ENGLISH

In 1996, 18 400 candidates presented for the examination in 2 Unit Contemporary English.

2 UNIT CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

The paper was well presented, included high quality photographs and, on the whole, the lay-out of stimulus material, which guided students in their responses, was good.

PAPER 1 : Reading and Writing

Questions 1, 2 ad 3

- The fact that the questions were less complex than in past years meant that most candidates were able to deal with all aspects of their chosen question. This also meant that there were fewer elements to juggle when scripts were being assessed.

- The number of questions presented was appropriate.

- Questions were clearly set out and expressed in a way that few candidates had difficulty in understanding. The requirements of audience, register and content were delivered in a similar way in each question. The clear instructions at the end of the question, viz:
  Write the speech notes.....
  Write the conversation.....
  Write at least THREE questions.....
  helped focus the candidates on the specific task and the appropriate way to deal with it.

- The use of the words *ONE of the Contemporary Issues* in each question also helped students to focus on the requirements of those questions.

- The need for a first person response was a very positive aspect of the questions, as was their open-ended nature.

- Answers were more evenly spread across the questions than has been the case in previous years.. Question 3 (interview) was the most popular, followed by Question 4 (conversation) and Question 2 (notes).

- In recent years the required genre was sometimes very specialised or outside candidates' experience. This was not the case in Questions 3 and 4 this year. In Question 2, while the *open forum* is not part of mainstream experience, students were familiar with the need to argue a case.

Candidates

- Whilst there seemed this year to be fewer very weak scripts, even those that were were serious attempts; there were also fewer non-attempts.

- The length and literacy of responses suggest that most candidates had studied a wide range and variety of material, as well as a number of the set texts.

- There appeared to be fewer responses which presented no more than a summary of a plot or regurgitation of information without reference to the question.

PAPER 2

Section I

Question 1

War and Peace

The majority of students dealt adequately with *War* but very few were able to discuss *Peace*. This might have been due to the material studied.

Growing Up

This is a very popular Issue which allows for a strong personal voice. Students used a wide range of material, especially videos and movies, in dealing with this Issue.

Sport

Although this was a very popular Issue for which students used a wide range of related material, here too they seemed to make the greatest use of unsourced related material.

Cultural Identity

This Issue allows for personal experience and voice but was that least frequently dealt with in this part of the paper.

- A noticeable feature of answers this year was a tendency to give examples from sources without naming them or to refer to general areas (the recent Olympic Games in Atlanta; the debate around Pauline Hanson) in some detail but without naming a specific source or sources for their information. It may be that the conversational tone of answers required by Questions 3 and 4 in Section II of the paper, and even the notes required by Question 2, were taken to indicate that the more formal element of documenting sources was not required.

Section II

Question 2

- The instruction to write speech notes caused problems because, for some candidates, this invited brevity. Interpretation of *notes* ranged from point form to fully written speeches and essays. Those who attempted the point form format sometimes suffered because they did not provide the detailed discussion necessary to move them above the C range of marks.

- Most students made good use of their text and material to cover the main aspects of their chosen Issue, but many found it more difficult to incorporate the persuasive element required by the question.

Question 3

- This was the most popular question and was generally well done. Students were familiar with the genre and the majority were able to create a suitably relaxed interview atmosphere.

- This situation provided a good vehicle for discussion.

- The requirement of a minimum of THREE questions, however, was seen by some as meaning that **only** three were to be asked but this did not necessarily inhibit the quality of their answers.

- Some candidates spent a lot of time in establishing the television atmosphere, in introducing the person to be interviewed and in relaxing him/her. While this helped satisfy the requirements of the genre, it left little time to deal adequately with the question and the issue.

- A number of candidates saw the question as requiring a discussion of *how* they studied the Issue and the type of material studied. The wording of such questions may need to be more specific. Rather than being *...about ONE of the Contemporary Issues*, there may need to be reference to aspects of main features of the issue.

- Asking for at least THREE aspects to be discussed might have prompted wider discussion than simply asking for *at least THREE questions.*

Question 4

- This question was generally well done since this is a scenario familiar to all candidates.

- As in the previous question, some students answered in terms of what material needed to be studied and how to prepare for the examination. More specific wording may be needed to avoid such confusion.

- Here, too, asking for *three aspects* rather than the *three most useful questions* might have prompted wider discussion.

