

# WRITING IN OET



## CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION TO THE WRITING SUB-TEST

The Writing sub-test is designed to assess whether candidates can communicate information that is relevant to a patient's case to a healthcare professional who is responsible for the continued care and recovery of that patient.

Students may struggle with writing because of their reliance on templates or formats. If this is the case with your students, then it is important to help them understand that a template approach to writing won't help them communicate relevant information to the recipients, because the requirements of continued-care patients in healthcare are never the same. An effective letter takes into consideration the unique situation of the patient and the purpose of the healthcare professional's role in providing continued care.

You may also find some students are already aware that templates shouldn't be used, but they may find it difficult to understand how this really works. Students tend to 'templatised' the 'Who you are writing to' and 'Why you are writing' statements. So, you may have students who create templates for the roles of healthcare professionals. They believe that if they're writing to their general practitioner, they don't need to mention medical history at all, or if they're writing to a physiotherapist, they don't need to include the medication which the patient is taking. Such generalised ideas are counterproductive and are only another version of the 'template approach' in disguise. Weaning them away from templates in all forms will take time, and it is worth investing classroom hours to provide activities that will help students to understand the communicative purpose of the OET letter, as well as how to write without the template approach.

As a result of a dependence on templates, you may get questions from students asking about smaller details such as 'How many names of medicines am I allowed to write?' or 'Should I include all the dates mentioned?' While it is natural for candidates to worry about smaller details, these questions may indicate that you need to help students understand that communication is key to writing. They can find the answers to these questions by relying on their understanding of the continued care required for a particular patient, and whether or not the reader will benefit from knowing all the medication, dates, etc. If such information helps achieve the purpose of continued care, then that information should be included and prioritised appropriately.

Emphasising the process of writing is a better approach to giving students the scaffolding they need. You can provide this scaffolding by giving them questions which they can use to help them write at every stage of the process. Spending some time going over the process, and reminding them of the process at every juncture, would be a better way to instil confidence rather than giving them a template. Here are some examples of questions you could get them to ask themselves at different stages of the process.

### During reading time

Although candidates aren't allowed to write during the five-minute reading time, you can help them use it to prepare. They should read the task first, followed by the case notes.

During this time, they can ask themselves questions such as:

- Who am I writing to?
- Why am I writing this letter to him/her?
- What is the purpose for writing?

- What is relevant to continued care for this patient?
- What is irrelevant and has no impact on continued care for this patient?
- What is optional, 'nice to know' information?

## While writing the letter

Before students begin writing, it is a good idea to help them understand that they need to think about and plan the different parts of the letter. While every student is different, and may have a preferred strategy for Test Day, you can encourage them to practise planning their letter in the classroom. So, by the time Test Day arrives, they have at least understood that they must think about their letter before beginning to write it. Some questions that could help them to understand the process are given here. It is important, however, that you follow the process consistently, getting students to understand the importance of thinking about these questions.

## Introduction and purpose

If students want to write an effective introduction and fulfil the purpose of the letter, they should ask themselves questions such as:

- Will the recipient understand why they should read the letter?
- Is there an overview in the introduction that makes the purpose clear?
- Does the letter start with a clear explanation?

## Selection

When selecting case notes, students should think about questions such as:

- Does my letter expand on the purpose with relevant details?
- Are my requests obvious to find?
- Which information is relevant for the reader to provide continued care?
- Which information is irrelevant and would distract the reader from understanding the purpose?

## Organisation

Telling students that healthcare professionals are time-poor, and don't have the luxury of reading through every letter in a leisurely way, gives them a good context to think about organisation. Their letters need to aid retrieval of information in the quickest time possible. Questions that can help them do this are:

- What is important for the reader to know at the beginning?
- What will be the effect of my choice of organisation on the reader?
- Does the way I have organised the information in my letter convey clearly what the reader needs to do for this patient?
- Does the way I have organised my letter help the reader to quickly extract relevant information about continued care?

Consistency with this approach is important. So, ensure you follow this throughout, rather than introducing it later in the course when it would be a little more difficult to break students out of their old habits.

If you find that your students' writing skills are not up to the mark in the first place, you can include additional sessions on writing which aren't directly related to OET Writing. You can plan these as per your students' language needs. For example, you may find that they may need more help with paragraph formation or certain aspects of grammar in Writing. If students feel that they don't require these classes, you may have to show them evidence of areas that they need to improve in, using their existing writing samples.

## Preparing for the Writing Sub-test

Usually in writing classes where the focus is on academic essays, skills such as writing topic sentences or use of linkers are deemed necessary. However, that is not the case in OET Writing. Bear this in mind if you'd like to provide additional classes on general writing.

