

Writing Reports

- Be clear about the **purpose** of your report. This must be made clear in the introduction and discussed in the conclusion.
- Reports are usually of two types:
 - **Provide information** on a topic to help someone else - eg *Write a report on shopping facilities in your area for a visiting group of students.*
 - **Identify the strengths and weaknesses** of a given situation - eg *Write a report on the facilities in your language school and suggest improvements.*
- **Organise** your report carefully, use clear **subheadings** for each section, group your ideas clearly and logically.
- **Underline** the subheadings.
- Always include an **introduction** and **conclusion/recommendation**.
- Use an **impersonal** style and **high register**. Avoid phrases such as *I think...*, and use *it would seem...* or *it was felt/found...* - **passives** are common.
- **Be concise** and only include details which are **strictly** relevant.

Useful phrases

- The purpose/intention/aim of this report is to outline / present / discuss / give a brief comment / suggest / sum up the last...
- The report contains details concerning ...
- It's based on / It draws on... my observations/extracts from the questionnaires / the feedback from participants / the opinions of local residents...

- I suggest ... as it would result in...
- Consideration should be given to...
- It was generally felt that / was often mentioned that / was suggested that / etc.
- It would be prudent / inadvisable / advisable to ... on the grounds that it / owing to the fact that / due to the fact that...
- Therefore / furthermore / in addition / however / In spite of / whilst / etc.
- In general / On the whole
- surprisingly / obviously / clearly / interestingly / oddly / predictably / curiously
- As might be expected ...

- The obvious conclusion to be drawn from these facts is that...
- I am opposed to the idea of/that...
- I suggest that the problem of... can be addressed through...
- I would strongly recommend...
- More steps also need to be taken to...
- On balance / over all / broadly speaking / to a large extent

Look at the example report overleaf. Does it use any of the example language given above? Where could you put in one or two more of the given phrases?

CAE Writing Example

A Proposal

In Paper 2 (Writing) you may be asked to write a **proposal**. Here is an example question, which has been adapted from Complete CAE (C.U.P.)

You are asked by the Principal of a college in Australia where you are studying to write a proposal for how to improve the college's website. The suggestions given include the classrooms, library, language laboratory, canteen and sports field, and you are asked to choose two of these in order to give an idea of the variety of the facilities which the college offers.

Here is an example of how to write a proposal. Pay attention to the **layout** (title, subheadings) and the **neutral style**, appropriate for this type of writing.

Suggestions for the new College Website

Introduction

The purpose of this proposal is to suggest which two of the college's many facilities should feature on the updated website. The choices below were made following a number of conversations with current students but cannot be said to definitively represent the majority opinion.

The language laboratory

Our college prides itself on its international atmosphere, and in order to maintain and develop this aspect of its appeal, I think we should give prominence to the support given to students whose first language is not English. Our language laboratory provides a first-class resource for students wishing to improve their listening comprehension and spoken fluency and I know from my own experience that many students have found this to be an invaluable resource.

The Sports Field

One major factor students take into account when choosing an institution is the opportunities for recreation that it offers. For this reason I think that we should give space on the website to promoting our sports field, where students can relax and enjoy themselves after time spent in the library or classroom. This facility also provides opportunities for students from different courses to meet and socialize.

Conclusion

Although it is not easy to single out just two facilities among the many on offer, I feel that the two I have selected, the language laboratory and the sports field, give the clearest idea of the range of services the college offers to its students.

Casual	Formal	Example / Context
about	regarding / concerning / in reference to	<i>I am writing regarding the position I saw...</i>
ask for	request	<i>I am writing to request further information.</i>
ask about	enquire about	<i>I am writing to enquire about the course.</i>
because	since / as	<i>I do not require a visa since I am French.</i>
big	large / sizeable	<i>I have worked for many large companies...</i>
but	however / nevertheless / yet	<i>I am not qualified, however I am experienced.</i>
buy	purchase	<i>I recently purchased a personal computer.</i>
can I?	would I be able to?	<i>Would I be able to come to your office?</i>
don't smoke (etc.)	refrain from smoking	<i>Please refrain from making personal calls.</i>
enough ~	sufficient ~	<i>He does not have sufficient qualifications.</i>
everything is OK	everything is in order	<i>I hope everything is in order.</i>
find	locate	<i>I was unable to locate your address.</i>
get in touch with ~	contact	<i>I attempted to contact you last week.</i>
I couldn't ~	I was unable to ~	<i>I was unable to contact you.</i>
I don't want to ~	I would prefer not to ~	<i>I would prefer not to share a room</i>
I had to ~	I was obliged to ~	<i>I was obliged to travel to Paris.</i>
I know that~	I understand / believe that	<i>I understand that it will require further ...</i>
I need ~	I require ~	<i>I require a written reference.</i>
I think ~	in my opinion / I feel ~	<i>In my opinion we should take immediate action.</i>
I want....	I would like....	<i>I would like to discuss this matter further.</i>
If you require~	Should you require...I will...	<i>(inverted 1st conditional)</i>
If you required~	Were you to require...I would...	<i>(inverted 2nd conditional)</i>
If you had required~	Had you required...I would have...	<i>(inverted 3rd conditional)</i>
job	post / position / vacancy	<i>I would like to apply for the position of waiter.</i>
let me ~	allow me to ~	<i>Please allow me to explain my situation.</i>
look for	seek ~	<i>I am seeking employment as a waiter.</i>
lots of ~	a (large) number of ~	<i>There have been a large number of applicants.</i>
make sure	ensure	<i>Please ensure that this letter is sent.</i>
make the most of ~	take (full) advantage of ~	<i>I took full advantage of my trip to Paris.</i>
more	further	<i>Should you require further information...</i>
please / would you ~	I would be most grateful if you could ~	<i>I would be grateful if you could phone me.</i>
put someone out	inconvenience someone	<i>I am sorry to inconvenience you, but....</i>
so	therefore / consequently	<i>I was in the wrong, therefore I apologise.</i>
soon	in the near future	<i>I will contact you in the near future.</i>
sorry for ~ing	I apologise for ~ing	<i>I apologise for phoning you at work.</i>
talk about ~	discuss ~	<i>I would like to discuss my holiday entitlement.</i>
tell	inform	<i>If you cannot attend, inform me in advance.</i>
tell me about ~	inform me of ~	<i>My manger informed me of my duties.</i>
tell someone not to do	dissuade someone from doing	<i>I dissuaded him from resigning.</i>
thanks for ~ing	I appreciate your ~ing	<i>I appreciate your helping me in this way.</i>
to (for purpose)	in order to / so as to	<i>I study English in order to get a good job.</i>
very ~	most / highly / quite ~	<i>John is a highly qualified teacher.</i>
work	employment	<i>Simon gained employment as a porter.</i>
you said that ~	you mentioned that ~	<i>You mentioned that you were looking for a job.</i>
First ~	First and foremost ~	<i>First and foremost I would like to...</i>

2 You are studying at an international college and you recently attended a careers day organised by the college to help students prepare for work. The event included information about how to identify suitable jobs, workshops on writing effective job applications, and advice on how to do well in interviews.

The College Principal has asked you to write a report evaluating to what extent the event was successful and making recommendations for next year's event.

Write your report.