Concerns

- The requirement to refer to a text and a range of material can inhibit personal response to an Issue. Moreover, some candidates tend to provide a series of summaries which are only tenuously linked to the Issue by discussion.

  This increasing preoccupation with the material on which candidates' understanding is based, and documentation of sources, has led to personal response becoming less valued. The original intention on Issues, Section II, was that candidates should be able to write in a certain style about the specific Issue.

- All the scenarios in this year's questions were oral, and Questions 3 and 4 required a question and answer format. Although this seems to have benefited students because they are most comfortable with such scenarios, it might have been too narrow a selection of styles.

- There were a small number of centres where, even if the question were addressed, students all presented the same material and reached the same conclusion. Although

this kind of preparation may be unavoidable with some classes, students should be encouraged to collect their own material.

- Although it was less obvious this year, a number of students still have difficulty in balancing the requirements of genre and discussion of the Issue, material or text. They might focus on the text rather than the Issue, fail to present a range of material, or discuss only one or two aspects of an Issue.

- Questions 2 and 3 invited candidates to give their name and the name of their school and many did this literally. It needs to be emphasised to students that they are **not** to identify themselves or their schools and that **they must use fictitious names**. Questions should avoid such scenarios or contain a warning to students not to use real names.

- There is a lack of variety in the related material used by candidates - newspaper articles and videos seem to be the main forms.

3 UNIT

The Marking Operation

Candidates

Number of candidates:	1669
Number of scripts:	3338
Double markings:	6676

Markers

Supervisor of Marking:	1
Senior Markers:	4
Markers:	24
Average number of scripts per marker:	278

Marking Teams

In order to involve as broad a range of English teachers as possible, both secondary and tertiary, the marking teams are organised into Corporate and Domestic groups. Corporate teams worked fixed hours (weekday evenings and Saturdays) at a designated marking centre, while Domestic teams collected their scripts from a central collection point and marked them at home or at their place of work.

Considerable effort is made to represent all professional interest groups among the markers, i.e. secondary teachers at government and non-government schools, and tertiary teachers at colleges of TAFE and universities. Secondary teachers appointed to mark in 1996 were required to have taught 3 Unit English in the current year or very recent past; tertiary teachers were required to have taught 3 Unit English or First Year University English in the current and preceding year.

The Corporate teams comprised secondary and TAFE teachers only; the Domestic teams comprised both secondary and tertiary teachers in a ratio of 7 : 5.

The marking teams were arranged as follows:

Corporate Team A	:	1 SM and 6 Markers, Questions 1, 2, 3, 8
Domestic Team A	:	as above
Corporate Team B:	:	1 SM and 6 Markers, Questions 4, 5, 6, 7
Domestic Team B	:	as above

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The Marking Process

Each question was marked out of 25. Each candidate answered two questions, each of which was double-marked 'blind', once by Corporate markers, once by Domestic markers.

For every candidate, one question was first-marked by Corporate and second-marked by Domestic markers, while the other question was first-marked by Domestic and second-marked by Corporate markers. In all cases, the second marker did not know what mark had been awarded to the script by the first marker.

The 25 marks were arranged in grades from A to E (see Appendix). Markers, who were briefed to look for particular criteria, were instructed to assign each script to a grade before deciding on the actual mark. No target proportion of A-grade marks was awarded.

Reconciliations

Each question was marked out of 25; a difference of 5 marks or more between the first and second mark was regarded as being discrepant.

Discrepant marks were given a third independent mark by one of the Senior Markers supervising those questions, and the three marks were then resolved by the other Senior Marker, who entered the resolved mark on both marksheets. The three original marks were required for a research project run by the Board of Studies during the 1996 3 Unit English marking operation. The aims of the project were to assess the comparative reliability of reconciling discrepancies at 5 marks out of 25, and at 8 marks out of 25; and to assess the comparative reliability of marking out of 15 and out of 25.

The total number of discrepant scripts was 526 out of 3338, or 15.75%.

Comments on the Marking Operation

The marking operation was completed in 3 weeks, including the initial briefing of the Senior Markers, pilot marking, actual marking, test marking out of 15 as required by the Board's research project, and the final reconciliations by the Senior Markers.