The learners can be introduced to writing paragraphs, but as long as the paragraphs are logically organised and help aid the retrieval of key information, they don't need to meet the generally accepted academic standards for general purpose tests. Help your students understand early that this test isn't about 'showing off' writing skills. This has been explained in the Student's Book as well, on page 116 in the chapter 'Preparing to Write the Letter'.

# WRITING IN OET



## Chapter objective

The Writing section has been divided into three chapters: Introduction to the Writing sub-test, Preparing to Write the Letter and Writing the Letter. If students are using the book as a self-study guide, then the sequence of tasks suggested in the book is fine, but if you would like to use it in class, you will find that you don't have to follow the order suggested and can intersperse tasks from 'Preparing to Write the Letter' with those from 'Writing the Letter'. You can take students through the process of writing the letter using the tasks in the book as well as by creating activities around the Practice Tests. The lesson sketches here use the tasks in the Student's Book but not necessarily in the same order. In addition, for classroom teaching, you can simultaneously finish tasks from Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. For example, on Day 1 of your Writing classes, you can do Tasks 1 and 2 from 'Writing the Letter', followed by any of the grammar topics in 'Preparing to Write the Letter', such as Tasks 6a and 6b about tenses.

## Preparing to Write the Letter (Chapter 2 of the Student's Book)

The majority of the topics here are focussed on grammar (except for Tasks 1a, 1b, 1c and Task 2) in an OET context so this assumes that your students are aware of how to produce the grammatical structures. If they struggle with producing the structures, then it is advisable to ensure they get a good grasp of these before you do the tasks in the book.

Task profile	
Tasks 1a, 1b, 1c	Scaffolded OET tasks based on selecting case notes
Task 2	Summarising case notes
Tasks 3a, 3b	Linking words
Tasks 4a, 4b	Conjunctions
Tasks 5a, 5b	Using appropriate vocabulary
Tasks 6a, 6b	Tenses
Tasks 7a, 7b	Modals
Tasks 8a, 8b	Active and passive sentences
Tasks 9a, 9b and 9c	Articles
Tasks 10a, 10b	Punctuation
Task 11	Spelling
Task 12	Layout of the letter

Please note that Tasks 1a, 1b, 1c and Task 2 from Chapter 2 are focussed on writing the letter (selection and summarisation of case notes) and so, for classroom purposes, it is recommended that they be done after Tasks 1 and 2 from Chapter 3. The lesson sketches here suggest the same order and also how you can exploit them in class.

## Writing the Letter (Chapter 3 of the Student's Book)

These tasks are directly focussed on the letter and students who are using the book for self-study may have automatically done them after completing Chapter 2. However, suggestions for using the tasks for classroom use have been given in the lesson sketches and this may not necessarily be in the order that you find them in the book.

Task profile	
Tasks 1, 2	Awareness of audience: Use these tasks as suggested in the lesson sketch but also add in an introduction to the western healthcare context in case your students aren't familiar with this.
Tasks 3, 4	Selection of case notes
Task 5	Writing a paragraph to consolidate learning from both chapters
Task 6	Checklist for writing: Use this towards the end of the course to help students learn what to look out for while checking their letters at the end.
Tasks 7, 8	Organisation of ideas based on a transfer letter and a letter to a layperson



### Chapter notes

Before you begin teaching, you can orientate your students to the western healthcare context in terms of different roles (district nurse, social worker, home health nurse, community nurse, etc.) and systems of care (transitional care, nursing home, etc.). This is useful especially if your students have no previous knowledge of this. You can design fun activities around this but the purpose of this is only to orientate them and there is no need to make a reference to the letter at this stage. The lesson sketches here highlight some important stages in the process of writing the letter. They are:

- Creating an awareness of audience / thinking about your reader
- Identifying and expanding on purpose
- Selecting case notes
- Organising case notes

It is highly recommended that you use the same order of the lesson sketches suggested here.



### Creating an awareness of the audience: Tasks 1 and 2 from Chapter 3 (page 147)

Understanding the recipient of the letter is an important first step to being able to write the letter. You may have to do a little reading to orientate yourself with the western healthcare context which will also help you answer students' questions about some of the roles that are different or not present in their healthcare context.

Stage	Activity
Setting the context / Warmer	<p>Ask some lead-in questions related to the healthcare scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where do you work? What is the system like there?</li> <li>• How do you think the healthcare system in the country where you're going to work is different from the one in your country?</li> <li>• Do you think anything would be similar?</li> </ul> <p>Elicit target responses which may range from references to structure, roles and responsibilities, patient-healthcare professional ratio, etc.</p>



## Exploring the skill

Divide the class into groups and tell them you're going to describe a scenario where they need to imagine themselves in the role of a healthcare professional.

