



1 The four papers at a glance

SEC G3 English Language (K300) replaces O-Level English Language (1184) from 2027. Candidates sit all four papers, for 180 raw marks in total. SEAB says the SEC keeps the same mode of assessment and standards as the O-Level. Source: SEAB K300 syllabus for 2027.

SEC G3 English Language (K300) scheme of assessment

Paper	Marks and weighting	Time	What is in it
Paper 1, Writing	70 marks, 35%	1 h 50 min	Section A Editing (10 marks), Section B Situational Writing (30 marks), Section C Continuous Writing (30 marks)
Paper 2, Comprehension	50 marks, 35%	1 h 50 min	Section A, two short texts, one with visuals (5 marks). Section B, a narrative text (20 marks). Section C, a non-narrative text with a summary of about 80 words (25 marks)
Paper 3, Listening	30 marks, 10%	About 45 min	Section A (22 marks) and Section B (8 marks)
Paper 4, Oral Communication	30 marks, 20%	About 20 min, including 10 min of preparation	Planned Response of up to 2 minutes on a video clip and prompt (15 marks), then a Spoken Interaction with the examiners (15 marks), delivered via computer

- Section A of Paper 1 is an editing text of not more than 250 words. Only grammatical errors are tested, not spelling or punctuation.
- Our arithmetic from the weightings: one mark is worth about 0.5 percentage points of the final grade in Paper 1, 0.7 in Paper 2, 0.33 in Paper 3 and 0.67 in Paper 4.
- SEAB holds the English written papers in September, with orals and listening before them. In 2026 the orals ran from 13 to 17 July. SEAB had not published the 2027 dates when we checked on 26 October 2026. Results come out in January of the following year.

Where G2 (K200) differs from G3 (K300)

Item	G3 (K300)	G2 (K200)
Situational writing length	250 to 350 words	180 to 250 words
Continuous writing length	350 to 500 words	250 to 400 words
Comprehension Texts 3 and 4	About 1200 words together	About 1000 words together
Summary	About 80 words	About 80 words, with the same style bands
Marks and weightings	Papers 1 to 4 at 70, 50, 30 and 30 marks, weighted 35%, 35%, 10% and 20%	The same
Oral	About 20 minutes, Planned Response and Spoken Interaction	The same format. The top bands ask for a considered rather than a well-considered response.

Paper 1 time plan (our suggestion)

Section	Suggested time	Why
Editing	About 10 minutes	10 marks. Read the whole text once before you correct anything.
Situational Writing	About 40 minutes, including 5 minutes of planning	30 marks. Planning protects the 10 Task Fulfilment marks.
Continuous Writing	About 50 minutes, including planning	30 marks for the longest piece.
Final check	About 10 minutes	Use the 5-minute proofreading list in section 9 on each piece.

- SEAB sets only the 1 hour 50 minute total for Paper 1. This split is our suggestion, roughly matched to the marks.

2 Situational writing: PAC planning checklist

Situational writing (Paper 1, Section B) is 30 marks for a text of 250 to 350 words at G3, or 180 to 250 at G2, based on a situation that includes a visual text. SEAB gives an email, a letter, a report or a speech as examples. PAC stands for purpose, audience and context.

Plan in about 5 minutes before you write

Step	What to do	Done when
Number the required points	Put a number beside every task the question asks you to cover.	Each number has its own paragraph in your plan.
Name the purpose	Say in one line what you want the reader to do or know, for example approve, attend, apologise or decide.	You can finish the sentence: after reading this, the reader will ...
Picture the audience	Decide who reads it, how well you know them and how busy they are.	You have chosen formal or informal, and how direct to be.
Fix the context	Note who you are writing as and why you are writing now.	Your first paragraph can say who you are and why you are writing.
Mine the visual	Circle the facts, figures, dates and names you will use, and give each one a job.	Every fact you plan to use supports a required point.
Check the format	Match the text type the task names, such as an email, letter, report or speech.	You know your greeting, headings and sign-off.
Plan the close	Decide the next step, request or thanks you will end with.	Your last paragraph does a job, not just repeats the first.

- SEAB marks this section out of 30: 10 for Task Fulfilment (covering the required points, awareness of purpose, audience and context, and use of the given information) and 20 for Language (organisation, clarity of expression and accuracy).
- The 5 minutes of planning is our suggestion. SEAB sets no time per section.

3 Situational writing: format checklists

Follow any layout or instructions printed in the question paper first. These checklists cover the usual parts of each format. School conventions differ on small points such as addresses and dates, so check with your teacher.