There was close co-operation between the Corporate and Domestic Senior Markers, with the latter paying regular visits to the marking centre to share sample scripts, while the reconciliations were all undertaken jointly at the centre.

The marking operation started slowly, following a request from the Senior Markers that they should continue to mark out of 25 for each question, rather than out of 15, as the Board had recommended. This led to the Board's research project and involved some extra work for the clerical assistants, the Senior Markers and the Corporate markers, who spent an extra evening at the end of the marking period test-marking a batch of scripts out of 15, following a short

briefing and the issue of a set of marking grades. Delays were minimal, however, and the marking operation was generally uneventful.

Due to the comparatively small numbers in many of the electives, pairs of markers in each team marked only two electives each. This meant that no marker was required to prepare more than two electives to mark, while the Senior Markers had to supervise four electives each. This system worked very well, with pairs of markers being able to be briefed together and compare scripts during the marking period.

Comments in Individual Questions

The following comments are a summarised version of feedback supplied by the Senior Markers and their marking teams, together with observations by the Supervisor of Marking.

General Remarks

- All the questions were fairly broadly-based this year, compared with those of previous years, and were of a uniform level of difficulty. The better students were able to develop clear arguments within the framework allowed by the questions, while weaker students tended to generalise.

- Answers were generally longer and of a higher standard than in previous years, with many of the scripts continuing into a second booklet. There were very few D-range scripts and even fewer E-range answers. General literacy was also of an acceptably high standard.

- The structuring of essays continues to be a problem for some students. A clear line of argument set out at the beginning of the essay, developed and supported by reference to the text(s), followed by a conclusion, is the general blueprint expected of 3 Unit candidates.

- Where candidates use quotations from the set texts, they should try to incorporate these into the broad argument of the essay rather than quoting slabs of text with very little explanatory context or interpretation. References to secondary critics should be avoided as much as possible.

- Some candidates attempted to use a technical vocabulary of literary criticism over which they had inadequate control. The first priority should be to construct a clear line of argument; lexical fireworks should be avoided, unless candidates are confident that they understand what they are writing down.

- Poor handwriting seemed to be more of a problem this year than in previous years.

- Abbreviated titles of texts should be avoided where possible, especially the use of acronyms, e.g. *BNW* for *Brave New World*. Students should be encouraged to underline titles and to spell the names of authors, texts and characters correctly.

- The art of paragraphing seems to be disappearing; many candidates wrote pages of text with no paragraph breaks. Paragraphing is a valuable tool for structuring an argument and should be encouraged.

Question 1 : Shakespearian Comedy

'Shakespeare's comedies are interesting because of the problems they raise but do not resolve.'

Discuss this with close reference to the TWO plays you have studied for this elective.

Most students were able to write at length and to display a sound knowledge of their two texts. While very few wrote on *Troilus and Cressida*, their answers were generally amongst the best, perhaps because that play offered the most scope for answering this question. Conversely, *Twelfth Night*, on which the majority of students wrote, was relatively difficult to adapt to the question, and it was a challenge for candidates to come up with *problems* which were not resolved in that play.

The words *interesting* and *resolve* in the question caused minor difficulties. The former allowed some students to focus on proving that the plays were interesting for reasons other than unresolved problems, thus effectively ignoring the second half of the question. The latter confused poorer students who resorted to story-telling about unresolved plot lines or unhappy characters (notably Malvolio and Caliban) rather than examining themes or issues. The better students were able to distinguish well between plot resolution and the resolution of issues or problems.

Some students made a distinction between *problems raised* and *problems resolved* which gave rise to irrelevant commentary on whether the plays' resolutions were *realistic* or not, particularly in regard to the switching of partners at the end of *Twelfth Night*.

Generally, candidates avoided the subtleties of the question and concentrated on presentation of themes through a discussion of characters and/or plots. The better candidates were able both to accept and to challenge the given statement, and their answers presented intelligent and perceptive discussions of issues and ideas, while moving comfortably from one text to the other, highlighting any differences which were relevant to the question.

Average candidates offered a sound understanding of the texts, but tended to focus on discussion of the characters. Problems were not always noted, nor was the word *interesting* discussed in any meaningful way.

Weaker candidates offered no discussion of the complexities of the texts, merely asserting that all comedy, by its nature, resolves all problems, and adding a basic plot summary.