Give each group one of the following situations and ask them to put themselves in the shoes of the healthcare professional.

- Imagine you're a community nurse. There's a patient who has come to you with a left knee replacement. The patient is elderly, about 90 years old. What are the things you'd need to know to provide continued care for this patient?
- Imagine you're a physiotherapist. There's a patient who has come to you with a fractured arm and leg. The patient is an athlete. What are the things you'd like to know to provide continued care for this patient?
- Imagine you're a lactation consultant. A mother who recently delivered a baby is being referred to you. What do you need to do to provide continued care for this patient?
- Imagine you're an endocrinologist and a patient is being referred to you for management of hypothyroidism. What do you need to do to provide continued care for this patient?
- Imagine you're a social worker. A single mother who has just delivered a premature baby is being referred to you. What do you need to do to provide continued care for this patient?

Invite a representative from each group to share what the group discussed.

**Notes**

As groups present their answers on what information is required to continue care, make sure you probe 'why' for each of their explanations. This prevents students from thinking that there are specific types of information that should be given to medical professionals in certain roles. For example, students often think that a physiotherapist doesn't need to know about dietary recommendations or that a dietician doesn't need to know about medical background.

Ask the students to read the teaching content on page 146. Check their understanding by asking questions.

In the same groups, ask them to discuss:

- What kind of language do you need to use when writing to these professionals?
- Can you use medical terminology when writing to all these professionals?

Invite a representative from each group to come to the front and share what the group discussed.

Consolidate the discussion by highlighting that 'what is required for continued care' is key to the letter.

**Notes**

Avoid giving students the impression that the same medical terminology can be used with all medical professionals just because they're medical professionals. If writing to a specialist, terms from their field of specialisation are appropriate; however, when writing to a medical professional who may not be familiar with those specialist terms, it is better to explain or expand them, or not to use them at all.

Ask students to continue working in groups and finish Task 1. Discuss answers as a class. Also probe 'why' for every response given by students.

Applying the skill to an OET task	<p>Review the learning from the previous stage by asking students what they need to remember when thinking about their reader. Then, ask them to complete Task 2 on page 147 individually. After they have finished the task, they can share their answers with the rest of their group members.</p> <p>Nominate students to give their answers, but ensure you ask students to explain the 'why' of their answers.</p> <p>Check the answer key of the Student's Book for an explanation of why each item should or should not be included.</p>
Doing an OET task	<p>Ask students to look at the Writing task on page 160. Give them a one-line description of the patient: A young woman who has been discharged after having a baby. Students shouldn't look at the case notes at this stage.</p> <p>Ask them to analyse the recipient by asking themselves the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is the reader?</li> <li>• What does the reader need to know for continued care of this patient?</li> <li>• What kind of language is suitable for the reader?</li> </ul> <p>The goal of this task is to get students to anticipate what their reader would need to know based on the task and their patient.</p>
Following up	<p>Ask students to 'think-pair-share' on this question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will I know what my reader needs to know about the patient when I'm writing a letter in the workplace?</li> </ul> <p>Nominate pairs to share their ideas with the class.</p>

The section on 'Organising ideas' on page 117 looks at how students can write to four different recipients (a general practitioner, a physiotherapist, an occupational therapist and a home health nurse). You can use these letters in class to focus on different aspects of the letter as shown in the following lesson sketches.

### Identifying purpose for writing: Letters from Chapter 2 (pages 117–121)

The purpose of the letter is evident in the Writing task; it can also be found in the case notes, mostly in the discharge plan. There are two aspects to the purpose. The first is to make the purpose evident early on in the letter and the second is to expand the purpose through the rest of the letter. Official OET resource material on the website is a good source to learn more about the purpose of writing in the healthcare context and how it applies to the letter.

Stage	Activity
Setting the context / Warmer	<p>Ask students to imagine that they're a busy medical professional with very little time to waste. If they were to receive a letter about a patient, what would they expect from it? You can also project a relevant picture if your class has space for visual aids.</p> <p>Elicit responses and guide them to understand that since a medical professional has very little time, they need to read a letter quickly. They don't want to waste time searching for the purpose of the letter.</p>
Exploring the skill	<p>Ask students to discuss in pairs naming one student 'A' and the other 'B'. Tell students that they are going to read the introductions of two letters addressed to two different medical professionals.</p> <p>Hand out only the introduction of the letter to the students. Give the letter to the home health nurse to Student A in each pair and the letter to the physiotherapist to Student B.</p>



