centre's users for ExamBuilder.

If you do not have an Interchange account, please contact your centre administrator (usually the Exams Officer) to request a username.

Once you have an Interchange username, use the form on [this page](#) to sign up for ExamBuilder, or ask an existing user at your centre to create an ExamBuilder account for you.

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