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Question 2 : Special Study of Milton

*'The meaning of **Paradise Lost**, Books I and II, , stems from the differences between Satan's self-image and the images that the narrator creates for him.'*
Discuss.

A basic difficulty raised by this question was its assumption that Satan's self-image was not constructed by the narrator, who must therefore be someone other than Milton. Very few students (not surprisingly) were able to make any distinction between the narrative voice and Milton's construction of Satan's self-image, leading the majority to discuss Satan as if he were a *real* person. A mere handful of students tackled the issue of *who* or *what* precisely constituted the narrative voice. Most assumed the narrator to be synonymous with Milton. Setting aside this basic theoretical problem, the standard of answers was generally very high and the text had clearly been well-taught by a small number of enthusiasts.

While the majority of students successfully tackled the differences between Satan's self-image and the images that the narrator creates of him, far fewer then went on to produce a subtle interpretation of the text's meaning; indeed, a number did not attempt this section of the question at all.

The best answers:

- set out a clear line of argument in the first paragraph, i.e. went beyond simply re-stating the topic

- recognised that the aim of the poem, the inevitably oft-quoted *justify the ways of God to men*, is not the same thing as its meaning

- did more than merely describe images of Satan as presented by the narrator before setting this beside Satan's self-image; they analysed the various ways in which the poem draws out these contrasts

- took up the point that the poem shows Satan in a quasi-ambiguous light, making him not unattractive as a temptation to Man

- made consistent and appropriate close reference to the text, and demonstrated a sensitivity to the grandeur of the poem's design.

In weaker answers, students:

- spent far too much time on biographical material that related Milton to political and social crises of the 17th century

- concentrated on the burning lake and the Great Consult, thus ignoring most of Book II, in particular Satan's journey and confrontation with Sin and Death.

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Question 3 : Utopias and Anti-Utopias

*Both Utopian and anti-Utopian narratives have to confront the problem of defining a place for the individual in their imagined social structures. How successfully, in your view, do Thomas More's **Utopia** and ONE other text you have studied deal with this problem?*

Once again, this question was generally well answered, and the standard of the scripts in this elective was generally higher than in 1995. Some of the answers, however, did read like answers to last year's question. The majority of students demonstrated a good grasp of the irony and satire underlying the portrayal of the imagined societies, although a failure to do so was a distinguishing feature of most of the weaker answers.

The wording of the question created interpretation problems for students and sent them off in a number of directions. The majority elected to shrink the requirements of the question to a description of the ways in which the various writers set about *defining a place for the individual*. A small number took it to mean that *both Utopian and anti-Utopian narratives have to confront the problem of defining a place **to** the individual...* and wrote about the benefits of vivid description. Most students failed to give any definition of their understanding of the term *individual*, and this sometimes led to confused discussions which focussed on the author, or even the reader, as the individual in question. Rarely was the notion of *social structures* clearly or deliberately addressed. Students seemed largely content to believe that any detail from the texts which related to an individual had to do with *social structure.*

The notion of *how successfully* the texts addressed the problem of defining a place for the individual was another stumbling block. A substantial number of scripts equated the success of the texts as works of literature with the perceived success of specific societies in dealing with the *problem* of individuality.

Many answers were unbalanced, dealing very well with one text but failing to deal with the other in any depth. Despite the fact that it probably seemed easier to answer this question by using the modern texts, many of these unbalanced answers actually concentrated on More, perhaps reflecting an emphasis in the teaching of this elective. Provided that the second text was considered, this imbalance did not necessarily disadvantage the students.

There was a tendency to avoid addressing the question of genre, implied by the reference in the question to *narratives* which *have to confront....* The best answers did deal with that issue, talking about the differing roles of Raphael and Offred/Winston/Bernard.   The effect of Raphael's being an observer of Utopian society was addressed by the better candidates.

Answers which discussed *The Handmaid's Tale* were more common than last year, but still in the minority. They tended to be among the better responses, some of which dealt with the fact that Offred is even denied individuality at the end of the novel. Other answers on this text, however, resorted to story-telling or to an exclusive emphasis on the feminist aspect of the text.

In general, sophisticated responses to this question argued strongly that the attempts to define a place for the individual showed that, indeed, there was no such place, this being one of the aims of the texts. These responses were intricately detailed in their arguments and well-substantiated with evidence from the texts. They also showed an understanding of the ways in which satire and irony allowed for complex readings of the text.

