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MANDARIN B

Overall grade boundaries

Grade:	E	D	C	B	A
Mark range:	0 - 7	8 - 15	16 - 22	23 - 28	29 - 36

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The coverage of topics was wide, ranging from cultural and social topics, language issues including character formation, lexicon evolution, language policies and language education to literary analysis. Most of them met the topic selection requirements for the extended essay for Group 2. All of the 3 categories were covered.

Candidate performance against each criterion

A: research question

Most research questions were clearly stated and well worded. There were two kinds of problematic research questions. First, some were too broad and big. A few candidates tried to cover too many areas or touch on big concepts to make the investigation meaningful or profound.

B: introduction

Introduction was a weak area. The majority of the EEs had no proper introductions.

There were basically 3 kinds of weaknesses:

- the abstract was used as an introduction or vice versa.
- the background information of the investigation was placed in the introduction.
- the essay began directly with the argument.

C: investigation

It is encouraging to see the candidates had done tremendous work on a large range of investigations on a variety of topics using a range of resources. Online sources are becoming popular.

The most problematic area is how to use sources and references and how to make proper citations. This definitely is a teachable area which needs the attention of all instructors and supervisors.

There were a couple of essays in which candidates conducted interviews or surveys. It is commendable that these candidates have used their initiative. However, this is one of the investigative methods needing more instruction. Candidates had difficulties designing a good survey or interpreting, analyzing and using the data collected appropriately.

D: knowledge and understanding of the topic studied

Most of the candidates demonstrated in depth knowledge and understanding of the academic content and context of the investigation.

E: reasoned argument

There was evidence of clear attempts to develop reasoned arguments. Some candidates performed better and some very poorly. If the candidate was clear headed with a focused research question and had identified the scope and context as well as the research methods and steps of the investigation, he/she usually developed a more reasoned argument. Often, this was an inadequate area for candidates.

F: application of analytical and evaluative skills appropriate to the subject

This area presented quite a challenge to most of the candidates. It seems very difficult for the candidates to process the information into a reasonable line of thinking.

Sometimes, candidates tended to jump from data or information to conclusive a statement without the analytical or evaluative process in between. Or they had some pre-set notions or ideas and they simply used the information to prove them right before they correctly or properly interpreted, evaluated and analyzed the evidences.

G: use of language appropriate to the subject

Most of the candidates demonstrated a high level of language proficiency. Some commanded very sophisticated target language ability. However in other cases the content was incomprehensible due to grammatical and lexical errors and some of the meanings were completely altered or even reversed.

H: conclusion

There were few good conclusions with personal reflections on the findings. Most of the candidates do not know how to write conclusion. Many included irrelevant statements in conclusion. Some ended the essay suddenly when the arguments were finished. Some introduced new arguments in the conclusion. Some rushed to a closing.

I: formal presentation

Candidates in general had done a good job with formal presentation. The major problems in format are:

- most of candidates did not know how to write abstract, introduction and conclusion so they don't format them distinctively.

- many candidates did not know how to format citation properly.

- many of the candidates did not use sub-sections or subtitles to divide the body of the text or to organize the arguments.

J: abstract

Most of the candidates do not know how to write an abstract. Many confused abstract with introduction.

K: holistic judgment

The candidates in general conducted a serious investigation. It is evident that most of them put in tremendous effort to explore the topic and research interest with personal enthusiasm. It must have been a challenging experience for each individual. Each demonstrated some unique strength and potentials. Each left room for improvement.

Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

Supervisors should ensure that they train students in the use of references.

The supervisor should go through the check list of all marking areas with the candidate during the writing of the essay.

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