

**2003 HSC Notes from  
the Marking Centre  
English Extension 1**

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# 2003 HSC NOTES FROM THE MARKING CENTRE

## ENGLISH EXTENSION 1

### Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of the Stage 6 course in English Extension 1. It provides comments with regard to responses to the 2003 Higher School Certificate Examination, indicating the quality of candidate responses and highlighting the relative strengths and weaknesses of the candidature in each section and each question.

It is essential for this document to be read in conjunction with the relevant syllabus, the 2003 Higher School Certificate Examination, the Marking Guidelines and other support documents which have been developed by the Board of Studies to assist in the teaching and learning of English Extension 1.

### General Comments

In 2003, approximately 5150 candidates attempted the Extension 1 English examination.

Teachers and candidates should be aware that examiners may ask questions that address the syllabus outcomes in a manner that requires candidates to respond by integrating their knowledge, understanding and skills developed through studying the course. This reflects the fact that the knowledge, understanding and skills developed through the study of discrete sections, should accumulate to a more comprehensive understanding than may be described in each section separately.

The following Module and Elective breakdown shows the pattern and preferences for study:

- Module A had 2597 candidates of which the vast majority of 2132 responded to the ‘Crime Fiction’ elective. This was by far the most popular elective over the whole paper and represented over one third of the total Extension 1 candidature. 417 candidates did ‘Revenge Tragedy’, while only 48 studied ‘The Essay’. This breakdown was similar to last year’s figures.
- Module B had 2271 candidates and therefore was similar in popularity to Module A but the breakdown between electives differed here. ‘The Individual and Society’ elective had 1181 candidates, while ‘Postmodernism’ had 500 respondents and ‘Retreat From the Global’ attracted 590. This breakdown showed an obvious shift in the pattern of study from last year as the candidature for ‘Retreat From the Global’ more than doubled in 2003 and there were fewer candidates for ‘Postmodernism’ this year.
- Module C again had an extremely small candidature of 193. Only 17 candidates responded to ‘Acts of Reading and Writing’, no candidates did ‘The Language of Sport’ elective, while the remaining 176 candidates did ‘Gendered Language’.

Generic critical response questions for each of the modules in the paper allowed candidates to concentrate on meaningful aspects of their respective elective while the individual questions encouraged candidates’ creativity and imaginative responses.

Markers found that most candidates wrote well-structured and detailed responses that were of a high standard. The majority of candidates were well equipped to answer the questions and the vast majority of candidates understood what was required of them in their responses, even more so than in previous years. Markers commented particularly on the candidates' obvious enjoyment of, and enthusiasm for, the elective they had studied. There was, though, still a small number of candidates who were clearly struggling to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding at an appropriate standard for this demanding extension course.

The most notable change in candidates' responses this year was the length of their responses. The average length for the compulsory questions requiring a critical response was two booklets, with a significant number of candidates using a third booklet. For the individual elective questions that required a more imaginative response most candidates wrote a minimum of 8 pages, usually extending into a second, or at times, third booklet. Despite the increased length of the generic compulsory question responses very few candidates ran out of time for their second response. While many of the longer responses were of high quality, however, others were rambling, repetitive and an unshaped mass of indiscriminate information, and needed to be more lucid, coherent and well-argued.

Markers felt this year's examination had a high degree of parity of questions across the modules as well as within the modules. Markers also felt that the instructions on the examination paper were clear, consistent and adequately repeated throughout the paper. This year only a few candidates answered the wrong question. While technically these students did not satisfy the requirements of the examination these 'illegal' scripts were not discounted at the marking centre; they were marked by the Senior Markers according to the marking guidelines for the actual question the candidates responded to. But these candidates clearly found it difficult to fully demonstrate their knowledge of the appropriate elective, which they had not studied, or meet all the marking guidelines for the question.

Some candidates severely limited the scope of their response by restricting their answers to include only one other text of their 'own choosing' in response to the compulsory generic critical response questions. At this level of study candidates needed to show that they had independently investigated their elective thoroughly, read/viewed widely and immersed themselves in their elective throughout the year. Candidates needed to show their extensive knowledge and informed opinion and interpretation presenting a sophisticated and complex argument. The better responses made careful and pertinent selections of texts of their 'own choosing' and usually referred to at least two other texts to support their personal responses. Students should have a range of texts they can choose from in order to present a complex and detailed analysis of their elective, relevant to the specifics of the question asked. Students should be discouraged from having only one 'other text' to refer to and use irrespective of the specific focus of the question.

The selection of texts of their 'own choosing' also became a clear discriminating factor in the marking. It was evident in the more sophisticated responses that candidates had individually and carefully selected 'other texts' that would develop their argument in an effective manner. These responses displayed diversity and freshness in their originality and a truly personal engagement with the elective. Unfortunately again this year, some candidates were still referring to 'other texts' that had only a tenuous connection to their elective or were simply not substantial enough to support a complex critical response. Weaker responses also tended to treat 'other texts' superficially, relying on fleeting references to a text, or just a casual mention of a title or author, in support of their argument.

Of considerable concern to the markers this year, however, was the increased number of candidates who for the study of ways of thinking in the ‘Individual and Society’ elective, did not select ‘other texts’ that explored the appropriate and requisite historical period, viz 19th century, often choosing contemporary texts that dealt with the 20th century world simply on the premise that they somehow represented an individual in a society. Likewise, for the ‘Retreat From the Global’ elective many candidates appeared confused over the appropriate and relevant historical period and made poor selections of ‘other’ texts as a consequence, limiting the scope of their responses.

While each response is assessed individually the practice of whole classes using the same ‘other texts’ in the examination proved to be limiting to many candidates at this level of study as it prevented them from engaging in independent reading/viewing that could have enhanced the sophistication of their responses. Too often when candidates used the same ‘other texts’ they also had similar perceptions about the texts and regurgitated very generalised ‘dominant’ readings of them. The apparent whole centre selections of ‘other texts’ severely limited the candidates’ personal engagement with the texts and their responses lacked critical insight or analysis. Candidates were unable to provide informed personal responses to these texts or engage with them perceptively on an individual level. This was apparent as they often confused or had difficulty articulating their interpretation of these texts and struggled to relate them effectively to the rubric or question. Students in Extension 1 English need to find their own ‘other texts’ by ‘engaging in extended independent investigation’ and ‘reflecting on their findings’ (Outcome 4, Content 4.1 and 4.2).

In all electives the stronger and more insightful responses came from those candidates who had engaged in their own research, investigation and wide reading and took ‘ownership’ of their elective, often evidenced by the personal tone and individual voice they used to articulate their response and interpretation of texts and electives.

All of the questions on the examination paper included an opening stimulus statement, quoted or unquoted, or a visual stimulus text. (In Question 8 this stimulus statement was represented by the title of the feature article.) Candidates who relied on prepared, rote discussions, ignoring the possibilities in the question, tended to produce a plethora of dull, predictable responses and it became difficult to distinguish between them. Extension 1 candidates ideally show a detailed and complex knowledge and understanding of their elective and adapt this knowledge and understanding to the specifics of the question. This demonstrates evidence of an agile, perceptive mind and a sense of intellectual curiosity, and these qualities tended to raise the candidates who engaged with the opening stimulus statements above the average and ordinary responses.

Candidates should be careful to spell correctly the names of authors and characters on whose work they are drawing, or the names of philosophical movements. Appropriate syntax and paragraphing are also expectations for this course. Handwriting also needs to be reasonably legible.