Good candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the way in which the treatment of the individual signified the writer's attitude to both the imagined society and the *real* society to which the text was a response.

Average candidates were more unsettled by the form and the possible directions of the question. They resorted to description rather than analysis, often stumbling over particular aspects of the question, rather than focussing on the question as a whole.

Question 4 : Special Study of Yeats

Soon after Yeats died, W H Auden wrote:
> *Earth, receive an honoured guest;*
> *William Yeats is laid to rest...*
What, in your view, is the poetic accomplishment of W B Yeats? Support your answer by reference to at least TWO of the poems set for study.

As is often the case in the poetry electives, there were noticeable signs of the prepared response, encouraged by the very broad terms of the question. Most candidates had no idea what to do with the quotation and ignored it; this did not necessarily count against them if their interpretation of Yeats' poems had some depth and substance. The quotation seemed decorative rather than helpful. The phrase *at least* was confusing; it would have been preferable to indicate exactly how many poems need to be dealt with in detail; otherwise the question was felt to be a reasonable one.

There was a relative absence of disciplined personal response controlled by the text. Among the weaknesses were a tendency towards irrelevant biographical and historical information, and mechanical listings of qualities or themes. Frequently, an explanation of meaning without analysis of language reduced the poems to a paraphrase of narrative or description. As well, Yeats' personal and idiosyncratic ideas were too often laboured at the expense of textual analysis and there is a growing and regrettable tendency for intrusive diagrams, e.g. the gyres.

Among the strengths were some refreshing and personal interpretations that showed insight. The best scripts defined a personal and relevant viewpoint, using textual support. On the whole, the candidates knew the texts well and had a sound understanding of the themes.

Above average scripts showed the ability to:

- analyse language and relate it to meaning

- strike a reasoned balance between close analysis and a wider understanding of Yeats's ideas

- develop a considered response while dealing with two or three poems in depth

- use grammatical, fluent and articulate language, observing the conventions of writing, e.g. accurate and integrated quotations, titles given in full and indicated by quotation marks, precision in spelling and choice of words, legibility in handwriting.

Question 5 : The Poem Sequence

'Memory, not chronology, is the organising principle in the poem sequence.'
To what extent do you agree? Discuss with reference to the TWO poem sequences you have studied.

Generally, students had no problem in interpreting the question. The majority adopted the view that Lowell's poetry was based on chronology, whereas Tranter's was seen as memory-based. The more competent answers were able to incorporate both aspects. Those few who had studied Brennan seemed to approach the question as being a blend of both chronology and memory.

Most candidates took a sequential and logical approach to the question, while the better answers showed an analytical approach to language and integrated quotations effectively. Discussions of Brennan's poetry incorporated a higher level of analysis than did discussions of Tranter's or Lowell's poetry. Few candidates seemed able to analyse Tranter's poetry with any degree of expertise.

Weaker candidates tended to paraphrase the poems, making them into narratives and picking out all the examples of *memory*. Stronger answers tackled the idea of the *organising principle*, discussing the structure of the texts and even the nature of a *poem sequence* as a genre.

Question 6 : Modern Prose

'Anything to let my voice be heard.'
What textual strategies do Modern Prose writers adopt to ensure that they are 'heard'? Discuss TWO of the texts set for study.

The question appeared straightforward but required some definition of *voice* which most candidates failed to supply. The majority assumed that it simply referred to the author (as the

question implied) so that answers on *Flaws in the Glass* and *A Room of One's Own* tended to take up a more confident position than some of the others, without necessarily achieving a higher standard. The term *textual strategies* appeared not to have much meaning for most students as it was not directly addressed except by a few of the better candidates. Many scripts failed to focus sharply on the styles and structures of the texts, whilst, in the better scripts, students were able to discuss both style and structure in relation to content, supporting their arguments with relevant textual evidence.

On the whole, responses were competent and literate, with some very perceptive and sophisticated answers. Good scripts maintained a balanced treatment of both texts, giving fresh and thoughtful interpretations rather than prepared responses. Poorer scripts lacked sufficient relevance to the question, offering rambling, repetitive retellings rather than analysis.

