



NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION
NOVEMBER 2008

ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE: PAPER II
MARKING GUIDELINES

Time: 3 hours

Marks: 100

These marking guidelines are prepared for use by examiners and sub-examiners, all of whom are required to attend a standardisation meeting to ensure that the guidelines are consistently interpreted and applied in the marking of candidates' scripts.

The IEB will not enter into any discussions or correspondence about any marking guidelines. It is acknowledged that there may be different views about some matters of emphasis or detail in the guidelines. It is also recognised that, without the benefit of attendance at a standardisation meeting, there may be different interpretations of the application of the marking guidelines.

SECTION A SHAKESPEARE**SHAKESPEARE MINI-ESSAY – PLANNING AND STRUCTURE**

LEVEL	MARK	DESCRIPTOR
7	8 – 10	Consistently excellent link between final product and planned version. Clear links to planning and organisation around topic. Highly competent, even sophisticated, organisation and planning. Planning shows clear links to manner in which mini-essay is written (evidence of order in planning, including quoting).
6	7 – 7,5	Often very good structure. Impressive use of planning. Reader assisted by thoughtfulness in planning. Quality not completely consistent – areas of planning may be ignored/ overlooked or not collated clearly. Quoting evident in planning.
5	6 – 6,5	Generally sound structure. Generally coherent with evidence of organised ideas. Areas that are unfocused. Planning does not always show structure. Essay paragraphs may need to be re-arranged.
4	5 – 5,5	Some evidence of a developing structure. Paragraphing jumbled. No evidence of topic sentences. Planning unfocused. Series of ideas on page, without real evidence of links
3	4 – 4,5	Occasionally incoherent. Limited/ poor evidence of planning – often only a few sentences. Occasionally rambled as plan not followed.
2	3 – 3,5	No paragraphs, but some suggestion of ideas. Virtually no evidence of planning – perhaps a few words on page.
1	0 – 2,5	No planning or planning that makes no sense in terms of content of essay. No attempt at structure. Nonsensical link of ideas.

SHAKESPEARE MINI-ESSAY – ENGAGING WITH TEXT

LEVEL	MARK	DESCRIPTOR
7	16 – 20	Sophisticated evidence of candidate's original voice and clear flair. Hugely effective selection and omission of information. Intelligent knowledge of text. Crisp and clear ability to evaluate and synthesise.
6	14 – 15,5	Very good response. Ability to sustain argument and good knowledge of text. Shows evidence of being able to extract information and engage with question. Lacks flair.
5	12 – 13,5	Average attempt at answering question and engaging with text – although flaws in engaging. Solid, but unimpressive. Sound knowledge of text.
4	10 – 11,5	Glimmers of insight. Some attempt to maintain argument. Padded with narrative. Not cohesive. Engages with text on a relatively superficial level.
3	8 – 9,5	Repetitive/ superficial. Often narrative. Inability to argue competently, but there is a limited engagement with text.
2	6 – 7,5	Muddled/ Vague answer to question. Does not generally appear to understand the question's demands or the text.
1	0 – 5,5	Inability to answer question. No attempt to work with text or question.

Further Mini-essay assessment guidelines

- A candidate whose style of writing cannot be described as 'sparkling', 'detailed, but succinct with careful control and original design of language', cannot achieve a distinction.
- the 'A' candidates will need to integrate short, intelligently chosen quotations into their planning AND final essay.
- The 'A' candidates' planning pages will need to demonstrate an intellectual capacity to source and 'redirect' information. A fresh voice must be in evidence.
- If there is no planning page, the candidate may receive no more than 60%.
- If candidates only tell the story and do not engage with the question, they may receive no more than 30%. If the majority of the essay is narrative, is relatively well written and there is some attempt to respond to the question, they could attain up to 50%. (We would imagine that a competent 'old' standard grade candidate would be somewhere in this bracket.)
- Length requirements (350 – 400 words) are part of the challenge. Essays that are too short will penalise themselves in any case because the response will, in all likelihood, be superficial or will have failed to engage thoughtfully with the required area of debate.
- Essay that are too long must be penalised substantially. A suggestion: over 450 words (can only receive a maximum of 70%); over 500 words (can only receive a maximum of 65%); over 600 words (can only receive a maximum of 60%).
- A 'B' candidate's mini-essay is a very good response. Planning might be insufficient, style might not be excellent (it would, for example, lack flair). Clear substantiation is evident, but it tends to use more obvious examples.
- A 'C' candidate's mini-essay reflects a solid attempt. It may not be entirely focused or impressive or consistently organised. Knowledge of text is sound. Subtleties of question or text are not necessarily foregrounded. Substantiation tends to be thin/ obvious.
- A 'D' candidate can manage a mini-essay, but the planning and final product are often unfocused and superficial. The essay is often padded with narrative. There is an honest attempt to engage with the question, but the product may be poor.
- 'E' candidates' responses are poor and often rambled and/ or repetitive. They may be described as consistently unimpressive and derivative. The candidate's voice appears to be missing.
- A candidate must receive e less than 40%, i.e. fail if it is clear that they do not know the given text. These mini-essays will demonstrate a lack of structure and/ or a completely unsuccessful attempt to answer the question.
- Candidates whose responses rely on film versions of the prescribed texts must be severely penalised.