Candidates demonstrated the following strengths:

- a complex and sophisticated knowledge and understanding of the texts and their relationship to the module and elective rubrics; a good grasp of the focus and concepts implicit in the rubrics and echoed in the texts
- a variety of individual responses to texts; high level of personal engagement with texts
- original and perceptive interpretations of texts and concepts; a strong awareness of context and values
- obvious enjoyment of the texts and enthusiasm for their experiences in this course
- extremely articulate with a high standard of writing and literacy skills; clarity of expression; with a sophisticated structure of responses incorporating complexity and depth of ideas; well

integrated textual references and quotes in support of arguments; sophisticated understanding and knowledge of appropriate conventions of form and styles required

- clear sense of student's own voice and individual response; 'ownership' of their work evident
- solid understanding of literary theory, genre theory, historical background and context where relevant
- thorough and extensive independent investigation and wide reading/viewing evident in their selection and discussion of texts, especially 'texts of own choosing'
- insightful awareness and discussion of 'how' ideas, concepts and meaning are shaped in texts.

Candidates demonstrated some of the following weaknesses:

- failure to engage with all aspects of a particular question; tendency to ignore specific focus or parts of the question
- no sense of a cohesive response to a specific question; use of prepared, rote-learned responses; poor adaptation of memorised responses to fit the specific question; mechanical reliance on prepared material; formulaic responses
- inadequate range or inappropriate selection of 'texts of own choosing'; neglect to identify bibliographical or sources of such texts when relevant or needed
- tendency to summarise and describe rather than analyse and interpret; some storytelling evident; neglect to show detailed and specific knowledge of the set texts
- problems with written expression, organisation of ideas and structure of responses; neglect to use paragraphs; incorrect spelling and syntax; poor legibility
- misinterpretation or poor understanding of the rubrics and their relation to the texts studied; sense of having studied single texts rather than texts within an elective/module
- issues raised but not developed; poor integration or use of evidence in support
- lack of independent thinking or reflection about elective studied
- poor understanding of how meaning is shaped; inability to integrate analysis of a composer's techniques with analysis of ideas.



## Comments On Specific Modules and Questions

### Module A: Genre

#### Compulsory Question 1

Question 1 elicited some highly sophisticated responses from the candidates, particularly in the crime fiction and revenge tragedy genres. As so few candidates attempted the essay it is difficult to discern any real trends in their responses. Most candidates were able to write a well-structured and sustained response. This year there was a notable increase in the length of candidates' responses and for the most part they contained detailed, pertinent discussions. The more able students were well aware of what was required of them and wrote articulate, analytical responses. They were able to move from the prescribed texts to their own knowledge and understanding of the genre's conventions and judiciously comment on composers' transformation and subversion of conventions.

One of the key discriminators in Question 1 was the extent to which they effectively engaged with all parts of the question. The question provided candidates with an opening statement from which they could draw ideas and considerations, as well as a two-part question inviting a more personal response and reflection on the genre they had studied. The stronger candidates were able to address all ideas and elements of the question in a cohesive and synthesised manner. In addressing the statement students dealt well with the notion of 'a framework of conventions' as this year there was clear evidence of a development in the candidates' understanding of genre theory and students had formed their own theories of genre. Most candidates were clearly aware of the contexts and values reflected in the texts and how these were important to the analysis of generic conventions. The better candidates tended to directly address the statement and synthesise their reflection on it coherently throughout their response. This became a clear discriminator in the marking as those candidates who engaged with the statement as well as the additional parts of the question tended to sustain a more in-depth and complex argument.

While weaker candidates still tended to present a chronological historical overview of their genre, or a listing of the conventions, the stronger responses revealed a complex knowledge and understanding of their genre, its development and at times its subversion, and how the changes to the genre reflected changes in context. The majority of candidates had a detailed knowledge of the studied genre but only the better candidates engaged deeply, thoroughly and effectively with the terms of the question, particularly with the notion of how or why a text may be 'engaging'. The better candidates developed a thesis with regards to composers conforming to or challenging conventions and developed it throughout their response. There were insightful discussions of the interplay between genre, conventions and perspectives on the nature of society and the exploration of experimentation of composers within a genre. The candidates' addressing of the notion of conventions being challenged and played with became a significant discriminator in the marking.

For this critical response, or 'essay' type question, there was still some evidence of whole centres churning out the same 'prepared' response, and using exactly the same related texts, interpretations, arguments and quotations. This is of concern to markers as such responses were often limited in scope and confused in their thinking and insights given into the genre studied. The pre-planned, rote-learned responses tended to remain in the low-mid C range of marks as students struggled to adapt them cogently to the specific question asked. It became evident to the markers that the

candidates who composed synthesised, fresh responses to the specific question asked, drawing on their own choice of material, were invariably the better and more sophisticated responses. The stronger responses also referred to a range of other texts covering, for example, prose fiction, film, television, operas and art works. Markers felt that the selection of appropriate ‘other texts’ was a discriminating factor.

Generally the candidates’ own sophisticated and competent writing style and expression were evident. A cogent, economical style helped to develop an effective argument. The different elements of the question required complex thought and the synthesis of a reflective, personal response so clear language and articulation of ideas were crucial.

### **Revenge Tragedy**

Candidates tended to see Revenge Tragedy as being much narrower than the other genres studied, both in terms of its conventions and sub-genres, and different examples of appropriate ‘other texts’. This tended to lead to a tighter discussion of the genre but with less variety of additional material. Better candidates were able to deal with the ‘tragedy’ element as much as the notion of ‘revenge’ itself. Popular ‘other texts’ proved to be the films, *The Bank*, *Gladiator* and *Road to Perdition* and the quintessential revenge tragedy, *Hamlet*.

The better candidates for this question were able to pull together the many strands of their elective and genre: a discussion of revenge, the development of the tragedy component of the genre, context, values and features of the genre. Markers were impressed with the quality of the responses, with the discriminating factors tending to be the depth of discussion and breadth of argument and the focus on the ‘useful’ aspect of the question. A-range scripts included appropriate, original choice of own texts which were effectively analysed and integrated into the discussion. C-range scripts were predictable, often prepared responses, which candidates manipulated to fit the question and were consequently more limited in scope.

### **Crime Fiction**

As with Revenge Tragedy, the A-B range scripts in Crime Fiction were sophisticated responses, referring to a range of elements and aspects of the genre. C range scripts tended to take a very chronological approach and struggled to present a complex or sophisticated argument. Many of the weaker responses neglected to refer to any of the more recent developments in crime fiction writing which are continuing to subvert and create new directions for the genre.

A noticeable trend this year was the huge number of students referring to the ‘“cosy” school of crime fiction’. The use of this colloquialism was prolific and students’ real understanding and usage of the term as well as its relevance and appropriateness at this level of study was questionable. Their synonymous use of the term for the ‘Golden Age’ of crime fiction generally, as well as the more specific ‘country manor house murders’, suggested that students were confused by the term. Candidates should use this term very sparingly and ensure that they have undertaken independent research on the genre rather than relying on published Extension 1 resources which can result in uniformity and undermine the quality of their personal response or interpretation.

When discussing *The Big Sleep* the strongest responses were able to provide a succinct and clear analysis of film technique and film noir conventions although very few candidates considered the soundtrack of the film. The absurdist and self-reflexive aspects of *The Real Inspector Hound* were generally well understood and analysed. There was, though, some confusion about the medium of some of the texts studied with a number of candidates discussing the novel version of *The Big Sleep* or the film of *Snow Falling on Cedars*.