Email

Part	Check
Subject line	Short and specific. It tells the reader the purpose before they open the email.
Greeting	Matches the reader, for example Dear Mrs Lim for a teacher you know, or Dear Sir or Madam if no name is given.
Opening paragraph	Says who you are and why you are writing, in two or three sentences.
Body	One required point per paragraph, each backed by a fact from the visual.
Closing paragraph	States the next step or request and thanks the reader.
Sign-off	A formal close such as Yours sincerely, then your full name and role, for example Secretary, Green Club.

Formal letter

Part	Check
Addresses and date	Include them only if your school teaches them or the task asks for them.
Salutation	Dear Mr Tan when you know the name. Dear Sir or Madam when you do not.
Subject heading	A short heading under the salutation helps the reader see the purpose at once.
Opening	Who you are, why you are writing and what you want, near the start.
Body	One point per paragraph, in a logical order, using the facts given.
Close	Yours sincerely after a named salutation. Yours faithfully after Dear Sir or Madam.

Report

Part	Check
Title	Names the topic clearly, for example Report on the Sports Day Survey.
Addressed to	Says who the report is for and who wrote it, if your school teaches this layout.
Introduction	States the purpose of the report and who asked for it.
Findings	Short headed sections that present the facts from the visual accurately.
Recommendations	Practical suggestions, each linked to a finding.
Tone	Objective and impersonal. Report facts, then give your view only where the task asks for it.

Speech

Part	Check
Greeting	Address the audience in order of seniority, for example the principal, teachers, then fellow students.
Introduction	Say who you are and what the speech is about in the first few lines.
Signposts	Use words like first, another reason and finally so listeners can follow without seeing the text.
Speak to the audience	Use you and we, and keep sentences short enough to say aloud.
Persuasion	One well-placed question to the audience is enough. Back each point with a fact from the visual.
Close	End with a clear call to action, then thank the audience for listening.

Proposal (a format many schools practise)

Part	Check
Title	States what is being proposed.
Background	Explains the problem or need, using facts from the visual.
The proposal	Gives the details: what, who, where, when and the cost if the task mentions it.
Benefits	Each benefit is linked to the problem it solves.
Concerns	Names one likely worry and answers it.
Request	Ends by asking for approval or a meeting.

Article (a format many schools practise)

Part	Check
Headline	Short and catches the reader's interest.
Opening	Starts with a question, a striking fact or a short scene to draw readers in.
Body	Clear paragraphs, with subheadings if the article is long.
Register	Lively but still correct English for the publication, such as a school magazine.
Ending	Leaves readers with something to do or think about.

- SEAB names an email, a letter, a report and a speech as examples of the texts candidates may write. Proposals and articles are formats many schools practise, not formats SEAB names in the syllabus.

4 Situational writing: register phrases

Register is how formal you sound. Choose one register for the whole piece, based on your audience and context. These phrases are our own.

Formal and informal phrases for the same job

Job	Formal	Informal
Stating your purpose	I am writing to propose	I just wanted to tell you about
Referring to their message	Thank you for your email regarding	Thanks for your message about
Introducing yourself	As the secretary of the Green Club,	You know I joined the Green Club, right?
Giving a reason	This is because	The thing is,
Using a fact from the visual	According to the survey, 46% of students	Did you know almost half of us
Making a suggestion	I would like to suggest that	Why don't we
Making a request	I would be grateful if you could	Could you
Agreeing	I fully support the view that	I totally agree that
Disagreeing politely	While I understand the concern, I believe	I get your point, but
Apologising	Please accept my apologies for	Sorry about
Adding a point	In addition,	Also,
Ending	I look forward to your reply.	Let me know what you think.
Signing off	Yours sincerely,	Take care,

- In formal writing, avoid contractions such as don't and can't, slang and text abbreviations.

Tone fixes for formal writing

Too blunt or too casual	Better
You must approve this.	We hope you will consider approving this proposal.
The canteen food is terrible.	Many students feel the canteen menu could offer more variety.
Give us the hall on Friday.	Would it be possible to book the hall on Friday?
Your plan won't work.	There may be some difficulties with this plan, such as
Lots of people hate it.	A large number of students have raised concerns about it.
Hope you say yes.	Thank you for considering this request.

5 Continuous writing quick checks

Continuous writing (Paper 1, Section C) is 30 marks. You choose one of four topics and write 350 to 500 words at G3, or 250 to 400 words at G2.

