



Moderators' Report

Principal Moderator Feedback

January 2023

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

In English Language (4EA1)

Paper 03: Poetry and Prose Texts and
Imaginative Writing

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Administration

This was a smaller series, with many centres choosing to enter only a small number of candidates overall or use the series for single entry candidates. This is the third series where digital submission has been employed and it was pleasing to see so many centres navigate this very smoothly, ensuring their samples were available to be viewed in a very timely way.

I would like to offer a reminder to centres to ensure that each candidate's work is uploaded as **one** pdf rather than cover sheets and the two assignments being uploaded separately. Having three separate pdfs to upload and download can be very time consuming both for the centre and the moderator. I would also advise centres in the next series to ensure candidate files are organised in a logical order with the C.A.S. followed by Assignment A and then Assignment B. Centres are reminded that even though this is a digital submission, folders do still require a cover sheet to be completed and signed by both the candidate and the teacher responsible for assessing the work. In some cases, this series, signatures were missing from work.

Assessment, annotation, and internal moderation

Most centres had completed the cover sheets usefully, allowing the moderators to see that the overall assessment in the summative comment was in line with the totals applied on the cover sheet. A number of centres had applied very careful thought and consideration to candidates' work. There was evidence of thoughtful and detailed annotation from both a first and second marker and this good practice really is the key to fair assessment for a centre's entry. Thank you to those centres who worked so hard on this. In one or two cases, however, this was not the case and centres are reminded of the need to apply the mark scheme carefully and systematically to each candidate's work. Comments and descriptors from Level 2, for example, cannot suffice if a mark from Level 4 is then awarded by the centre.

Formative annotation linked to the mark scheme descriptors is always the most effective way of arriving at a fair mark, noting skills as they are demonstrated. Some centres have adopted a formula of simply using the AOs as formative annotation – for example listing AO1 or AO2 in the margins of the response. Whilst this flags the assessment objective, it does not indicate to the moderator at which level of the mark scheme the assessor considers the candidate to be working at and whether the candidate is identifying an aspect of language or structure or commenting on its effect for example.

We do tend to see fewer annotations on writing assignments, and I would encourage centres to engage more with specific descriptors here. Whilst we tend to see leniency in the Reading assignments, we often see marginal severity in the writing assignments. Annotating where a candidate has made interesting choices of vocabulary, linguistic

features, variety of sentence structure for effect and so on can help centres to discriminate between writing assignments more effectively.

We still occasionally see centres where there is no evidence of assessment at all on a candidate's work except the numerical mark. This is disappointing when so many centres have clearly spent a great deal of time in careful marking and moderation. Centres who are unsure as to how to present coursework, centres with new colleagues or who are new to the specification may like to access this useful online training course and support materials by visiting the Pearson Edexcel webpage for iGCSE English Language A →Teaching and Learning Materials →Past Training Content →Coursework Marking Training online event.



Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Language A: Coursework
Marking Training - Online Event
| ZIP 13.2 MB | 05 June 2020

Task setting

Most centres have acted on the advice in previous reports and constructed tasks which lead candidates confidently towards the assessment objectives in the correct balance. Very few centres this time took the rather unhelpful generalised comparative approach. Occasionally, we do still find some centres setting tasks which lead candidates to focus on AO1 to the detriment of the more heavily weighted AO2. Again, the training materials referenced above are extremely helpful and supportive if you are new to the course or if this has been flagged in your individual centre feedback. Centres are reminded however, of the recommended word counts for the folders. Whilst we do not penalise candidates for exceeding the suggested word counts, it can create problems if candidates wildly exceed the suggestions. In some cases, a 'less is more' policy would benefit candidates who seem determined to write everything they know about a text without shaping their essay to answer the question. This is also the case for Section B where the opportunity to edit and redraft work is clearly beneficial. By the same token, we did see some assignments in this series which were under the suggested word count – and yet had been awarded very high marks. It is unlikely a candidate would achieve 'developed', 'sustained' and 'thorough' explorations writing under the lower reaches of the word count.

Assignment A

Many centres this time worked with two poetry texts, and it was disappointing to see rather a lack of variety in the texts chosen. So many centres used 'Disabled' and 'Out, Out' which remain from the legacy specification. Whilst these are both rich texts, it can be difficult for candidates to find ways to express fresh ideas and perspectives on these texts and we often see introductions to essays or points made in essays which are extremely similar in their phrasing. Where we have larger centres, it is always good practice to see more of a range of tasks and texts covered. However, this is not always

the case. This can then lead to some rather false commentaries – it is difficult for a candidate to explain why they have chosen particular texts if they have not actually chosen them! However, we did also see coverage of ‘Still I Rise’ and ‘The Bright Lights of Sarajevo’ this time with tasks linked to interesting themes of hope, suffering, oppression, identity and the use of light and darkness across texts. Where prose was tackled in this series, ‘The Story of an Hour’ remains a popular choice and ‘The Necklace’ made an occasional appearance.

Assignment B

Assignment B continues to be a successful vehicle for candidates to demonstrate their creative writing skills. Many candidates show both their enjoyment and their talent in this section of the coursework, and we do see some very accomplished pieces of work indeed.

There were strong narratives using the theme of war as a backdrop, interesting gothic short stories and some superb examples of descriptive writing – many of which were based on a selection of photographic images.

One thing which did seem more prevalent in this series was that some pieces of work had the feel of a first and only draft. Whilst we are all mindful of the demands of time in teaching a course, the coursework option does afford candidates the privilege and luxury of being able to rework, edit and redraft their creative pieces. It would benefit many candidates to make use of the drafting process to shape their work, avoid cliché and develop their writing over time more effectively.

It is also worth reminding centres that this assignment requires creative and imaginative writing to create parity with the examined option Paper 2. Transactional and persuasive writing such as speeches are tested on the common Paper 1 and through the Spoken Endorsement and therefore do not adhere to the requirements for coursework.

