

# Support material for English examination questions

## General marking guidelines

Examination responses should demonstrate the knowledge and skills relevant to the sections **reading**, **writing** and **viewing**. They should also demonstrate familiarity with the textual conventions of a range of text types that candidates have used in the course (e.g. fiction, non-fiction, drama, letters, reports, visual material such as film, documentary, cartoons, paintings, photographs etc.).

- **Section 1: Reading** provides unseen written stimulus material with which candidates can demonstrate their skills and understanding for comprehension and close reading, dealing with such elements as genre, audience, attitudes, values, point of view, tone and language. Candidates will be able to draw on personal experience and other reading/viewing experience. Candidates are also required to demonstrate their understanding of print texts studied in the course.
- **Section 2: Writing** provides candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate their control of language, sense of audience, knowledge of generic conventions and the ability to use them in relation to the examination items, and integrate their knowledge of written and visual texts studied in the course.
- **Section 3: Viewing** provides unseen visual material with which candidates can demonstrate their understanding of the generic and specific qualities of these texts in a structured response. Candidates are also required to demonstrate their understanding of visual texts studied in the course.

It must **not** be assumed that the **writing** section is only a means of assessing functional literacy, i.e. spelling, syntax, vocabulary etc. Its purpose is to assess candidates' achievement in writing for a particular purpose, context and audience. Moreover, candidates must be aware that the **reading** and **viewing** sections of the paper are about making their reading/viewing practices transparent. It should be obvious that evidence of achievement in these sections can be gleaned only from what candidates have written. The more understanding they display in explaining their ideas, the clearer their expression, the more fluent and organised their response, the more likely it is that the examiner will be able to grade the candidate's understanding of reading/viewing practices.

In summary, across the paper **as a whole**, markers will assess:

- **content**: engagement with the task (rather than the reproduction of material prepared during the course with merely token reference to the task). This is of paramount importance in *each* section. Candidates need to demonstrate skills and understanding (rather than mere assertion) through their reading/writing/viewing practices, drawing as appropriate on relevant sources.
- **structure and expression**: organisation of ideas; the ability to develop and sustain a response; textual coherence; and awareness of purpose and textual conventions; clarity of language; breadth of vocabulary; and competence in such elements as awareness of audience, fluency, grammar, syntax, spelling, punctuation etc.

Note that a high standard of expression in itself is not sufficient. Markers will assess the content in each answer, and the way it is expressed, taking into account the fact that answers are written under the time pressure of exam conditions.

## General marking key

<p>The range of marks depends on whether the question is out of 10, 15, 20, 30 etc. Here, the marks refer to the sample English examination paper.</p>	<p>Each answer is marked on the extent to which it meets the following criteria <b>(In the reading and viewing sections of the paper, emphasis will be on candidates' demonstration of reading and viewing practices)</b></p>
	<p><b>Content:</b> (as appropriate to the sections <b>reading, writing and viewing</b>): Addresses task fully. Detailed and perceptive exploration of topic. Demonstrates high-order use of sources to synthesize ideas. Very strong awareness of how sociocultural contexts, ideological frameworks, values, attitudes and assumptions shape texts and readers' interpretations, and of how readers are positioned. High-level skills in comprehending and working with complex and unusual conventions, and sensitivity to cultural nuances and subtle or complex textual patterns.</p> <p><b>Structure and expression:</b> Strong textual coherence; sustained sense of purpose, structure and textual conventions. Highly developed use of vocabulary, phrasing, grammar and syntax, with accurate spelling.</p> <p><b>Content:</b> Addresses most aspects of task. Shows detailed and at times perceptive understanding of topic. Mostly uses sources appropriately. Strong awareness of how sociocultural contexts, ideological frameworks, values, attitudes and assumptions shape texts and readers' interpretations, and of how readers are positioned. Shows some skills/understanding in comprehending and working with complex and unusual conventions, and some sensitivity to cultural nuances and subtle or complex textual patterns.</p> <p><b>Structure and expression:</b> Mostly strong textual coherence. Generally has sustained sense of purpose, structure and textual conventions. Uses vocabulary, phrasing, grammar syntax and spelling at a proficient level.</p> <p><b>Content:</b> Addresses some aspects of the task. Explores possibilities of topic. Shows skill/understanding in using sources appropriately. Some recognition of how sociocultural contexts, ideological frameworks etc. shape texts and readers' interpretations.</p> <p><b>Structure and expression:</b> Mostly textually coherent; broad sense of purpose, structure and textual conventions. Competent and appropriate use of vocabulary, spelling, phrasing, grammar and syntax.</p> <p><b>Content:</b> At times addresses the task requirements. Shows limited understanding of topic. Shows limited skills/ understanding in use of sources.</p> <p><b>Structure and expression:</b> Varying levels of textual coherence; varying control of purpose, structure and textual conventions. Uses a limited range of vocabulary, phrasing and syntax. Very limited control of spelling and grammatical conventions.</p> <p><b>Content:</b> Barely addresses the task requirements. Shows elementary understanding of topic. Extremely limited skills/understanding in use of sources.</p> <p><b>Structure and expression:</b> Little textual coherence; little control of purpose, structure and textual conventions. Uses a very limited range of vocabulary, phrasing and syntax. Very limited control of spelling and grammatical conventions.</p>