







Review crew – Critical analysis



Challenge title	Review crew — Critical analysis	Code	SAMPLE1
Topic area	English		













Driving question	How do you give an honest review that's fair, balanced, and backed by evidence?
Challenge description	You'll become a critic in your own area of interest — reviewing products, services, tools, media, or case studies linked to your course or area of personal interest. You'll learn how to give a balanced opinion, support it with evidence, and present your verdict in a way that informs and engages others.

Challenge overview	What you'll do
At Entry 3 , you will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify something familiar to review • Decide whether to give your review in writing or verbally • Decide what you liked and didn't like about the thing you are reviewing • Use simple words to give your opinions • Include at least one reason for your view <p>(Functional Skills E3 – Writing: write short texts with basic grammar; Reading: identify main points and opinions)</p>
At Level 1 , you will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify something to review • Choose a suitable format for your review • Write or present a short review using key points such as strengths and weaknesses • Use linking words like “because” or “however” to join ideas • Include examples from your own experience or use <p>(Functional Skills L1 – Writing: structure short evaluative texts; Reading: recognise opinion vs fact)</p>

Challenge overview	What you'll do
At Level 2 , you will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify at least two different versions of the same thing to review • Choose a suitable format for your review • Compare at least two similar items, services, or performances • Support your opinions with clear evidence • Use an appropriate structure for your audience (eg blog vs. report) <p>(Functional Skills L2 – Writing: develop detailed arguments; Reading: compare information from different sources)</p>
At Level 3 , you will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse a chosen subject matter against a set of criteria relevant to your field • Choose a suitable format for your review • Present a balanced review, considering different perspectives • Justify your verdict with evidence, examples, and specialist vocabulary <p>(Writing: analyse and evaluate; Reading: synthesise information from multiple sources)</p>

PEQ skills units	Observable behaviours	Ranking
 Communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a formal review for chosen audience with appropriate supporting images • Demonstrate the item/service in use including a commentary that uses appropriate vocabulary, tone and expression for the purpose 	1
 Thinking/Critical thinking skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weigh pros and cons of your chosen item using an agreed set of measures • Compare multiple perspectives (eg expert vs user) before concluding 	2
 Decision making skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose which criteria are most important for judging quality in your trade • Select the best format to present your review (eg written, podcast, vlog, infographic) 	3
 Learning skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research professional reviews in your sector and note techniques used • Apply a new review framework or set of criteria to your chosen item 	—

PEQ skills units	Observable behaviours	Ranking
 Team working skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co host a video or podcast review with another learner • Collaborate on a side by side comparison infographic 	—
 Wellbeing in learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share your review process and how you dealt with forming a fair verdict • Reflect on how giving and receiving constructive critique builds confidence 	—

Skill(s) to be assessed	 Estimated challenge duration*
 Communication skills	10 hours
 Thinking/Critical thinking skills	10 hours
 Communication skills and  Thinking/Critical thinking skills	15–20 hours
 Communication skills and  Decision making skills	15–20 hours
 Thinking/Critical thinking skills and  Decision making skills	15–20 hours
 Communication skills and  Thinking/Critical thinking skills and  Decision making skills	15–30 hours

* Approximate, including **supervised and unsupervised learning** time and assessment.



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Additional guidance for tutors and assessors

Example review scenarios

Based on sample vocational pathways and areas of interest:

Context	Challenge idea	Entry 3	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Catering	Taste test review	Describe a dish you tried	Say what you liked/disliked	Write a short review with reasons	Create a balanced review with evidence and comparisons
Construction	Tool or material review	Describe a tool or material	Say what works well or not	Write a short review with pros/cons	Create a review with evidence and alternatives
Hair and beauty	Product review	Describe a product you used	Say what it does well or not	Write a short review with client focus	Create a review with evidence and recommendations
Motor mechanics	Service review	Describe a service or repair	Say what was good or could improve	Write a short review with technical points	Create a review with evidence and advice
Fashion and textiles	Garment review	Describe a garment or design	Say what works well or not	Write a short review with features	Create a review with comparisons and visuals
Sport and fitness	Session review	Describe a training session	Say what helped or didn't	Write a short review with goals	Create a review with evidence and adaptations
Animal care	Product or routine review	Describe a pet product or routine	Say what helps or doesn't	Write a short review with outcomes	Create a review with evidence and care advice

Context	Challenge idea	Entry 3	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Business admin	System or process review	Describe a system or tool	Say what works well or not	Write a short review with pros/cons	Create a review with evidence and suggestions
Digital media	App or project review	Describe an app or media project	Say what features work or don't	Write a short review with ratings	Create a review with evidence and improvements
Travel and tourism	Destination or service review	Describe a location or service	Say what was good or not	Write a short review with highlights	Create a review with comparisons and client advice

Review writing cheat sheet

For tutors and assessors:

Feature	What it means	Example
Balanced Opinion	Say what's good and what could improve	"It's fast but not very user-friendly"
Evidence	Support your view with facts or examples	"It lasted three weeks before breaking"
Comparison	Mention alternatives or similar items	"Better than the previous model"
Recommendation	Say who it's best for or what to do next	"Ideal for beginners" "Try this instead"
Structure	Clear intro, body, and conclusion	"I tested this... Here's what I found..."
Tone	Fair, honest, and respectful	Avoid exaggeration or slang

Visual prompts and scaffolding for learners

Planning grid

- What are you reviewing?
- What works well?
- What could be better?
- What's your final verdict?

Layout tips

- Use headings: Pros / Cons / Verdict
- Add visuals or ratings (stars, scores)
- Keep paragraphs short and focused

Sentence starters for learners at Entry 3 and emerging at Level 1

- “I tested...”
- “One thing I liked was...”
- “However, I found...”
- “Overall, I would recommend...”

Tutor tips for non-subject specialists

- **Use real items:** Let learners review something they’ve used in their course, or a product or service that they’re familiar with.
- **Focus on fairness:** Help learners balance praise and critique.
- **Model it:** Share one or two short reviews, either written or video recorded – even informal – and discuss what makes them fair.
- **Use templates:** Provide a scaffold with boxes for pros, cons, evidence, and verdict (scaffolding must be appropriate for the level).
- **Allow choice:** Learners can write, record, or present their review visually.
- **Peer review:** Use “Review Swap” – learners read each other’s reviews and give feedback.
- **Celebrate clarity and honesty:** Reward learners for being thoughtful, specific and constructive.