## The Essay

‘The Essay’ as an elective seems to be more manageable, with clearly defined conventions and clear arguments being presented in each of the set texts. Although this elective does not have a large candidature, and so it is difficult to note trends, some of the responses to this question needed more direct textual evidence as they tended to take a ‘broad brush’ in their approach. The better responses showed an ability to come to terms with the ideas involved and the context of composition and revealed a good understanding of symbolism in, for example, *A Room of One’s Own*.

Strengths of candidates answering Question 1:

- complex knowledge and understanding of genre, its defining characteristics and genre theory
- sound and detailed knowledge of the conventions of the specific genre studied, its history and development, the ideas and values associated with the genre and the place of ‘text’ within the genre
- ability to engage with the specifics of the question and address all parts of the question
- ability to develop a thesis that explores the conventions of the genre, context and values and develop an argument that addresses all parts of the question
- solid understanding of the history and evolution of the genre and its subversions, adaptations
- detailed knowledge of the prescribed texts and ability to integrate the consideration of form and medium of production/techniques into discussion/argument
- ability to sustain the quality of their analysis across the treatment of all their texts
- ability to compose detailed, comprehensive responses that cited clear textual references in support of arguments and integrated elements of the question
- ability to synthesise material with sophistication; ability to discuss a range of texts in an integrated manner and to seamlessly blend discussion of text, context, genre and audience engagement
- awareness of ‘how’ meaning is shaped in texts and ability to discuss features of texts
- appropriate and independent selection and effective use of texts of ‘own choosing’ to demonstrate their complex knowledge and understanding of the genre; originality in text selection and relevance to discussion of genre; ability to synthesise and apply conventions to a range of texts of ‘own choosing’ and sophisticated analysis of chosen texts
- sound control of language and structure of response.

Weaker responses to Question 1:

- didn’t engage with requirements of the question or had difficulty synthesising all the parts of the question
- lacked sophisticated expression and complexity of thought; difficulties with synthesis of argument and material; were poorly structured
- analysis lacked detail; inability to demonstrate through close and detailed textual analysis a deep and broad knowledge and understanding of the genre; inability to refer to scenes/sections of texts in depth or integrate evidence and quotes
- listed conventions which led to simple, generalised responses
- were generalised, more ‘narrated’ responses rather than evaluative
- were unable to discuss the context of text creditably and respond to the ‘useful’ element of the question
- wrote overlong scripts that became repetitive and rambling
- tried to adapt prepared answers to fit the question; regurgitated prepared answers thereby failing to respond to unique elements of the examination question
- had little evidence of independent research or personal response to their study of a genre; relied on whole centre ‘parroting’ of particular points of view using the same phraseology
- wrote more strongly on the prescribed texts than the texts of their ‘own choosing’

- tended to present a standardised use of additional material and texts of ‘own choosing’ which limited the development and scope of their responses
- showed minimal understanding or a misunderstanding of genre theory and genre development; misconception about what ‘genre’ actually is
- found it difficult to conceptualise genre and text detail beyond the superficial
- used fleeting references to other texts rather than substantial analysis or other texts selected were irrelevant/inappropriate/insubstantial
- listed conventions of the genre with an example; described conventions rather than analysed them or just gave a chronological overview
- had less control of their own language and written expression; contained rudimentary spelling and syntax errors; lack of paragraphs.

### **Specific questions on electives, Questions 2, 3 and 4**

The questions in this section of the paper were inventive and stimulating for the candidates as they engendered a wide range of responses. Almost all candidates responded to the opening statements and the majority attempted to use them as a ‘way into’ their responses. Candidates found it engaging to respond to the imaginative invitation of focusing on a fictional character in Questions 2 and 3, especially in their creation of a credible voice. Better candidates responded to the emotional tones of the opening statements and used them to clearly establish their persona and point of view. Weaker candidates tended to devolve into rather flamboyant and somewhat clichéd rhetoric such as Medea’s furious passion or the exaggerated toughness of Marlowe. Better responses, however, moderated the rhetoric in favour of a reasoned consideration of the issues involved yet still managed to retain a convincing voice.

The strongest responses were marked by an overall intellectual control of material while sustaining their characterisation which gave their reflections cohesion rather than rant. Particular interpretation tended to be less important than overall control and the sustaining of both the form and voice. While most candidates were able to create an authentic voice the real discriminator tended to be how well they could integrate into their reflection their knowledge and understanding of the conventions of the genre. The strongest responses combined strong voices with an adherence to, and clear understanding of, the conventions of the genre.

Question 4 gave less opportunity for obviously emotional responses and as a result candidates’ creation of voice was, appropriately, more restrained and they tended to engage more directly with the content. Although there was a small candidature for this elective the responses to Question 4 were generally very sound.

All three questions required a skilful blend of knowledge of text and genre, the creation of an authentic voice for their persona and the adoption of an appropriate writing style for the nominated form of a reflection. The better candidates were able to demonstrate a high degree of creativity firmly grounded in their academic expertise and knowledge and understanding of the genre.

A very surprising feature, particularly in responses to Questions 2 and 3, was the number of candidates who failed to observe the clear requirement of the questions to write as ‘a central character in one of the prescribed texts.’ This instruction could not have been clearer yet many students wrote on a non-prescribed text and did themselves a great disservice. Some candidates wrote on no specific text at all and invented their own fiction, others wrote on minor characters (even though markers interpreted ‘central’ very liberally) and some wrote on critical texts. Other candidates chose to write as the actor playing the part of one of the main characters in a play or

film; this type of ‘imagining’ restricted some of the candidates at times who struggled to create an authentic voice and persona while trying to write a convincing reflection that encapsulated their understanding of the character they were playing and that character’s perspective on events or being manipulated by the composer.

All three questions required a response in the form of a reflection yet weaker responses appeared in the form of newspaper interviews, popular TV ‘talk shows’ such as *Oprah* and radio reports. A few were critical response essays masquerading as creative reflections with the third person pronouns hastily expunged for first- or second-person pronouns. None of these forms allowed for the creation of authentic characters’ voices in terms of reflection. The inappropriate choice of form clearly disadvantaged these candidates and teachers need to advise students that while many of them may label this the ‘creative’ question it does not mean that they can ignore the parameters and requirements of the specific questions.

Overall however the candidates approached the task with sound understanding of genre, and demonstrated effectively their close and critical study of the texts. There was some wonderful creativity in language from the pathetic and moving to the sharp and witty. Better responses clearly reflected the hard work of the candidates and were evidence of their depth of understanding of the genre. In particular, candidates who showed a sense of personal discovery in their responses tended to write with enjoyment, confidence, depth and stylistic maturity.

### **Revenge Tragedy**

Complex understanding of characters shown. Better candidates captured the angst of characters such as Medea and powerfully represented it with overt and implicit acknowledgement of the genre. Using the stimulus statement ‘What’s done is done’, weaker candidates tended to simply retell the events and their role in the plot rather than reflect on what had or had not been achieved and evaluate whether it had been worth it.

### **Crime Fiction**

Responses showed a complex understanding of conventions of crime fiction and knowledge of characters. Writing as Marlowe was the most popular choice. In response to this question and the need to reflect on how things could have unfolded weaker candidates tended to simply rewrite the story with scant reference to their knowledge of the conventions of the genre or the prescribed text. Many recreations were imaginative wanderings that had little resemblance to the prescribed text. Weaker candidates often ignored context and conventions and simply rewrote the plot or recast the characters to reflect their own values.