	<p>You can access these introductions from the answer key for the Student's Book and have them photocopied and cut beforehand. Don't mention who the recipients are but ask students to identify the purpose of the letters based on the introduction. Ask them to share with a partner, what they think the purpose is. Nominate one pair to explain their responses to the rest of the class.</p> <p>Ask them to discuss what they think those letters could contain for the recipient to continue care for the patient. You don't have to go into details with this as there is an activity in the lesson sketch on 'Selecting case notes – 2' that covers this.</p> <p>End with a class discussion.</p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>It is important to hear what students say rather than label their answers as 'correct' or 'incorrect'. At this stage, they haven't seen the case notes, so they are merely anticipating based on the purpose mentioned in the introductions.</p>
Applying the skill to an OET task	<p>Hand out the Writing tasks for these introductions to the pairs. Ask them to match each task with its introduction. Elicit answers.</p> <p>For further practice, hand out the Writing task and introductions for the letters to the general practitioner and the occupational therapist and ask them to match again. Discuss answers with the whole class.</p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>Some students may not understand the difference between a physiotherapist and an occupational therapist, so it may be worthwhile to check that they do.</p>
Doing an OET task	<p>Ask students to look at the Writing task for Practice Test 1 on page 225 and identify the purpose for writing. They may look at the information in the Discharge plan section of the case notes for further information on purpose.</p>
Following up	<p>Ask students to brainstorm different purposes for writing in healthcare. For example, letters can be written to ask medical professionals to make a further assessment, to provide education on a certain aspect of management of a condition, to create a diet plan, to refer to a specialist, and so on.</p>

## Writing an effective introduction: Letters from Chapter 2 (pages 117–121)

There is no single format for writing an introduction; however, a good introduction has certain elements which are discussed in this lesson sketch.

Stage	Activity
Setting the context / Warmer	<p>Give students a list of features and ask them to pick which ones make an effective introduction. You can mix features of good and bad introductions such as the ones given below. (✓) indicates a feature of a good introduction and (✗) indicates a feature of a bad one.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The next stages of care are communicated to the reader. (✓)</li> <li>• The reader knows why they need to read the letter. (✓)</li> <li>• The patient's medical history is mentioned clearly. (✗)</li> <li>• The phrase 'I'm writing to' is used. (✗)</li> <li>• The introduction contains a definite format of medical diagnosis, name and age of the patient and past medical conditions. (✗)</li> <li>• The introduction is personalised to the situation of the patient. (✓)</li> <li>• The introduction gives a high-level overview of the reason for writing. (✓)</li> </ul> <p>Discuss answers with the class, nominating different students to explain why they think an item does or doesn't make an effective introduction.</p>

Exploring the skill	<p>Begin by emphasising that there is no single way to write an introduction and that all introductions that contain the 'good' features discussed in the previous stage are acceptable.</p> <p>For students who require language help, you can introduce a few sentence starters to write introductions. For example, 'I'm writing to ...', 'Thank you for seeing ...', 'Ms Shaw is being referred to you for ...', etc.</p> <p>Ask students to work in pairs and hand out or display two good introductions and two bad ones. Ask students to identify which ones are good and which ones are bad, based on the discussion in the first stage of the activity. You can create these on your own, perhaps using introductions from letters written previously by students. Bad introductions should be 'bad' from the point of view of the features discussed in the previous stage. For example, a very generic introduction such as 'I'm writing to refer this patient to your care / I'm writing to refer Ms Shaw into your care' or an introduction with either too many details or a set format that sounds like a template.</p> <p>You can create a class checklist at the end of this stage that students can use to check whether their introduction is effective or not. If your students have picked this up well, ask them to create their own checklist or create one on the board with the whole class.</p>
Applying the skill to an OET task	<p>Hand out / display only the introductions of the letters to the general practitioner, occupational therapist, physiotherapist and home health nurse on pages 117–121. The introductions of letters to the general practitioner, occupational therapist and the physiotherapist are available in the answer key of the Student's Book. The introduction of the letter to the home health nurse is on page 120.</p> <p>Form groups of three and ask each of them to rewrite the four introductions in another way. The group can vote for the best introduction in their group for each recipient. After they have voted, ask groups to read out to the whole class the introductions that they have voted as the best for each recipient. After groups have finished reading their introductions for one recipient, the class can then vote for the best introduction for that recipient.</p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>Voting for one introduction doesn't mean that the others are incorrect. Make sure students get the message that introductions can be written in different ways and all of them are acceptable as long as they meet the features discussed in the first stage of the lesson.</p>
Doing an OET task	<p>Ask students to write the introduction for the Writing task from Practice Test 1 on page 225. Allow them to glance over the case notes for two or three minutes to get a better idea.</p> <p>Monitor and pick out a few introductions for discussion. Check first with students if they are comfortable with having their work analysed by the class. Otherwise, monitor and provide feedback.</p>
Following up	<p>Ask students if their understanding about what makes an effective introduction has changed in any way after the class. Ask them to reflect on how it has changed and share their thoughts with a partner. End with a class discussion.</p>