Question 7 : The Novel of Awakening

'The awakening may be the beginning of a nightmare.'
Show how the concept of awakening is explored in **Jane Eyre** *and ONE other text you have studied.*

Good scripts had a clear definition of the concept of *awakening* and the techniques used by writers to convey the characters' growing awareness of their identity. Such scripts were able to select techniques and events which shaped the *awakening*, and were acutely aware of the role of the author in structuring the process of awakening through control of the plot. The best candidates were conscious of the ambiguity of the *awakenings*, which were both liberating and damaging to the protagonists.

The most noticeable weaknesses occurred when candidates failed to state a clear definition of an awakening or dealt with it simplistically as being only worries or social constraints, without taking into account the personality of the protagonists and their perception of events. Simplistic comparisons of *nightmare* elements within and between novels tended to list the positives and negatives without discussing their implications.

The range of stylistic techniques was inadequately discussed; terms such as *epiphanies* and *stream of consciousness* were used frequently without reference to their meaning or their significance within the text.

The two texts were usually treated very unevenly, with *Jane Eyre* often receiving very perfunctory attention; indeed, Rochester was often mentioned only in relation to Jane's choice of marrying him in preference to St John Rivers. On the other hand, there were a few excellent answers which described the process of Rochester's own *awakening*. The general impression was that students had not studied *Jane Eyre* in as much depth as the other novels, perhaps because of its length.

Similarly, the small number of candidates who discussed *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* treated it very superficially, with few *epiphanies* being analysed or recognised as stages in the characters' development.

A significant number of weak responses viewed *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* as essentially the same novel, to the detriment of both texts. The discussion of character, especially that of Rochester, was blurred and reflected the candidates' confusion regarding the nature of the *awakenings* and the techniques used by the authors to describe them. Candidates who saw Edna and Antoinette as being *liberated* by their suicides took a very narrow view of the texts and selected only those events which supported this interpretation, ignoring the wider issues presented by the novels.

On the whole, the responses were lengthy, but a lack of clarity in initially defining the concept of *awakenings* saw candidates floundering and enmeshed in describing events which were only vaguely connected to the question. Poor sentence and paragraph structure also impeded the progress of the weaker candidates.

Question 8 : Australian English

*Use the following passage (from Roger McDonald's **Shearers' Motel**) as the basis of discussion of Australian vocabulary and idiom.*

The question clearly directed candidates to two specific features of Australian English, vocabulary and idiom, and the better candidates (out of only 24 who attempted this elective) took a diachronic rather than a synchronic approach which gave them scope for longer answers.

Better responses used an analysis of the passage to support a well-structured discussion of the historical, geographical and socio-cultural factors that have influenced the development of a distinctively Australian English. The extract encouraged discussion of Australian vocabulary and idiom up to the present day. The scope of some responses was limited by the small range of secondary material they had used to prepare for this elective. In their reference to the passage, the better candidates demonstrated ability to consider the language of the narrative as well as the direct speech of the characters. Poorer responses made superficial reference only to the language of the characters.

The majority had been conscientiously prepared but found the task of coherently relating a particular piece of text to their knowledge of Australian English daunting There was a tendency to present an essay on Australian English with minimal reference to the given extract.

A small number of the candidates had not, apparently, been prepared for the elective and grasped what they apparently thought was an opportunity to do a 2 Unit Related reading task. Students should be strongly dissuaded from making such an attempt; the finished product, in such cases, tends to be a fragmented series of observations based on general knowledge rather than on the specialised reading and research expected of the 3 Unit student.

APPENDIX

MARKING SCHEME

The Marking Scheme is based on the Syllabus Objectives, as listed in the Board of Studies 3 Unit Syllabus (page 1) and a list of assessable outcomes derived from these objectives.

Syllabus Objectives and Assessable Outcomes

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Objective 1

To improve the ability to understand and appreciate spoken and written English, and to speak and write English well;

Outcomes
- a high standard of written English
- clarity and sophistication of writing style
- ability to make close reference to text and language to support argument.

Objective 2

To develop and refine an individual response to literature in English, both past and present;

Outcomes
- ability to develop a coherent and logical argument
- evidence of original and individual response to text.

Objective 3

To provide for deeper and more extensive study of particular authors and topics;

Outcomes
- high level of understanding of text
- relevance of answer to question
- detailed knowledge of content.