### **The Essay**

Most candidates captured an effective voice and were able to convincingly sustain it. Better candidates responded to the criticism with insight and a certain amount of honesty and self-evaluation of purpose.

Strengths of candidates answering Questions 2, 3 and 4:

- ability to incorporate all elements of the question – selection of appropriate character, creation of an authentic voice for the chosen character and the ability to write a reflection in response to the stimulus statement and specific questions
- very creative, experimental responses; wrote with flair and engaged the reader; often humorous; ability to control content and form creatively
- sophisticated understanding of genre and conventions

- ability to sustain the selected form and voice while demonstrating their knowledge of the genre studied
- depth of textual knowledge
- took an interesting stance in their reflection, often allowing for a challenging viewpoint
- demonstrated extensive knowledge and understanding of the ideas, values and conventions of each respective genre
- effective control of own language and writing
- impressive length and depth of responses
- conveyed an enjoyment of, and involvement in, the study of their elective
- compositions that assumed the hard-boiled voice persona were particularly effective.

Weaker responses to Questions 2, 3 and 4:

- had difficulty creating an authentic and credible voice for their character
- failed to choose an appropriate character from an appropriate text as per the instructions in the question
- had difficulties grasping the sense of the character as a creation of a composer and having no external life; confusion between actor/character evident, especially with Bogart/Marlowe and Bacall/Vivian
- tended to write emotional diatribes full of emotional rhetoric and histrionics
- were mostly simple recounts of the plot/story or retold existing story portraying their character in a more favourable light without any substantiation or analysis in light of conventions
- used prepared short story versions of a text
- lacked focus; insufficient planning and structuring of ideas
- were confused by notion of central character; or had no sense of character and audience
- some misunderstandings of character evident in crime fiction, especially when relying on film version of *Snow Falling on Cedars*
- neglected to write in the nominated form, viz a reflection
- had difficulty integrating notions of conventions of genre into their response
- some conventions of revenge tragedy were underdeveloped, especially the sense of the revenger being tainted by their own actions
- had inappropriate cultural references
- contained a lot of technical difficulties (of syntax, spelling, punctuation, paragraphing); this prevented the candidates from displaying a highly developed control of language or any level of sophisticated writing.

## **Module B: Texts and Ways of Thinking**

### **Compulsory Question 5**

This question was sufficiently straightforward to allow candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the rubric and of their elective. The question allowed students to launch into an exploration of their elective and show their understanding of the ways of thinking as well as include their own personal reflection and understanding of their elective derived from their wide reading/viewing. The question also allowed the better candidates to blend their conceptual understanding with a detailed knowledge of how meaning is shaped in texts.

There was a marked increase in the length of the average script this year, with the majority of students writing two to three booklets for this question. Markers noted that while many students

wrote very substantial and dense essays some of the better candidates were also able to demonstrate both thoroughness and succinctness and this should be encouraged by teachers of this course. The conceptual level of this course needs a corresponding control of language and an ability to express ideas coherently and this was a discriminating factor in the marking. Markers also commented on the overall sophisticated quality of textual analysis and impressive control of language displayed in the many of the responses this year.

Critical theories and theorists were well used in the better responses in supporting candidates' arguments, and essays were well structured. While some candidates struggled with the theoretical underpinnings of Module B many were able to discuss the texts intelligently, with a good understanding of the texts' contexts and their varying receptions. The better candidates were able to achieve a synthesis of theory and texts. It was obvious to the markers that some students were very thorough in their preparation and the better scripts showed intellectual maturity and writing skill. Given that they were writing under examination conditions many candidates demonstrated impressive fluency and control of language and were able to achieve an effective synthesis as they found connections among the texts and discussed them articulately. Weaker candidates still relied too heavily on plot recounts and showed an inability to discuss techniques. They also had a poorer conceptual grasp of the question, paradigms and rubrics and their responses were marred by a lack of fluency and control of language.

The selection of texts of their own choosing affected the quality of responses in this question. Although students did display an advanced understanding of how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts there remains a large number of candidates who either ignored or wandered away from the 'particular historical period' they should have been focusing on as referred to in the syllabus rubric for this module. This was evident in the most popular elective, 'The Individual and Society', as well as 'Retreat From the Global'. The choice of texts that were either not composed in the specific historical period or could not be appropriately linked to the historical period was disadvantageous to candidates as it prevented them from including relevant philosophical or theoretical analysis. Inappropriate choice of additional texts created real problems for some candidates as their choices did not reflect the idea that the texts belonged to, or explored, a certain time and its values and ways of thinking. Students studying 'The Individual and Society' need to locate their exploration firmly in the 19th century while those studying the 'Retreat From the Global' need to show an understanding of the late 20th century and discuss the texts within that particular context.

The better candidates were able to draw on a range and variety of texts and provided a fresher, more original and individual response to this question. Many candidates demonstrated a sophisticated analysis of, for example, 19th century paintings, postmodern films and other more obscure texts, which demonstrated the candidates' individual reflections and rigorous pursuit of 'other texts' to support their personal responses and interpretations. However, despite evidence of a strong contextual understanding of how concepts and ways of thinking are expressed in texts, many candidates referred to only one text of their own choosing and others used only another prescribed text (beyond the two prescribed texts stipulated in the question) thereby having only one text of own choosing. There were also a number of centres where all the candidates not only used the same texts 'of their own choosing' but discussed them using identical phraseology. In the majority of instances these practices clearly limited the scope of the candidate's response and prevented many from giving an individual, insightful and complex response to the question which is deemed to be of such importance in this 'Extension' level course.

The discussion and explanation of techniques was an important requirement for this question. Not only was this focus a clear requirement of the question, it is also clear in the examination rubric and students need to be advised to pay close attention to the ‘dot points’ in the rubric as well as the specifics in the questions. Consequently many candidates failed to give techniques adequate attention or focus in their analysis of texts and how ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts. Even students who did discuss techniques sometimes did so as an addendum to the discussion of concepts and could not effectively integrate how composers used techniques to present ideas and shape meaning. Rather than analysing texts weaker candidates tended to describe a technique, provide a quote in support and then neglected to discuss how the technique contributed to the text’s meaning. Candidates needed to ensure they analysed in detail ‘how’ meaning is shaped, how the ‘resistance [made] itself heard’. It was noted, however, that there has been a significant improvement overall this year in the way in which candidates are able to effectively integrate discussion of techniques in their responses.

Students were more successful when discussing ideas. Weaker responses, however, tended to provide a low level, or superficial level, of textual analysis. At times these responses were more descriptive than analytical, relying on recount or retelling of the story to present their argument. Candidates often did not demonstrate an understanding of the overriding paradigms or concepts behind the ideas. In other cases, some candidates engaged in marginally relevant historical contextualising without directly addressing the specifics of the question. Better candidates were also clearly able to define the ‘mainstream’ and show exactly what it was that was being resisted. Weaker candidates found this somewhat confusing and became trite in their definitions or gave convoluted, and at times contradictory, explanations. For example, some candidates in the elective ‘Postmodernism’ had difficulty setting up a logical argument and seemed unsure as to whether it was Postmodernism itself that was being resisted or if it was modernism or tradition. Weaker candidates were also confused over the nature of the module rubric and elective rubric and how to marry them. Weaker responses tended to labour through a discussion of each contextual paradigm for each text being discussed.

In this section of the examination which required a more straightforward critical response many candidates still felt they could just use a pre-prepared ‘essay’ and make minor adjustments to it to fit the specific question. In the majority of cases this kept candidates in the low-mid C range as they failed to engage fully with the complexities of the question and elective studied. It was clear that when using pre-prepared, rote-learned responses many candidates struggled to adapt them cogently to the specific question asked. It became evident to the markers that the candidates who composed synthesised, fresh responses to the question, drawing on their own choice of material, were invariably the better and more sophisticated responses.

