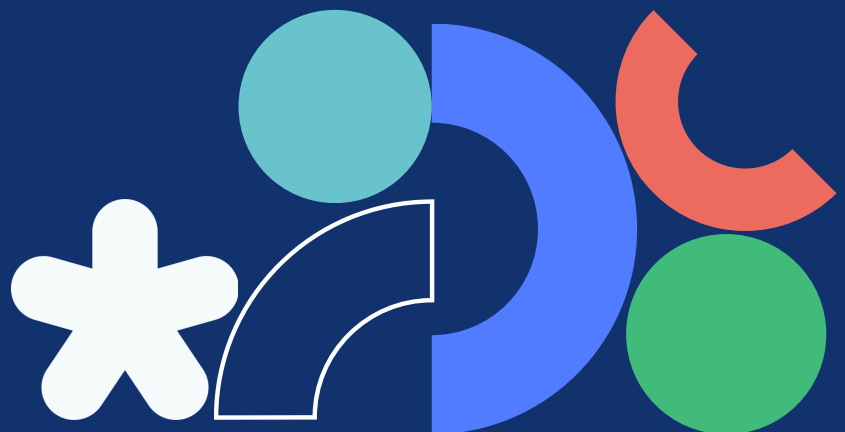




The OET Transfer Letter Toolkit

Transfer vs Referral and the language that distinguishes them

By Bailey, Head Teacher at [e2language.com](https://www.e2language.com)





How to Use This Toolkit

This resource pairs with the YouTube video “How to Write a Strong OET Transfer Letter.” The most common reason transfer letters score lower than expected is that they read like referrals. They’re not. The patient is moving to continue treatment - not being investigated. This toolkit gives you the comparison, the vocabulary, and an adaptable structure to address that.



Transfer vs Referral vs Discharge: Side by Side

	Referral	Discharge	Transfer
What's the patient doing?	Awaiting input from another clinician	Going home / to community care	Moving to another active care setting
Who is the reader?	Specialist or other clinician	GP / community nurse / care home	Receiving inpatient team
What does the reader do?	Assesses or investigates	Continues care in community setting	Continues active treatment
Key paragraph 3 focus	Current presentation	Current status at discharge	Treatment to date AND current status
Final paragraph language	"Please assess / investigate"	"Please continue in community setting"	"Please continue active treatment"



The Transfer Letter Vocabulary

These phrases signal to your assessor that you've understood the task as a transfer rather than a referral. Use variations of them in their corresponding paragraphs.

Introduction Phrases

- "I am writing to transfer the care of [patient]..."
- "...for ongoing inpatient management at your facility."
- "...to your unit for continued [type of] care."
- "...currently being treated for [condition], to your team for ongoing care."

Treatment-to-Date Phrases (paragraph 3)

- "Treatment to date has included..."
- "[Patient] has been managed with..."
- "At the time of transfer, [patient] is..."
- "Current medications include..."
- "[Patient]'s functional status at transfer is..."

Ongoing Care Plan Phrases (paragraph 4)

- "Continued [therapy] is required, with [frequency/duration]."
- "A repeat [investigation] has been scheduled for [date]."
- "Should [escalation trigger] occur, urgent review and communication with our team would be appreciated."
- "The following are pending and will require completion: [list]."



The Transfer Letter Vocabulary

This is an adaptable shape, not a script to memorise. The bracketed prompts show you what each paragraph does. Understand the job of each one, then write it in your own words from your specific case notes. Don't use these sentences verbatim; the assessor rewards language matched to the case in front of you.

Paragraph 1: Introduction	"I am writing to transfer the care of [patient name], a [age]-year-old [gender] currently being treated for [condition], to [your unit/facility] for [ongoing treatment goal]."
Paragraph 2: Background	"[Patient] was admitted on [date] with [presenting complaint]. [Diagnosis] was confirmed, and they have a background of [relevant comorbidities]."
Paragraph 3: Treatment to Date and Current Status	"Treatment to date has included [interventions, medications, therapies]. At the time of transfer, [patient] is [current status], with [residual issues, if any]. Current medications include [list]."
Paragraph 4: Ongoing Care Plan	"Continued [intervention] is required, with [frequency/duration]. [Pending investigations or appointments]. Should [escalation trigger] occur, urgent communication with our team would be appreciated."
Paragraph 5: Sign-off	"Please contact me directly should you require any further information regarding [patient]'s care to date. Yours sincerely, [Job Title]"



Pre-Submission Checklist

☐

Continuation language

Letter uses “transfer the care,” “ongoing,” “continued” - not “refer” or “assess.”

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Treatment to date paragraph

Paragraph 3 explicitly lists what’s already been done, so the receiving team doesn’t repeat it

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Outstanding items

Paragraph 4 names pending investigations, scheduled appointments, or planned next steps

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No assessment requests

The letter does not ask the reader to investigate or assess anything (that’s a referral, not a transfer)

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Escalation criteria

Paragraph 4 includes a clear trigger for the receiving team to contact you back



What's Next?

Becoming confident with the difference between transfer, referral, and discharge letters is one of the highest-impact things you can do for your OET writing score. The next step is practising under timed conditions with all four letter types in rotation. At E2, we have practice tasks, mock tests, and writing assessments for every letter type, with detailed correction feedback aligned to the official criteria.

Ready to score a B? This resource is a starting point. To get personalised feedback on your own letters, real OET-style mock tests, and 1-on-1 tutorials with experienced OET teachers, head to [E2Language.com](https://www.E2Language.com) - trusted by over 3 million candidates across our English exam preparation.

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