

Choosing suitable language and tone | Entry 3

Key idea

- Purpose means why you are writing.
- Audience means who will read your writing.
- Tone means how your writing sounds to the reader.

The 3-question check

Question	Example
Why am I writing?	to ask for information / to complain / to thank / to explain
Who will read it?	a friend / a teacher / a manager / a college office
How should it sound?	friendly / formal / polite / respectful

Formal or informal?

Formal writing	Informal writing
Dear Mrs Ali,	Hi / Hey,
I am writing to ask...	Can you...?
Could you please...?	Let me know.
Kind regards,	Thanks! / See you soon.

Polite requests

- Less polite: Send me the form today.
- More polite: Could you please send me the form today?
- Useful pattern: Could you please + verb + extra information?

Entry 3 writing tip

- Read the task carefully. The task normally tells you the purpose, audience and sometimes the format.
- If you write to a manager, office, school, college or service, use polite/formal language.
- If you write to a friend or family member, informal language is usually fine.