### Selecting case notes: Task 3 from Chapter 3 (page 149)

Selecting case notes is a skill that may take several classes to develop, so ensure that you give your students enough time to become comfortable with the skill. When discussing selection of case notes with your class, always walk through the reason why a case note is relevant or irrelevant, considering the purpose of the letter and continued care. Remember that some case notes may be semi-relevant, i.e., they are pieces of 'nice to know' information that don't distract the reader from retrieving relevant information. However, they aren't critical to helping the reader understand how to continue care. Some questions to keep asking students:

- What do you think the reader needs to know to continue care for this patient?
- What does the reader not need to know?

Stage	Activity
Setting the context / Warmer	<p>Prepare an example of a 'bad' letter for the following situation beforehand (or any other situation you can think of).</p> <p>The reader is a lactation consultant who receives a letter from a nurse on duty in the maternity ward where a mother has recently given birth to a baby via C-section. Break the class into groups and distribute a copy of the bad example to each group. Ask them to imagine they're the lactation consultant reading the letter. In their group, they should discuss whether the letter provides information of how to continue care for the mother. They must justify their answer and if they feel it doesn't contain relevant information, they should suggest what information it should contain.</p> <p>Elicit responses and end by highlighting to students that a reader would feel frustrated not knowing what they're supposed to do or not having enough information to continue care.</p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>The example can contain irrelevant details of the history of scans, C-section, and the mother's recovery but nothing about the baby or the mother's issues with lactation.</p>
Exploration	<p>Tell students that they're going to help you select case notes for the lactation consultant.</p> <p>Write these on the board or display them or hand them out as a worksheet. The worksheet can include relevant case notes for the professional in this particular case, irrelevant case notes that are part of the case but not necessary for the lactation consultant, case notes that are relevant to other healthcare professionals in this case. Put in one case note which is semi-relevant. The idea here is not to have a whole set of case notes but little chunks of case notes.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight at birth 1.67 kg (<i>relevant</i>)</li> <li>• Mother – stressed due to husband's absence at birth, unexpected C-section (<i>relevant</i>)</li> <li>• Mother – fall in second trimester (tripped over stone, landed on hands) (<i>irrelevant</i>)</li> <li>• Ear and eye tests – normal (<i>semi-relevant – could be more relevant to a paediatrician, but it gives information about the baby's condition which is 'nice to know'</i>)</li> <li>• Stitches – 3 (<i>irrelevant – could be relevant to a gynaecologist</i>)</li> <li>• Mother's weight – 52 kg (normal) (<i>irrelevant</i>)</li> <li>• Estimated foetal weight at 33 wks – 2<sup>nd</sup> centile (<i>irrelevant as this was before birth</i>)</li> <li>• Severe foetal growth restriction (<i>irrelevant as this was before birth</i>)</li> <li>• Born at 34 wks (<i>relevant as this shows baby is premature and needs to reach target weight</i>)</li> </ul> <p>Divide students into groups and discuss which case notes they think are relevant, irrelevant and semi-relevant. Nominate groups to share their answers as you discuss each case note with the class. Spend time on discussing why the case notes are relevant or irrelevant, probing students on the 'why' of their choice.</p> <p>You can repeat this exercise with another small set of similar case notes using another medical professional.</p>

Applying the skill to an OET task	<p>Explain to students that they're going to continue imagining themselves as healthcare professionals. This time, they need to imagine that they're the nurse at the transitional care home described in the Writing task on page 150. What information would they like to know about the patient, Ms Evelyn Burt, to provide care to help her recover?</p> <p>Ask students to work individually first and finish Task 3. After they have finished Task 3 on their own, ask them to compare with a partner. Discuss answers with the whole class. You can nominate pairs to share their answers.</p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>At this stage, it is very important to probe students to ask them why they think a case note is relevant, irrelevant or semi-relevant. Instead of giving them a direct 'yes, that's correct' or 'no, that's incorrect' response to their answers, ask them why they think a case note should be included and how that impacts continued care.</p>
Doing an OET task	<p>Ask students to work in groups and write the letter to the transitional care home nurse who is going to be looking after Ms Evelyn Burt as given in the Writing task. Ask them to apply what they've learnt about purpose and introductions when writing. Collect letters to provide feedback to them later.</p>
Following up	<p>Ask them to finish Task 12 from Chapter 2 on page 144 in groups. Explain that while this task contains a sample letter, it is not the only way to write the letter. Check answers and ensure that students read the explanation for each part of the letter on page 145.</p> <p>You can also assign this task for homework and check answers the next day.</p>