SECTION B NOVEL**LITERATURE ESSAYS**

Level	Descriptor	%	Mark
7	27 - 30 = excellent. Only for the truly outstanding. Essays should be marked by unusual maturity of thought and command of language. These essays will show considerable insight and confident judgement and will reveal real originality of mind. An exceptional knowledge of the text, including detailed quoting, will be evident. 24 – 26,5 = very impressive. These essays are sensitive and interesting, showing sound and focused judgement of important issues and logically developed arguments. Candidates have a thorough knowledge of the text. Definitely superior.	80 – 100	24 – 30
6	Very good/ good. These essays are commendable, without being brilliant. They are fluent and present reasoned arguments, showing a careful selection of material.	70 – 79	21 – 23,5
5	Average. These are sound, reasonably correct essays. Relevant information has been selected and used to give a direct answer to the question. Not enough insightful reference to text. Just covers the ground, but occasional flashes of insight. Pedestrian style, but evidence of planning.	60 – 69	18 – 20,5
4	Below average. No particular flair shown. The essay shows that the text has been read and understood and the candidate has made an honest attempt to answer parts of the questions. There may be some faults in expression, but, in general, the language is competently handled.	50 – 59	15 – 17,5
3	Weak. This is a passable essay. The text has been read, but the answer is padded with narrative and views are not supported or developed fully. Language usage may be fair to muddled.	40 – 49	12 – 14,5
2	Very weak. These essays are often totally narrative and show a poor command of language. Essay structure is not in evidence. Length is a problem, but some attempt has been made to grapple with question.	30 – 39	9 – 11,5
1	7 – 8,5= incompetent. Essay often muddled, inarticulate. A one-page essay. Unable to grapple with issues 0 – 6,5 = Purpose of task NOT met. Ramblings. Often vague and irrelevant statements which have very little to do with the text.	0 – 29	0 – 8,5

SECTION C TRANSACTIONAL**TRANSACTIONAL EXAM PIECE – LANGUAGE**

MARK	DESCRIPTOR
5	Highly competent use of language conventions and excellent understanding of register required.
4	Competent, at times impressive, use of language conventions.
3	Average response. Pedestrian, but not seriously flawed. Mostly accurate use of language conventions.
2	The candidate tried to apply conventions, but the product is flawed.
1	No evidence of language conventions being applied. Inability to use correct register. Communication marred.

TRANSACTIONAL EXAM PIECE – PURPOSE

LEVEL	MARK	DESCRIPTOR
7	12 – 15	The candidate is able to write original and coherent texts, skilfully adapting to different audiences, purposes, formats and contexts. A clear personal style is evident. Candidate makes an intelligent, original statement.
6	10,5 – 11,5	The candidate is able to write original texts and can adapt to different audiences, purposes, formats and contexts, although this skill is not always sustained. There is evidence of a personal style and a thoughtful engagement with the question.
5	9 – 10	The candidate is able to write with some degree of originality and attempts to adapt to different audiences, purposes, formats and contexts, although some areas jar with the question's requirements. There is limited evidence of a personal style. This is an average response.
4	7,5 – 8,5	The candidate is able to write with some originality and tries to take into account different audiences, purposes, formats and contexts, although this is not always done successfully. Limited personal style is evident.
3	6 – 7	An attempt is made to produce original texts which take into account different audiences, purposes, formats and contexts, but this is not always done correctly. Style is sometimes unoriginal and often relies on 'borrowing' from other work.
2	4,5 – 5,5	Limited originality and inadequate attention to purpose, context and format. Generally no personal style. A poor response. Flawed.
1	0 – 4	Little evidence of originality or cohesion of any kind. No attention to purpose, context, or format. A completely flawed answer.