### **The Individual and Society**

This was by far the most popular elective in this module. The selection of texts of their own choosing was a crucial discriminating factor in this question as many candidates chose inappropriate texts that did not focus on the historical period designated for study. While some contemporary texts may be appropriate, such as Peter Carey’s *Oscar and Lucinda*, candidates must show how they directly relate to the ways of thinking of the 19th century and how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in the texts. Some candidates seem to have seized on the title of the elective without considering how it is defined in the module and elective rubrics. These candidates, who often inappropriately used 20th century texts which merely provided a perspective of an individual in a society, are doing themselves a great disservice unless they can clearly show how the selected text demonstrates the focus for study in this elective and the designated historical period.



The average responses to this elective also seemed less tied to an overall understanding of the 19th century, particularly the changes over the period and the breadth of issues which can be addressed. This was evident, for example, in those responses which discussed *Pride and Prejudice* as a ‘Victorian’ text. Many candidates also did themselves a disservice in limiting the scope of their responses by taking a too narrow focus; numerous students only explored the role of women without examining any other ways of thinking such as class stratification.

### **Postmodernism**

Overall these responses showed a high level of pleasure experienced by candidates in their study, a sophisticated understanding of theory and a discriminating critical appreciation of contemporary texts.

For this question candidates needed to display an understanding of postmodern culture itself and define what the mainstream is. The better responses showed a complex and sophisticated understanding of postmodernism and were able to provide a strong personal response that reflected their engagement with the course and their study of postmodernism. The weakest responses indicated that these candidates were struggling with the very basic concepts underpinning postmodernist theory and were confused and inarticulate in their discussion of it. Weaker responses to this question tended to rely heavily on quoting critics and regurgitating some sort of treatise on the theory of postmodernism without making any attempt to adapt their knowledge to the specifics of the question. Weaker candidates often confined their discussion to the forms and features without linking them to ways of thinking. Too often responses merely listed techniques with the rejoinder ‘This is a resistance to the mainstream’ or ‘This is resisting mainstream texts which traditionally do this and that.’ There was often no clear sense of what constitutes the mainstream.

### **Retreat From the Global**

There was a significant increase in the number of students studying this elective this year and it was clear to the markers that they had, in contrast to previous years, been given a strong theoretical base for their study. It was interesting to see some particularly able candidates using some of the insights of postmodern thinkers and writers to address their own rubric. Many candidates were able to draw on a range of critical theorists in support of their analysis and discussion and seem this year to have considered the complexity of the concept with more insight. Again this year, though, weaker responses still tended to oversimplify the relationship between the local and the global, with many candidates still considering this elective only in terms of ‘global - bad’ and ‘local - good’. Markers noted that a number of students also felt they could define ‘global’, and particularly ‘local’, however they chose; anything that was not mainstream or was about some personal act of non-conformity became a retreat to some sort of metaphorical local.

The selection of texts of their own choosing was also a factor which affected the quality of responses in this question. Again this year, some candidates chose to use, for example, brief magazine or newspaper articles (sourced as late as 5 November), items retrieved from the internet or other texts which were often not complex or substantial enough to develop a strong argument or effectively discuss the composer’s techniques.

Strengths of candidates answering Question 5:

- strong understanding of the theoretical principles underpinning the various elective statements and rubrics (not just for postmodernism, as has tended to be the case in the past, but for all electives)

- familiarity with relevant critical theories and strong ability to interweave this knowledge with textual analysis; sophisticated integration of theory and text analysis
- extensive knowledge of the context/text relationship
- able to deal with more sophisticated concepts; critical responses were ‘idea’-driven
- appropriate selection and effective use of texts of own choosing
- evidence of individual research and personal selection of ‘other texts’
- ability to write lengthy, well-structured and sustained responses
- presentation of sophisticated arguments with substantial evidence
- engaged with the stimulus statement and specifics of the question
- close analysis of texts and how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts
- clear understanding of composer’s techniques; engaged in detailed analysis of techniques and ‘how this resistance makes itself heard’
- able to present a thorough and dense response while remaining reasonably succinct
- high literacy levels and sophisticated control of language.

#### Weaker responses to Question 5:

- included inappropriate, unsuitable or irrelevant texts of own choosing; limited the scope of their response with inadequate number of texts referred to
- demonstrated little evidence of individual research and personal interpretation and response
- had difficulty relating their knowledge and understanding of their elective to related texts – tended to treat them in isolation; considered a limited number of aspects of texts; had a narrow focus
- experienced difficulty with structuring an integrated response; were more concerned about length and ‘quantity’ than ‘quality’ of their response; often long-winded and repetitious
- inadequately discussed ‘how’ paradigms are developed in texts; failed to define concepts discussed
- mentioned theorists in a tokenistic way without demonstrating real familiarity with their theories
- relied on pre-prepared, rote-learned responses; consequently had difficulty adapting comments to the specific question
- rarely centred their responses around the context for the elective; the discussion of context was often reductive, focusing on simplistic notions (slightly more evident in responses for ‘The Individual and Society’ and ‘Retreat from the Global’ electives)
- lacked any discernible argument; made generalisations
- relied on storytelling and recounting of plot or narrow text study without connection to context or the specifics of the question; preferred character and plot analysis to grappling with ‘how’ and techniques of the composers
- presented a simple listing of techniques with an example as their analysis
- referred to film versions of novels in deference to a close study of the prescribed text
- dealt with texts of own choosing more superficially and less confidently than prescribed texts.

#### **Specific questions on electives, Questions 6, 7 and 8**

The corresponding questions in Module A were prefaced by an opening statement which provided direction and acted as a lead-in to the actual question and instructions. This provided consistency of question format. In addition, each Module A question directed students to prescribed texts. In Module B questions 6 and 7 were similar to those in Module A: they had an opening quotation and were text-linked. Question 8’s structure differed slightly but better candidates saw the feature article’s title as serving the same purpose as the quotations in the other questions. In this question,

although it did not specifically ask candidates to ground their response in the composer's actual text, the better responses integrated references to it into their article giving their ideas about 'modern life' a more solid, conceptual base. Weaker candidates were tempted into writing more generally about 'modern life' and often veered away from their knowledge and understanding of the ways of thinking studied in their elective. These candidates submitted overly generalised or idiosyncratic feature articles by 'composers' whose writing often gave no hint of the composer's actual context.

The selection of the composer was crucial in this question as some candidates were restricted by their choice. Candidates needed to come to the examination prepared to discuss or make reference to any of their prescribed texts. A candidate's selection of the composer whose perspective they would convey had considerable bearing on the quality of the response and proved to be a discriminator in the marking. As in Module A Questions 2-4, some candidates failed to write as the composer of one of the prescribed texts, often confusing these with a text of their own choosing. As it was a clear directive in the questions to 'Imagine you are the composer of one of the prescribed texts' these candidates severely disadvantaged themselves by their choice of composer. In response to these questions markers also noted a disturbing degree of failure to understand what 'composer' means. This applied particularly in the case of Simon Langton's *Pride and Prejudice* as numerous students responded to Question 6 as Jane Austen. Candidates need to be clearly aware of the parameters of the course and the terminology defining them.