## Selecting case notes – 2: Tasks 1a, 1b and 1c from Chapter 2 (pages 117–121)

After having looked at a selection of case notes with one recipient in mind, you can continue to build the skill by giving students one set of case notes but with different recipients. This has been done with the case notes for Ms Cindy Shaw on pages 117–121. You can continue to use these here even though you have used them to teach purpose and introductions.

Stage	Activity
Setting the context / Warmer	<p>Ask students to imagine that they're in the country that they would like to ultimately work in, and that they're writing home after a month of living there. They're writing one letter to their parents, one to their childhood friend, one letter to a fellow nurse who also wants to move and work abroad, and one to their professor.</p> <p>Ask them to discuss in pairs what information they might include in these different letters. You can nominate a few students to give an example of what they would include in each letter, but it isn't necessary to spend a lot of time on this.</p> <p>Then ask them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you include the same information for everyone?</li> <li>• Why didn't you include the same information?</li> </ul> <p>Elicit responses and then link this to the healthcare context. Ask them if physiotherapists, occupational therapists and general practitioners need to know the same things to continue care. Consolidate the discussion by highlighting that different recipients would need to know different things about a patient depending on the situation and their role in continuing care for the patient.</p>

Exploring the skill	<p>Divide the class into two groups, one side is the 'general practitioner' and the other side is the 'physiotherapist'.</p> <p>Describe the patient's situation briefly to them, but don't allow them to look at the case notes at this stage. You can tell them:</p> <p><i>Ms Shaw is a 75-year-old patient who has just undergone a left hip replacement surgery and is being discharged.</i></p> <p>Then, to the 'general practitioner' side of the class, say:</p> <p><i>You're Ms Shaw's general practitioner who will be responsible for monitoring her condition and providing immediate medical assistance if she requires it.</i></p> <p>To the 'physiotherapist' side of the class, say:</p> <p><i>You're a physiotherapist who will be responsible for providing post-operative rehabilitation for the first few weeks after surgery.</i></p> <p>Explain that they should imagine themselves as the general practitioner / physiotherapist and that they haven't seen the patient yet, but they only know that a patient named Ms Shaw is coming to them.</p> <p>Ask students to work individually and make a list of things they (as the general practitioner / physiotherapist) would like to know about this patient to continue care.</p> <p>Some target responses:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="407 934 1446 1209"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="407 934 927 982">General practitioner</th><th data-bbox="927 934 1446 982">Physiotherapist</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="407 982 927 1209"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the surgery was successful or not</li> <li>• Complications, if any</li> <li>• How the patient is doing</li> <li>• If there is any medication that needs to be monitored</li> </ul> </td><td data-bbox="927 982 1446 1209"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The patient's condition</li> <li>• Patient's mobility at discharge</li> <li>• What specific exercises need to be performed</li> <li>• A little about the level of physical activity before surgery (nice to know)</li> </ul> </td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Ask students from the general practitioner's side to find a partner from the physiotherapist's side and compare ideas. Nominate pairs to share their thoughts and record responses on the blackboard to see the comparison.</p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>Remember that students haven't seen the case notes yet so these responses aren't about what is contained in the case notes but only what they think these healthcare professionals would expect to know. Therefore, it is important to keep the discussion tentative and ask students why they think that the medical professional would like to know a specific information about the patient. Probe 'why' rather than focussing on whether a response is correct or incorrect.</p>	General practitioner	Physiotherapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the surgery was successful or not</li> <li>• Complications, if any</li> <li>• How the patient is doing</li> <li>• If there is any medication that needs to be monitored</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The patient's condition</li> <li>• Patient's mobility at discharge</li> <li>• What specific exercises need to be performed</li> <li>• A little about the level of physical activity before surgery (nice to know)</li> </ul>
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Applying the skill to an OET task	<p>Let students continue working in pairs and tell them that they're now going to read parts of the case notes for Ms Shaw. Ask them to finish Task 1a together. Discuss answers with the class, asking volunteers to share their answers. Repeat for Tasks 1b and 1c.</p>				

Doing an OET task	<p>Divide the class into four groups. Assign each group a Writing task from pages 117–121 (general practitioner, physiotherapist, occupational therapist and home health nurse).</p> <p>Ask them to read the complete case notes on pages 117–118 and write to their recipient. You can give them a suitable time allowance to account for a group discussion too. (You can make this fun by asking them to write on a large chart paper.)</p> <p>Invite a representative from each group to present the letter in front of the class. Ask them to focus on which case notes they chose and why.</p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>Although there is a sample letter to the home health nurse and an explanation of the case notes that are relevant to the occupational therapist and the home health nurse on these pages, ensure you ask students not to look at them.</p>
Following up	Ask them to finish Task 5 on page 152 for homework or in class.