Before you write

Check	What to look for
Choose the topic you can develop	Pick the topic you have the most ideas and examples for, not the one that sounds cleverest.
Underline the key words	Note the exact focus and any instruction words, such as describe, discuss or a time when.
Decide the text type	Know whether you are telling a story, describing, explaining or arguing, and keep to it.
Plan the paragraphs	Jot one line per paragraph, from opening to ending, before you start.
Plan the ending	Know how the piece ends, so the last paragraph is not rushed.

While you write and when you finish

Check	What to look for
Answers the question	Every paragraph links back to the topic. A strong story that misses the topic will not score well.
Opening	Draws the reader in within the first two or three sentences.
Paragraphing	A new paragraph for each new idea, time, place or speaker.
Narrative pieces	One main event, a clear turning point, and details that show feelings instead of naming them.
Argumentative or discursive pieces	A clear stand, each point backed by a reason and an example, and one counter-argument answered.
Linking	Varied connectors between sentences and paragraphs, not then or and then every time.
Vocabulary	Precise words that fit the tone, rather than long words used for show.
Ending	Shows a change, a realisation or a final view, without preaching.
Length	Inside the word range for your level, with time left to proofread.

- The word ranges come from the SEAB K300 and K200 syllabuses for 2027. The checks are our own advice.

6 Oral: Planned Response preparation checklist

In Paper 4 you first sit at a silent preparation station for 10 minutes. The screen shows the instructions, a text prompt and a short video clip. You then move to the examiners, who read the prompt aloud, and you speak for up to 2 minutes (15 marks). Source: SEAB K300 syllabus and SEAB statement of 5 August 2026.

Using the 10 minutes of preparation (our suggestion)

Minutes	Do this	Check
0 to 1	Read the prompt twice	You have found the question word, such as why, would you or should.
1 to 3	Watch the clip with the prompt in mind	You have picked two or three details from the clip to mention.
3 to 8	Plan the 2 minutes	You have one clear answer, two reasons, one personal example, one limit and a closing line.
8 to 10	Rehearse the first sentence	You can say your opening line smoothly without looking.

- SEAB sets the 10 minutes of preparation and the 2 minutes of speaking. The split within the 10 minutes is our suggestion.
- SEAB does not say whether candidates may write notes during preparation, so check with your school and practise both ways.

A 2-minute frame (our suggestion)

Part	What to say	Check
Opening	Answer the prompt directly in one sentence.	The examiner knows your view within 10 seconds.
Reason 1	A reason linked to your own life.	It includes a specific detail, such as a person, place or time.
Reason 2	A reason linked to the clip or to society.	It refers to something you saw in the clip.
Limit	One honest limit or other side.	It shows you have thought about it, not changed your mind.
Close	Return to your answer in a fresh way.	You finish before the 2 minutes are up, not mid-sentence.

- SEAB marks the Planned Response on the response itself, meaning the development, organisation and expression of ideas (10 marks), and on delivery, meaning pronunciation, fluency and intonation (5 marks).

Delivery checks

Check	What to do
Pace	Speak at a calm pace. About 250 words fills 2 minutes.
Pauses	Pause briefly after your opening answer and between reasons.
Clarity	Finish word endings clearly, especially final consonants and plural s.
Intonation	Let your voice rise and fall with meaning, and stress the key word in each sentence.
Purpose and audience	Sound as if you are speaking to the people the prompt names, not reciting.

7 Oral: Spoken Interaction checklist and sentence starters

After the Planned Response, the examiners discuss a topic broadly related to the video clip with you (15 marks). SEAB says you will not be asked about what people say in the clip. SEAB marks how well you communicate your perspectives and engage in the discussion.

Spoken Interaction checklist

Check	What to do
Answer first	Give your view in the first sentence, then explain it.
Develop it	Add a reason, an example and, where it fits, a consequence.
Use your own life	Mention a real experience from school, family or your neighbourhood.
Widen the view	Talk about how the issue affects other groups, such as the elderly, parents or the community.
Weigh both sides	Show that you see the other side before you conclude.
Respond to the examiner	Build on the examiner's words, not on an answer you memorised.
Ask for clarity	If you are unsure of a question, ask politely for it to be repeated or rephrased.
Keep it going	Aim for answers of several sentences, not one line, without rambling.

- SEAB gives only the 20-minute total for Paper 4 and up to 2 minutes for the Planned Response. Our estimate is that the Spoken Interaction takes up most of the remaining time.