There is also a tendency by candidates to see this section of the examination paper as the 'creative' question. Some students had headed their responses 'creative' and in many cases this led to the presentation of a piece of 'creative writing' which paid scant attention to the specifics of the question asked in terms of both content and form. Unfortunately a number of candidates continue to approach the examination with pre-prepared, rote-learned responses which do not adapt easily to the specific questions asked. Some of these 'creative writing' pieces contained little or no reference to the paradigms and ways of thinking explored in the electives.

The better candidates dealt well with the complex demands these questions made. The A-B range responses exhibited remarkable skill in selecting a suitable composer while integrating the idea established in the opening statement throughout the response, often with reference to philosophical or critical works. They were also able to construct an imaginative response which demonstrated fine control of the resources of language under examination conditions. Only a few candidates could do all of this at a sophisticated level, but most managed it to a commendable degree.

### **Question 6: The Individual and Society**

While Langton's *Pride and Prejudice* and Ibsen's *A Doll's House* remained extremely popular, it was good to see some excellent responses based on Browning's poetry and Gaskell's *North and South*. The required personal journal reflection gave students ample opportunity to create and sustain the voice of a composer and explore in depth particular ways of thinking through their discussion of their characters and what they 'were aiming to achieve' in their creation. The better responses to this question saw the relationship between the individual and society not in terms of simple opposition but grasped how the individual's challenge arises out of formative social experience. Some highly sophisticated responses were able to construct the adversarial case in the process of demolishing it.

The better responses on *North and South* were able to make good use of the novel's publication history and biographical details in creating inner reflections. These candidates showed awareness of ways in which Gaskell's personal experience of south and north, country, pastoral and factory

towns enabled her thematic concerns to resonate with description and authoritative power. While it was not a popular text choice for this question the weaker candidates who wrote on *The Portrait of a Lady* seemed to rely on the film version.

Overwhelmingly the better responses on Langton's *Pride and Prejudice* came from candidates who were encouraged to think about the way in which the film medium shapes meaning, and gave detailed examples of ways in which Langton questions and updates Austen's novel and/or the society that produced it.

### **Question 7: Postmodernism**

This question elicited a wide range of responses but the difficulty some students faced was to explain the complexities of postmodernism to a 'general readership'. Some decided to create a 'postmodern' text which, unfortunately, would have encouraged readers of the newspaper to reiterate the very charges and criticisms that were referred to in the question. Students should understand that 'being postmodernist' doesn't mean they can dispense with the question and do what they like. Some candidates have interpreted the paradigm to mean 'anything goes' and the result was often a pastiche of shrieking abuse, self-reflexivity, grand and minor narratives and a complete loss of the sense of audience and context. Some weaker responses engaged in point by point rebuttal of each charge as if in a debate.

Better responses accepted the invitation to write a strongly worded, though restrained, reply to the criticism and managed to encapsulate the essence of a complex way of thinking and the essence of a text at the same time.

As with Langton's *Pride and Prejudice* in Question 7 those candidates who wrote on *Orlando* were able to use their knowledge of film-making to develop their arguments and express their understanding of postmodernism and relevant ways of thinking.

### **Question 8: Retreat From the Global**

The better responses to this question embodied knowledge of the paradigm based in extensive reading of the set texts and beyond. They combined it with an engagingly journalistic writing style and a fine sense of audience. Although the question itself did not require specific discussion of text the better candidates did not simply elucidate the paradigm but gave responses focusing on textual detail and were advantaged by the inherent specificity instead of what often amounted to unrelieved rhetoric in the weaker responses.

Some of the better candidates had a sophisticated understanding of the elective and were able to explore theorists' opinions whilst also drawing on their own conclusions. Weaker candidates did not respond appropriately to the question, at times disregarding the composer and writing in any voice about superficialities, defining 'modern life' broadly and ambiguously. Stronger responses conveyed a clear sense of audience and purpose.

Strengths of candidates answering Questions 6, 7 and 8:

- selection of an appropriate composer
- sound insights into the composer, their context and their perspective
- ability to capture and sustain the voice and perspective of the composer
- sophisticated understanding of ways of thinking and relevant paradigms; sound balance between ways of thinking and the ways in which ideas shaped and were reflected in the prescribed texts
- wrote fluently and engagingly in the nominated form
- showed a willingness to engage with the task and grapple with argument

- ability to integrate rubric with details of question and effectively synthesise text, theory and personal response to question
- solid evidence of theoretical analysis of their elective
- integration of composer's perspective and exploration of ways of thinking
- sound knowledge of the individual text studied reflected through composer's perspective
- sophisticated control of language and use of appropriate conventions for form they wrote in.

Weaker responses to Questions 6, 7 and 8:

- failed to provide detailed textual references to establish and enhance their composer's perspective
- failed to choose an appropriate composer from an appropriate text as per the instructions in the question
- were unable to sustain a credible voice of the composer or write convincingly in the nominated form
- neglected to fulfil requirements of the rubric; had difficulty incorporating ways of thinking into their responses
- struggled to cohesively integrate the opening statement into their response where relevant
- had a poor understanding of how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts; gave a simplistic analysis of ideas and failed to see nuances
- demonstrated a tendency for 'name-dropping' of theorists
- showed a superficial knowledge of texts and characters
- relied on pre-prepared or rote-learned responses with superficial attempts to adapt it to the specific question
- lapsed into recount; some storytelling; lacked sophistication of ideas and form
- were more an 'essay' than a journal/reply/feature article
- inappropriately referred to film versions of print texts
- were marred by language flaws and spelling errors; showed lack of control in the use of language.

## **Module C: Language and Values**

This was the least 'popular' Module and was attempted by only 193 candidates in total. Consequently it is difficult to discern any real trends in the candidates' responses but the comments below are a reflection of the markers' overall impressions.

The critical responses to Question 9 tended to be of a higher standard in this module than the candidates' imaginative responses to Questions 10 and 12 both in length and construction of an argument as well as fluency and control of language. The imaginative responses tended to be superficial, brief and very 'light' in their discussion of language and values as required in the rubrics for both the module and individual electives.

'Acts of Reading and Writing' tends to lend itself to more informed and erudite responses as it seems to be a more focused elective for the students' study. Candidates seem to find 'Gendered Language' more difficult to grasp or make concrete as it is more disparate and more pervasive so it seems easier for the candidates to be side-tracked or descend into cliché.

## **Compulsory Question 9**

This question proved to be somewhat difficult and quite complex for many of the candidates as it required them to address a number of facets such as 'vital', 'potential', 'conveying' and

‘transforming’ values. Few candidates were able to effectively address all aspects of this question and present a synthesised response exploring language, culture and values.

Overall candidates didn’t address the question closely enough or take enough notice of the rubrics.

### **Acts of Reading and Writing**

Only 17 candidates responded to this elective. The better candidates clearly enjoyed the theoretical aspects of this elective and were able to write about these with a certain confidence and degree of clarity. The better candidates had an impressive grasp of the prescribed texts and were able to apply theory to the texts studied, particularly to Manguel’s *A History of Reading*, and Calvino’s *If on a winter’s night a traveller*.

This elective clearly enables capable students to extend themselves and to engage with ideas. Particular strengths of the candidates of this elective included a highly developed control of language and a sophisticated appreciation of values and how language shapes meaning.

### **The Language of Sport**

No candidates responded to this elective.

### **Gendered Language**

Although this was the most popular elective in this module, a small candidature of only 176 responded to this elective. The standard of language analysis by candidates studying this elective has improved somewhat over the previous years, although weaker responses still focus too much on gender roles at the expense of providing insights into, and analysis of, gendered language.