### Organisation of case notes: Tasks 7 and 8 from Chapter 3 (pages 153–157)

It is very important to emphasise to students that there is no uniform way to organise a letter, and that different ways of organising are acceptable. While there are things that everyone will agree are most important, there are different ways to organise other parts of the letter.

Stage	Activity
Setting the context / Warmer	<p>Ask students to imagine they're an orthopaedic surgeon who needs to perform an emergency procedure on a patient who has had a sports injury on the football field. The patient is being transferred from another hospital.</p> <p>As the orthopaedic surgeon assigned to this patient, they receive a letter about the patient. The letter begins with a lot of information about the patient's past injuries and how they were treated. The information about the patient's current injury and his/her condition comes at the end of the letter. Ask students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As the orthopaedic surgeon, how would you feel on reading this letter?</li> <li>• Why would you feel that way?</li> </ul> <p>Lead a class discussion and consolidate responses. Highlight that as the orthopaedic surgeon, you would feel a little frustrated at not finding the relevant information easily. Tell students that there are different ways of organising a letter but if relevant information doesn't come early in the letter, it is likely to waste the recipient's time.</p>
Exploring the skill	<p>Divide students into small groups. Ask them to look at the jumbled letter on page 155 (Task 7) and reorder it, keeping in mind the recipient and the purpose. They may refer to the case notes and the Writing task to understand the purpose for writing but the focus here is not on selection, but on organisation.</p> <p>Discuss the answers with the class and ask them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the organisation followed here?</li> <li>• Why is it suitable for this reader?</li> </ul> <p>Students can continue working in the same groups and complete Task 8. Discuss answers with the class and ask them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the organisation followed here?</li> <li>• Why is it suitable for the reader?</li> </ul>



	<p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>In Task 8, although Option 1 is the most obvious organisation, Option 2 isn't incorrect either. There may be a situation where Option 2 would be suitable; for example, if precautions are very important because the patient is in a delicate condition or is prone to doing something that may cause harm.</p>
Applying the skill to an OET task	<p>Divide the class into two groups A and B. If your class is small (5–10 students), you can have two groups, but if it's bigger then divide them into more groups but still label them A or B.</p> <p>Ask students to turn to the Writing Practice Test 1 on page 224. Tell them that they're going to write this letter but that you're going to help each side of the class organise the letter in a different way.</p> <p>Allow them time to read the case notes and then provide a scaffolded structure to each side. Remind them that this is not a template which can be used for any letter but a suggestion for this particular task. Ask them to write the letter using the suggested organisation.</p> <p>You may refer to the sample answer to help you for group A and then you could come up with another way to organise the letter for group B.</p> <p>Ask the groups to write their letter. After they have finished, stick the letters around the class and ask students to walk around, looking at the different organisation used.</p>
Doing an OET task	<p>Ask students to do the Sample Practice Test on pages 159–160.</p> <p>After you correct their letters, spend some time discussing organisation and let this be the focus of your feedback to them.</p>
Following up	<p>Ask students to reflect on the impact of organisation on the reader.</p> <p>The class can come up with some questions that will serve as a checklist for organising the letter. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the most important information come at the beginning of the letter?</li> <li>• Will the reader be able to understand what they're supposed to do from the way I've chosen to organise the letter?</li> <li>• Have I put any information at the beginning of the letter that could distract or frustrate the reader?</li> </ul> <p>Alternatively, you could ask them to brainstorm their ideas to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does organisation mean? Why is it important?</li> <li>• What is a well-organised letter?</li> </ul>

## Grammar for OET

Students will benefit from grammar lessons and there are plenty of grammar activities in the book on specific topics such as tenses, active vs passive voice and types of sentences. However, when teaching grammar in an OET class, it is important to highlight the impact of structure on the reader.

Because the level of this book is targeted at students who are already reasonably good at writing, you will notice that the grammar activities in this book assume students already know how to produce the grammar accurately, but may have trouble applying it in the right situation. For the passive voice, for example, it is assumed that students know how to write a passive sentence but they aren't sure why or when to use it. If you find that your students still need assistance with producing the grammar discussed in this chapter accurately, it's recommended that you teach them this before using the activities in this book.