Assessment Hierarchy

Grade A   (25-22)
- constructs coherent and logical argument
- addresses the question
- individual interpretation and analysis
- close reference to text and/or language to support argument
- clear and/or sophisticated writing style
- detailed knowledge of text.

Grade B   (21-18)
- constructs argument
- answer is relevant to the question
- attempts an individual response
- some reference to text and/or language to support argument
- clear writing style
- good knowledge of text.

Grade C   (17-13)
- some cohesion in the argument
- answer not always relevant to question
- simplistic and/or standardised interpretation, tendency towards repetition
- reliance on quotations with limited analysis of text and/or language
- simple but basically clear writing style, some non-standard forms
- reasonable knowledge of text.

Grade D   (12-7)
- inability to form an argument
- answer not obviously relevant to question
- inadequate interpretation
- use of quotations or references to text with no analysis or explanation
- simple writing style, use of non-standard forms
- limited knowledge of text.

Grade E   (6-0)
SOMETHING HAS GONE WRONG!, e.g.
- candidate has run out of time, writes only a few words or lines
- candidate has become ill (may be indicated by Examination Supervisor)
- non-native speaker of English with extremely poor literacy skills
- stress leads to 'non-serious' answer - refer to Senior Marker or Supervisor of Marking
- no attempt to answer the question relevantly.

Not Attempted
Completely blank booklet, or words equivalent to 'Not attempted'
A entered on the mark sheet - **this is different from a mark of 0**.

QUALITY CONTROL

The maintaining of high standards of parity and consistency across questions and across all the marking teams is achieved by a number of measures agreed on and implemented by the Senior Markers and Supervisor of Marking.

These include:

- the initial joint briefings

- compiling a set of sample scripts for each marker

- pilot marking which is closely checked

- asking markers to read sample scripts at each marking session or consultation

- regular exchange of sample scripts between Corporate and Domestic Senior Markers

- comparing mark sheets from different examiners

- check-marking at least 1 paper in 5

- asking markers to re-read marked scripts

- looking at tally cards

- checking statistical information supplied by the Board

- at least one re-briefing session during the marking period

- daily consultations between Corporate and Domestic Senior Markers.

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MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION BY QUESTION

Question	Total scripts	Mean	Standard Deviation
1 (Shakespearian Comedy)	820	16.88	3.72
2 (Milton)	101	18.26	3.84
3 (Utopias/Anti-Utopias)	892	17.01	3.58
4 (Yeats)	901	17.19	3.37
5 (Poem Sequence)	181	17.04	3.58
6 (Modern Prose)	125	18.80	3.21
7 Novel of Awakening)	372	17.96	3.35
8 (Australian English)	24	15.78	3.89
TOTAL SCRIPTS	**3416** (2 scripts per candidate)		

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FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF MARKS AWARDED BY QUESTION

Question	A (22-25)	B (18-21)	C (13-17)	D (7-12)	E (0-6)	Total
1	186 (11.33%)	538 (32.79%)	737 (44.91%)	169 (10.30%)	10 (0.67%)	1640
2	47 (23.27%)	65 (32.18%)	81 (40.09%)	8 (3.96%)	1 (0.5%)	202
3	204 (11.42%)	596 (33.37%)	801 (44.85%)	181 (10.14%)	4 (0.22%)	1786
4	141 (7.88%)	736 (40.82%)	774 (42.93%)	139 (7.7%)	12 (0.67%)	1802
5	30 (8.29%)	134 (37.01%)	166 (45.86%)	25 (6.91%)	7 (1.93%)	362
6	44 (17.93%)	130 (51.79%)	67 (26.69%)	9 (3.59%)	0	250
7	111 (14.83%)	293 (38.81%)	322 (42.65%)	22 (2.92%)	6 (0.79%)	754
8	3 (6.12%)	16 (32.66%)	19 (40.81%)	10 (20.41%)	0	48

Comments

The slightly higher marks awarded in Questions 2 and 6 reflect the ability of the candidates and the high standard to which they had been prepared for these electives. The Milton Elective in particular, although undertaken by a small candidature, produced some committed and knowledgeable answers. The lower average marks awarded in Question 8 is mainly a factor of the very small candidature. On the whole, the average marks were relatively high and reflected the superior ability of the 3 Unit cohort.