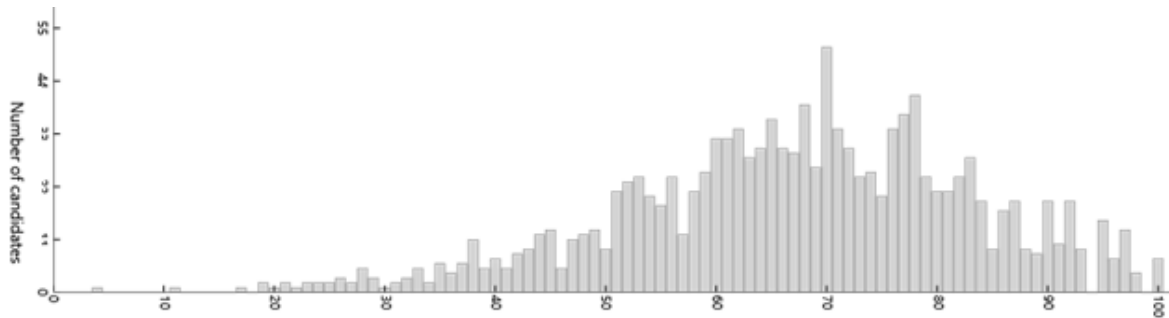




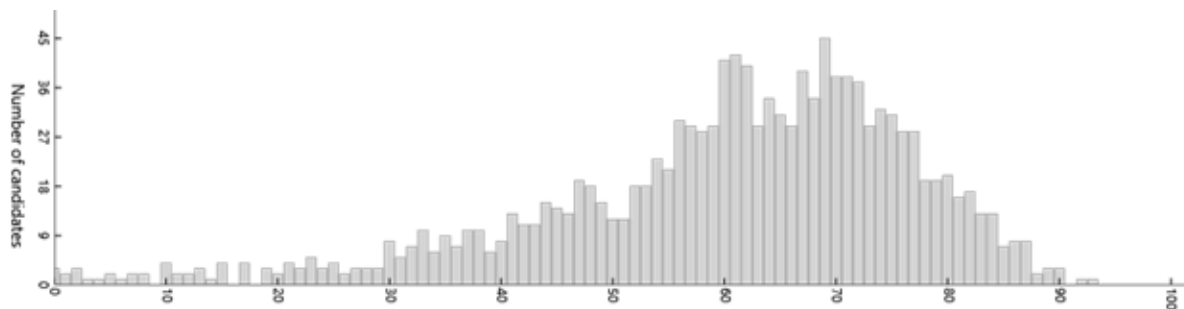
Summary report of the 2019 ATAR course examination: English as an Additional Language/Dialect

Year	Number who sat all examination components	Number of absentees from all examination components
2019	1278	33
2018	1476	12
2017	1483	13

Examination score distribution–Practical



Examination score distribution–Written



Summary

Candidates completed a practical and a written examination.

Practical examination

Attempted by 1279 candidates	Mean 67.06%	Max 100.00%	Min 4.48%
Section means were:			
Part A: Introductory discussion	Mean 83.29%		
Attempted by 1279 candidates	Mean 4.16(/5)	Max 5.00	Min 0.00
Part B: Visual stimulus/focus questions	Mean 74.30%		
Attempted by 1279 candidates	Mean 26.01(/35)	Max 35.00	Min 1.75
Part C: Course issues/topics discussion	Mean 61.49%		
Attempted by 1279 candidates	Mean 36.89(/60)	Max 60.00	Min 2.73

Written examination

Attempted by 1281 candidates	Mean 60.18%	Max 93.03%	Min 0.00%
Section means were:			
Section One: Listening	Mean 53.22%		
Attempted by 1280 candidates	Mean 15.97(/30)	Max 28.97	Min 0.00
Section Two: Reading and viewing	Mean 64.05%		
Attempted by 1276 candidates	Mean 22.42(/35)	Max 35.00	Min 0.00
Section Three: Extended writing	Mean 63.74%		
Attempted by 1257 candidates	Mean 22.31(/35)	Max 35.00	Min 0.00

General comments

Practical examination

Generally, candidates were familiar with the process and procedures of the examination. More candidates were better prepared for Part C: Course issues/topics discussion and markers noted improved performance in 2019. The selection of more suitable texts for both Unit 3 and Unit 4 has resulted in improved performance in many instances.

Advice for candidates

- Prepare for the practical examination by making brief bullet points to assist in the examination.
- You should never read directly from your notes.
- Describe the image 'briefly'.
- Use the focus questions to discuss the issues raised.
- Never read out the questions in the practical examination.
- Use formal language throughout. Never use slang or casual language.
- Prepare for Part C by understanding the themes and content of the course.
- Use textual references to back up points made about the course content.
- Avoid rote learning and giving long quotes from texts that are not related to the point you are making about course content.
- Develop personal opinions related to the course content and your textual examples.

Advice for teachers

- Teach and discuss the themes of Unit 3 and Unit 4. Use the texts as examples of the themes.
- Ensure that all texts relate to the themes and content of the unit. For example, in *Australia as a Cultural Community* ensure that candidates have both an understanding of Australia's early history and knowledge of contemporary Australia.