An example lesson sketch for a grammar class on compound and complex sentences is given here. You may use the same approach when teaching other points of grammar too.



## Compound and complex sentences: Tasks 4a and 4b from Chapter 2 (pages 128–130)

Stage	Activity
Setting the context / Warmer	<p>Describe the following situation:</p> <p>Mr Black lives in a retirement home and is returning after a knee replacement operation. The charge nurse, who is writing this letter, wants to tell the resident nurse about the patient's current condition. The resident nurse is responsible for his overall health and safety at the home.</p> <p>Then, write two case notes on the board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can ambulate independently</li> <li>• Needs a walker when outdoors (in the garden)</li> </ul> <p>Ask students to discuss in pairs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which piece of information deserves greater attention from the resident nurse?</li> </ul> <p>Elicit answers from the class and tell them that the lesson is going to be focussing on how to highlight information to the reader by using complex and compound sentences.</p>
Exploring the skill	<p>Continue the scenario from the previous stage. Write two sentences on the board:</p> <p>A. Mr Black is able to ambulate independently but he still needs a walker when he is outdoors.</p> <p>B. Although Mr Black is able to ambulate independently, he needs a walker when he is outdoors.</p> <p>Ask them which of these sentences they would choose to highlight the information that deserves greater attention (needs a walker). Elicit answers and provide an explanation. Refer to page 127 of the Student's Book for a detailed explanation.</p> <p>Once the impact on the reader has been established, you can spend time providing input to your class on structure. For example, you can give a list of coordinating and subordinating conjunctions and use a worksheet (there are many such worksheets online) to help them to practise joining sentences with these conjunctions. You can even create your own, using a medical context. At every stage, get students to focus on the importance of highlighting information to the reader.</p> <p>Once students are comfortable with changing sentences from compound to complex, complex to compound, ask them to finish Task 4b.</p>
Applying the skill to an OET task	<p>Ask students to finish Task 4a in pairs. Discuss answers with the whole class focussing the discussion on the information that needs to be highlighted.</p>
Doing an OET task	<p>Ask students to bring an OET letter they have written recently in class. Ask them to look at the types of sentences they've used and if there are any sentences that could be improved by highlighting information. Ask them to rewrite these sentences in one or more ways to provide clearer information.</p>

Following up	<p>You can ask students the following questions to check whether they've understood the lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you want your reader to pay attention to some information where would you put it (in the dependent or independent clause)?</li> <li>• What are some subordinating conjunctions you can use?</li> <li>• Give an example of a conjunction you would use when you want both pieces of information to get attention?</li> </ul>
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The other grammar topics in the book have teaching content which you can use to present the grammar points. The tasks provide an OET context. However, as mentioned earlier, you may need to supplement these tasks with more focussed grammar activities according to the needs of the class. There is an editing checklist in Task 6 on page 153 which you can use to consolidate learning and help students to become aware of the kinds of errors they are making.

### Extension tasks and sourcing material

You may find it difficult to find authentic OET material for the Writing sub-test. The focus should be on exploiting a set of case notes as much as possible, so that you don't need to keep having to find more and more material. For example, if your students have finished one Practice Test, then use the same case notes to design activities around grammar. A few other ways you could exploit case notes are:

- Break one set of case notes into the different aspects of the letter described here (purpose, introduction, selection, organisation, etc.) and spread these topics over the week rather than using one set of case notes every day.
- Design comprehension questions around a set of case notes to check students' understanding of the case notes.
- Exploit case notes and their respective sample letters to highlight tenses or any other grammatical aspect. You can even use the students' own writing to illustrate grammatical points that they need to work on and do some error correction in class.
- Cut up sentences from sample letters and let students organise them after they have read the case notes. This is especially a good activity for weaker students who need extra scaffolding.

### Trainer tips

The focus of the Writing sub-test has been mentioned under 'Notes' in each lesson sketch.

**Timing:** Each of the lessons described here range from 45–90 minutes. You may choose to extend some classes beyond 120 minutes too, especially if there is written work involved. You may then for example, complete the 'Applying the skill to an OET task' and the 'Doing an OET task' stages of a lesson the next day. This is perfectly fine.

**Mock test:** The Writing sub-test from Practice Test 2 can be used in a mock test whereas Practice Test 1 can be used to help students write a letter at the end of one of the lessons.

**Wrap up:** Create some 'myth busters' about the Writing sub-test and ask students to answer them. This is a good way of revising the teaching, but in the form of a game.