The better candidates made extensive references to Tannen and showed a good knowledge of her text and ideas. They were able to express a sophisticated appraisal of her work and articulate personal criticisms of her approaches to language and gender. They actively engaged in Tannen’s discussion of the use of language rather than merely gender roles and were able to apply her theories to their other texts, or to debate the validity of her arguments. The weaker candidates referred to Tannen in detail but still confused gender roles with gendered language.

Closer reference by candidates to the language of the texts is required in this elective and a greater understanding of the rubric and focus of the elective would assist candidates to move from discussing stereotypical gender roles and behaviour to a more complex understanding of how language may define gender and values.

*Elizabeth* was handled well by many candidates. Candidates engaged with the language of film in detail and how film-making techniques are used to shape meaning and capture notions of gendered language. Candidates need to be encouraged, though, to find and analyse their own scenes, rather than relying heavily upon classroom instruction which was evident in the responses with candidates from many centres using identical shot examples, dialogue references and quotations to support identical arguments and discussion.

*Twelfth Night* was used but not very successfully. Little attention was given to detailed analysis of language on the whole with candidates focusing superficially on plot and character, gender behaviour and attitudes and the disguise of gender. Once again there was considerable confusion between gendered language and gender roles. Candidates should discuss the use of gendered language and values in much more depth if this text is to be used successfully.

Some candidates were able to find suitable related texts and discussed the use of gendered language competently but it was clear that many candidates relied heavily on texts that had been distributed and/or studied in the classroom. This practice led to fairly predictable, uninspiring essays that regurgitated predictable interpretations and analysis with candidates demonstrating little original insight into their elective. In many cases this disadvantaged students as they did not always have a strong grasp or knowledge of the intricacies and complexities of their own arguments and textual references cited in support.

Strengths of candidates answering Question 9:

- clear understanding of the rubric and focus of the module and specific elective
- ability to demonstrate their understanding of the correlation between language and values
- selected appropriate texts in support of their arguments
- detailed knowledge of prescribed texts; provided close textual analysis with detailed textual references
- engaged with theorists and effectively applied theory to texts they had studied and texts of their own choosing
- considerable evidence of wide reading and independent research that indicated a detailed and complex engagement with the module
- original and insightful discussion of texts of their own choosing
- synthesis of research, texts and original thinking and personal reflection
- ability to compose a sustained response and integrate the multiple facets of the question
- synthesis of a range of suitable and engaging material
- thoughtful and insightful commentary on language and how it shapes meaning
- highly articulate, demonstrating sophisticated control of language.

Weaker responses to Question 9:

- were more descriptive than analytical in their responses
- demonstrated a limited understanding of the elective and module rubrics, particularly the correlation between language and values; confusion between ‘values’ and ‘valuing’
- did not display sufficient understanding of the way language shapes and reflects culture and values; did not show a true awareness of what values are
- for ‘Gendered Language’ often a discussion of gender differences and behaviour rather than an analysis of the language; had difficulty differentiating between gender roles/behaviour and gendered language
- lacked depth of analysis; commentary on texts often superficial or generalised discussion; some storytelling and recounting evident; did not provide sufficient close textual references
- relied on pre-prepared, planned essays and made clumsy attempts to adapt their material to the specific question
- had problems articulating how language shapes meaning
- selected inappropriate related texts or texts which did not allow them to develop their argument fully
- had little evidence of independent research or wide reading; limited their responses by referring to only one text of own choosing
- summarised content or discussed ideas only
- lacked control of own language and unable to structure a cohesive, sustained response.

### **Specific questions on electives, Questions 10 and 12:**

The responses to these questions were generally weaker than those for Question 9. Many responses were brief and appeared rushed, suggesting time management problems in the examination for some of the candidates.

Candidates generally did not make the most of the opportunity to be imaginative with these questions and very few succeeded in writing convincingly in the nominated form of ‘an opinion piece in a daily newspaper’. Many lapsed into writing an essay while others wrote a stylish piece but on behaviour not language. Candidates found it particularly difficult to meld appropriate style and form with sufficient material and opinion.

These questions included an illustration that was set up as accompanying the article and better candidates made use of the ideas and viewpoints conveyed by the illustrations. Some clearly identified where in the opinion piece the illustration would be used or placed and structured a clear argument around it. Weaker candidates had difficulty interpreting the illustration or integrating it in any way into their responses.

It was evident that many candidates had little understanding of language and values and even when such an understanding was demonstrated it was rarely supported by close reference to the language which conveyed the values.

In many cases, candidates did little more than re-write their essays in response to this question. Given that the candidature of this module is so small and the markers assess both questions, markers were actually able to recognise the repeated responses as in many instances candidates provided exactly the same arguments, texts and examples over two questions. While each script is marked individually it was evident that many students in this module were unable to adapt their knowledge and understanding to the appropriate form and specific focus of the question.

The better responses were able to present a clear opinion, write fluently in the nominated form, consider the illustration stimulus and demonstrate an understanding of language and values, using close references to texts.

Strengths of candidates answering Questions 10 and 12:

- used appropriate language, tone, voice and style for the nominated ‘opinion piece of a newspaper’; often wrote as a particular persona (eg university lecturer on gendered language)
- presented a clear and detailed opinion piece that explored language and values; created an insightful line of argument
- incorporated a logical discussion of the illustration into the article and gave it a context; used it to enhance their argument rather than become distracted by it
- displayed insights into values and culture and discussed these in an interesting and engaging manner
- included close textual references where relevant and showed a sophisticated understanding of the texts studied, the module and elective rubrics.

Weaker responses to Questions 10 and 12:

- demonstrated a tendency to use cliché and discuss stereotypes and gender roles rather than gendered language
- were distracted or confused by the illustration; misinterpreted the focus of the opinion piece

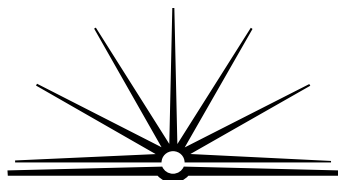


- were unable to successfully sustain an appropriate level of language and style for the nominated form; did not write imaginative or original responses that reflected any knowledge of editorial, feature or other newspaper article conventions
- ran out of time and presented brief, rushed responses
- neglected to discuss or analyse language; tended to present sociology essay type responses
- failed to demonstrate their understanding of the module and elective studied; for Question 12 often produced uninformed ‘rants’ about gender issues, focusing on gender roles and divisions, discrimination, equity issues in the workplace
- had less control of their own language and written expression; contained rudimentary spelling and syntax errors; lack of paragraphs.

