

**Writing Guide: ECL Language Exam
Level B2 – Email**

Writing Tips:

1. Make sure you understand the task and the genre of writing (e.g. essay, email, etc.). In the sample task below, you're writing an **email** of 200 words. The email should be informal and friendly.
2. If you go over 200 words, make sure it's only 10% over the required amount (220 words max). Try not to write fewer than 200 words.
3. Organize your email in short paragraphs (e.g. introductory paragraph, paragraphs to cover the bullet points, and concluding paragraph). You don't have to keep the bullet points in the order they appear.
4. Do not forget to separate the paragraphs (e.g. indent or one-line space). Don't just write one paragraph that isn't organized into cohesive units.
5. Make sure your handwriting is as clear as possible so the exam graders can read your composition.
6. When writing your application, keep in mind all the graded features (grammar, written accuracy, spelling and paragraphing, vocabulary, style and cohesive devices, and communicative effectiveness).

Sample Writing Task:

You have a special hobby that you would like your friend to pursue, too. Write an e-mail (around 200 words) to your friend and include the following:

- *what the specific hobby is (BULLET POINT 1)*
- *why it would be great for your friend (BULLET POINT 2)*
- *any expenses required (BULLET POINT 3)*
- *what effects a hobby has on one's physical/mental condition (BULLET POINT 4)*

Hi _____,

I would like to tell you... (Writing Starter)

During a live exam, you do not have to make a draft. But you should plan what to write about and how to cover the bullet points. (Your use of English will be scored, not what background knowledge you have.)

Paragraph 1 (20-30 words) – *Don't forget about the genre's features (how a personal e-mail should be organized, etc.).*

Paragraphs 2-4 (100-150 words) – *Content related to the bullet points. Each bullet point can be a short paragraph. Keep your email informal and friendly.*

Paragraph 5 (20-30 words) – *Sum up your overall opinion about your hobby.*

Sample Email (with reference to the bullet points):

Hi Sarah,

I'd like to tell you about one of my favorite hobbies: running. You should start running! I like running on tracks, but my favorite type is trail running. *(INTRO/BULLET POINT 1)*

Most of all, running is such a great way of staying in shape because it's easily available. It's also a wonderful way of making friends. In my city, there are many running clubs. I'm a member of a trail running club. We run on the mountains that surround town every week. In your last letter, you said you don't have many friends in your new town. Well, this would be a great way to make new connections. *(BULLET POINT 2)*

In addition, running is really cheap. It beats going to a gym and paying for a monthly membership. However, you need a good pair of running shoes, which will last you for one year. I recommend getting shoes for pavement and trails. I guess you'll spend less on your shoes each year than a gym membership. *(BULLET POINT 3)*

Best of all, this hobby won't just have a positive impact on your physical health. It will also improve your mental health. The more I run, the more positive and relaxed I am. Running gets endorphins to fire in your brain, which increases pleasure and happiness. So buy some running shoes and start running! *(BULLET POINT 4/CONCLUSION)*

Love,
Debbie

World Count: 215

Features of the composition to be scored:

Formal Accuracy/Grammar – The email has clear and complex grammatical structures required at this level with no mistakes.

Written Accuracy/Paragraphing/Punctuation/Spelling – The email is organized well with no spelling or punctuation mistakes.

Vocabulary/Range of Word Choice – The email is filled with a wide range of vocabulary that is well-chosen, relevant, and precise.

Style/Genre – The email is organized in a clear, coherent, and cohesive way, meeting the requirements for the writing genre.

Communicative Effectiveness/Task Completion – The email has adequate elaboration on all the bullet points. Task is well completed.

Conclusion: If you follow this guide above, you will perform well on the ECL writing section of the exam. Keep in mind that there are different genres of writing that you will be asked to complete on this language exam. You may find samples for all the possible genres. Good luck and happy studies!