Written examination

The contents of the paper were on a range of topics that were accessible to the candidates. Most candidates completed the paper with only a small number who did not attempt all sections. The Listening texts were interesting, and the recording was clear and at a good pace. As both texts, to some extent, focused on the environment, some candidates were putting information from one text into answers from the other. The Reading and Viewing section had accessible texts of a good length. The mixture of story in Text 3 and scientific research in Text 4 complemented each other well. The graph in Text 5 required more analysis to be able to achieve full marks thus acting as a discriminator. In the synthesis question, candidates tended to be able to identify the main ideas, although some tried to use the same information across two paragraphs. Weaker candidates often relied on writing a summary of each text, rather than synthesising ideas. The Extended writing questions covered a range of topics related to the content of both units.

Advice for candidates

- In the Listening section, use the time in the first reading to make brief notes and write the answers in the spaces provided during the second reading.

Advice for teachers

- Give your students strategies for dealing with each section of the examination. For example, candidates should make notes in the margin supplied (space for notes) during the first reading of a listening text, then review their notes to consolidate their answers while listening to the repeat reading.
- Give your students plenty of practice at synthesising texts while providing a range of appropriate strategies that will ensure they synthesise text material rather than providing separate text summaries.
- Check that your students only use current Australian English and avoid using outdated overworked clichés or idioms inappropriately.
- Your students need to be well-exposed to a range of current texts that reflect the thematic focus of each unit. While text knowledge is examined in Part C of the practical examination, it is also examined in Section Three of the written examination, where some extended writing questions require reference to at least two texts. Your students need to be given strategies for how to make appropriate text references in such questions.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Practical examination

Part A: Introductory discussion (3 Marks)

Overall, candidates performed well in this introductory ‘warm-up’, designed to put them at ease by ‘interacting on familiar topics’. Some used inappropriate register and slang rather than a more formal style of response as required.

Part B: Visual stimulus/focus questions (20 Marks)

Most candidates performed well in Part B. Images were described briefly and candidates moved on to discuss the issues raised by the focus questions in more detail. Candidates who scored highly were able to relate the content to their personal experiences. Stronger candidates demonstrated the appropriate register and fluency throughout, responding well to the unseen question with insightful, extended ideas and comments. Weaker candidates, however, failed to speak at length on the focus question and/or spent too much time describing the image. Despite being told not to do so by the markers, they also persisted in reading out the focus questions. Inappropriate use of colloquialisms, such as, ‘ya’, ‘like’ and ‘yeah’ were used by weaker candidates. Some candidates lacked the linguistic resources to score high marks and displayed L1 interference affecting fluency and clarity.

Part C: Course issues/topics discussion (22 Marks)

Stronger candidates demonstrated the appropriate register and showed fluency throughout Part C. Weaker candidates scored lower due to intrusive L1 interference which impacts fluency, clarity and pronunciation and lapses in register due to inappropriate use of cultural colloquialisms.

A greater number of candidates demonstrated significant improvement in ability and confidence in Criterion 4 (*Unit 3 Content*). Strong candidates were able to establish links between the texts and issues and provide appropriate examples from a range of relevant texts. Weaker candidates struggled textually and contextually. The inappropriate, outdated texts weaker candidates used in discussion did not relate to the unit content of *Australia as a Cultural Community* resulting in limited or no understanding of Australian values, beliefs or 21st Century Australian society. It was evident that some candidates had not studied any significant texts related to the unit content.

Overall there was a slight improvement on previous years' performance against Criterion 5 (*Unit 4 Content*). Stronger candidates were able to provide language features contextually and demonstrate relevant links to texts studied. Unit 4 continues in many instances to challenge candidates. Not studying suitable texts limits their capacity to perform in the examination. Weaker candidates demonstrated a lack of contextual understanding and the ability to make the relevant links or connections to course unit and texts. Often responses were rehearsed and lacking deeper analysis and understanding.

Written examination

Section One: Listening (29 Marks)

Candidates appeared to find the listening texts appropriate. A substantial loss of marks on a question in this section occurs when a candidate mishears a word and identifies it as another word. This is likely to make the answer totally incorrect. Partial marks only can be gained when a candidate provides only a partial answer, and finally, marks cannot be given when the answer relies on crucial words that are missing from the candidate's response.

Section Two: Reading and viewing (25 Marks)

The main purpose for the few questions offered in this section is to lead candidates to the use of the three texts to create a synthesis. While the two reading texts were answered well, the question for the graph was not straight-forward and required careful thought to understand and articulate its implications.

Section Three: Extended writing (25 Marks)

Most candidates completed a selected question in this section. The questions covered a range of topics and the content of both units proved accessible. However, they must ensure that they answer the whole question. The first essay question, although chosen by the second highest number of candidates also had the lowest mean due largely to incomplete answering of the question. Candidates often overused clichéd idioms, and idioms that are not generally used in Australia, such as 'every Tom, Dick and Harry', 'in a nutshell' and 'a double edged sword'.