# English Extension 1

## 2003 HSC Examination Mapping Grid

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
<b>Module A: Genre</b>			
1	25	Genre	H1, H2, H3, H4
2	25	Revenge Tragedy	H1, H2, H3, H4
3	25	Crime Fiction	H1, H2, H3, H4
4	25	The Essay	H1, H2, H3, H4
<b>Module B: Texts and Ways of Thinking</b>			
5	25	Texts and Ways of Thinking	H1, H2, H3, H4
6	25	The Individual and Society	H1, H2, H3, H4
7	25	Postmodernism	H1, H2, H3, H4
8	25	Retreat From the Global	H1, H2, H3, H4
<b>Module C: Language and Values</b>			
9	25	Language and Values	H1, H2, H3, H4
10	25	Acts of Reading and Writing	H1, H2, H3, H4
11	25	The Language of Sport	H1, H2, H3, H4
12	25	Gendered Language	H1, H2, H3, H4



**B O A R D O F S T U D I E S**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

## **2003 HSC English Extension Marking Guidelines**

**Module A****Question 1***Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4***MARKING GUIDELINES**

	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critically considers the different ways in which the qualities of the texts of the genre are influenced by the generic conventions</li><li>• Shows sophisticated evaluation of the features and conventions and appeal of the genre</li><li>• Sustains an extended composition, displaying highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity</li></ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explores and evaluates the different ways in which the qualities of the texts of the genre are influenced by the generic conventions</li><li>• Shows an advanced ability to evaluate the features and conventions and appeal of the genre</li><li>• Sustains an extended composition, displaying skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity</li></ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shows awareness and understanding of the different ways in which the qualities of the texts of the genre are influenced by the generic conventions</li><li>• Provides a thoughtful response that attempts to evaluate the features and the conventions and appeal of the genre</li><li>• Writes an extended composition, displaying competent control of language to express ideas</li></ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acknowledges that texts can be influenced in different ways by their generic conventions</li><li>• Describes, in what may be an underdeveloped response, some of the features and conventions and appeal of the genre</li><li>• Writes a composition, displaying reasonable control of language to express ideas</li></ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offers limited understanding that texts can be influenced in different ways by their generic conventions</li><li>• Displays limited ability to describe the features and conventions and appeal of the genre, possibly as undeveloped personal opinions</li><li>• May display some control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question</li></ul>	1–5

**Module A****Questions 2, 3, 4***Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4***MARKING GUIDELINES**

	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows sophisticated ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form, and in role</li><li>Demonstrates with flair and insight the ways ideas, values and conventions associated with the prescribed genre can be expressed</li><li>Displays highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity and originality in a style and form appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows substantial ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form, and in role</li><li>Demonstrates with insight the ways ideas, values and conventions associated with the prescribed genre can be expressed</li><li>Displays skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity in a style and form appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows sound ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form, and in role</li><li>Demonstrates sound ability to express the ways ideas, values and conventions associated with the prescribed genre can be expressed</li><li>Displays competent control of language to express ideas in a style and form appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows some ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form, and in role</li><li>Demonstrates some ability to express the ways ideas, values and conventions associated with the genre can be expressed</li><li>Displays satisfactory control of language to express ideas in a style and form appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows limited ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form</li><li>Demonstrates limited ability to express the ways ideas, values and conventions associated with the genre can be expressed</li><li>Displays limited control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question in a style and form which may not be appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	1–5

**Module B****Question 5***Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4***MARKING GUIDELINES**

	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critically considers the various forms of resistance to the mainstream, and how that is expressed in the chosen texts</li><li>• Shows sophisticated appreciation of how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts</li><li>• Sustains an extended composition, displaying highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity</li></ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explores and explains clearly the various forms of resistance to the mainstream, and how that is expressed in the chosen texts</li><li>• Shows an advanced ability to appreciate how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts</li><li>• Sustains an extended composition displaying skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity</li></ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shows awareness and understanding of the various forms of resistance to the mainstream, and how that is expressed in the chosen texts</li><li>• Provides a thoughtful response to how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts</li><li>• Writes an extended composition displaying competent control of language to express ideas</li></ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognises some forms of resistance to the mainstream, and demonstrates a limited comprehension of how that is expressed in the chosen texts</li><li>• Describes, in what may be an underdeveloped response, how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts</li><li>• Writes a composition displaying reasonable control of language to express ideas</li></ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offers limited understanding of forms of resistance to the mainstream, with an elementary awareness of how that is expressed in the chosen texts</li><li>• Displays limited ability to describe how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts, possibly as undeveloped personal opinions</li><li>• May display some control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question</li></ul>	1–5

**Module B****Questions 6, 7, 8***Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4***MARKING GUIDELINES**

	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows sophisticated ability to compose a sustained text demonstrating highly developed understanding of ‘ways of thinking’ and consistent with nominated style or form, and in role</li><li>Demonstrates with flair and insight the ways in which ideas have shaped and are reflected in the prescribed texts</li><li>Displays highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity and originality in a style and form appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows substantial ability to compose a sustained text demonstrating skilful understanding of ‘ways of thinking’ and consistent with nominated style or form, and in role</li><li>Demonstrates with insight the ways in which ideas have shaped and are reflected in the prescribed texts</li><li>Displays skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity in a style and form appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows sound ability to compose a sustained text demonstrating competent understanding of ‘ways of thinking’ and consistent with nominated style or form, and in role</li><li>Demonstrates sound ability to express the ways in which ideas have shaped and are reflected in the prescribed texts</li><li>Displays competent control of language to express ideas in a style and form appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows some ability to compose a sustained text demonstrating satisfactory understanding of ‘ways of thinking’ and consistent with nominated style or form, and in role</li><li>Demonstrates some ability to express the ways in which ideas have shaped and are reflected in the prescribed texts</li><li>Displays satisfactory control of language to express ideas in a style and form appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows limited ability to compose a sustained text demonstrating limited understanding of ‘ways of thinking’</li><li>Demonstrates limited ability to express the ways in which ideas have shaped and are reflected in texts</li><li>Displays limited control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question, in a style and form which may not be appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	1–5

**Module C****Question 9***Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4***MARKING GUIDELINES**

	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critically considers the issues in the proposition and critically explores and evaluates the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values in compulsory, prescribed and chosen texts</li><li>• Shows sophisticated awareness of the communicative and transformative power of language</li><li>• Sustains an extended composition, displaying highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity</li></ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explores the issues in the proposition and evaluates the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values in compulsory, prescribed and chosen texts</li><li>• Shows an advanced awareness of the communicative and transformative power of language</li><li>• Sustains an extended composition, displaying skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity</li></ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shows awareness of the issues in the proposition and understands the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values in compulsory, prescribed and chosen texts</li><li>• Provides a thoughtful response that attempts to show the communicative and transformative power of language</li><li>• Writes an extended composition, displaying competent control of language to express ideas</li></ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognises the issues in the proposition and acknowledges the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values in compulsory and chosen or prescribed texts</li><li>• Displays, in what may be an underdeveloped response, some awareness of the communicative and transformative power of language</li><li>• Writes a composition, displaying reasonable control of language to express ideas</li></ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offers limited understanding of the issues in the proposition and of the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values in chosen texts</li><li>• Displays limited awareness of the communicative and transformative power of language</li><li>• May display some control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question</li></ul>	1–5



**Module C****Questions 10, 11, 12***Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4***MARKING GUIDELINES**

	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shows sophisticated ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form</li><li>• Demonstrates with flair and insight the inherent power/ values/ cultural attitudes in language as understood from the prescribed electives in Module C</li><li>• Displays highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity and originality appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shows substantial ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form</li><li>• Demonstrates with insight the inherent power/ values/ cultural attitudes in language as understood from the prescribed electives in Module C</li><li>• Displays skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shows sound ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form</li><li>• Demonstrates sound ability to express the inherent power/ values/ cultural attitudes in language as understood from the prescribed electives in Module C</li><li>• Displays competent control of language to express ideas in a style and form appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shows some ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form</li><li>• Demonstrates some ability to express the inherent power/ values/ cultural attitudes in language as understood from the prescribed electives in Module C</li><li>• Displays satisfactory control of language to express ideas in a style and form appropriate to the purpose and context</li></ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shows limited ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form</li><li>• Demonstrates limited ability to express the inherent power/ values/ cultural attitudes in language</li><li>• Displays limited control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question, in a style and form which may not be appropriate to the purpose or context</li></ul>	1–5