Sentence starters for the discussion

Job	Sentence starter	Example
Giving a view	I would say that	I would say that repairing things is better than replacing them, in most cases.
Giving a reason	The main reason is that	The main reason is that it saves money for families on a tight budget.
Giving an example	For instance, in my family,	For instance, in my family, my grandfather still uses a radio he fixed twenty years ago.
Linking to the clip	This reminds me of the part of the clip where	This reminds me of the part of the clip where the volunteer opens up the fan.
Widening the view	If we look at it from the point of view of	If we look at it from the point of view of the elderly, it is also about feeling useful.
Weighing both sides	That said, I can see why some people feel	That said, I can see why some people feel it is quicker to buy a new one.
Building on the examiner	That is an interesting point, and I would add that	That is an interesting point, and I would add that schools could teach simple repairs.
Thinking aloud	I have not thought about that before, but I suppose	I have not thought about that before, but I suppose online shopping makes replacing too easy.
Suggesting a solution	One practical step would be to	One practical step would be to hold a repair corner at every community club once a month.
Concluding	So, on balance, I believe	So, on balance, I believe we should repair first and replace only when we must.
Asking for clarity	Sorry, could you rephrase the question, please?	Sorry, could you rephrase the question, please? Do you mean at home or in school?

- These starters and examples are our own. Use them to shape your answer, then put the content in your own words.

8 Comprehension and summary quick checks

Paper 2 (Comprehension) is 50 marks, 35% of the grade, in 1 hour 50 minutes. Section A has two short texts, one with visuals (5 marks). Section B is a narrative (20 marks). Section C is a non-narrative text (25 marks) and ends with a summary of about 80 words, not counting the introductory words given.

Question types

If the question says	Do this	Check
In your own words	Find the key words in the line, then rephrase each one.	No key word from the text is copied unless there is no simpler word.
Suggest, imply or infer	Give the meaning that is not stated, then point to the clue.	Your answer goes beyond what the line says directly.
What does the word suggest, or what is its effect	Give the meaning in context, then what it makes the reader feel or picture.	You have explained the effect, not just the meaning.
Vocabulary in context	Give a word or phrase that would fit in the same sentence.	Your answer matches the part of speech and the tense.
Quote a word or phrase	Copy only the exact words needed.	You have not copied a whole sentence.
Questions on visuals (Section A)	Look at the images, layout and large text as well as the words.	You have linked what you see to the purpose of the text.
Two marks	Expect two points or a point with an explanation.	Your answer has enough for the marks shown.

- Treating own words questions this way is our advice. It is a widely taught approach, not a rule printed in the SEAB syllabus.

Summary checklist

Step	Check
Read the task first	You know the topic and the exact paragraphs to use before reading Text 4 closely.
Find the points	Each relevant point is underlined, and examples and repeats are left out.
Group the ideas	Related points are combined so the summary flows.
Rephrase	Key words and sentence shapes are changed into your own words.
Continue the given words	Your first sentence follows on smoothly from the introductory words.
Word count	About 80 words, not counting the words given.
Read it through	It makes sense to someone who has not read the passage.

- SEAB awards a style band of up to 7 marks for using your own words and structures and organising ideas clearly. The syllabus does not state the summary's total marks or the number of content points.

Paper 2 time plan (our suggestion)

Minutes	Task	Tip
0 to 5	Skim all four texts	Read the summary task first, so you read Text 4 with it in mind.
5 to 15	Section A, 5 marks	Do not overspend here.
15 to 45	Section B, 20 marks	Underline the line each answer comes from.
45 to 75	Section C questions	Answer the Text 4 short questions.
75 to 100	The summary	Range, points, rephrase, about 80 words.
100 to 110	Check	Fill any blanks first, then check the word count.

- SEAB sets no time per section. This split is our suggestion, roughly matched to the marks.

9 Final 5-minute proofreading checklist

Use these checks on each piece of writing before you hand in Paper 1. The 5-minute budget and the order are our suggestion.

Five checks, about one minute each

Minute	Check	Fix
1	Task coverage	Every numbered point in situational writing is in your answer, and your continuous writing still answers the topic.
2	Tenses and agreement	Tenses stay consistent, and each verb agrees with its subject, for example the list of names was, not were.
3	Sentence boundaries	No run-on sentences joined only by commas, and no fragments that cannot stand alone.
4	Register and format	No contractions or slang in formal pieces. The greeting matches the sign-off, and facts from the visual are copied correctly.
5	Spelling, punctuation and length	Names and key words from the question are spelt as printed. Speech marks are closed. The word count is inside the range for your level.

- Cross out errors neatly with a single line and write the correction above. A tidy script is easier for the examiner to follow.