

MANDARIN B

Overall grade boundaries

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

General comments

All three categories (Language, Culture and Society, and Literature) were covered in the topic selection. The topics chosen were appropriate, and many were interesting and innovative. As has been the case in previous sessions, Culture and Society was a popular area when choosing extended essay topics.

While comments from the supervisors are welcome, excessive comments on the quality of the essays can be rather distracting for the examiners. Comments are helpful where they concentrate on each candidate's performance during the essay writing process.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Most of the candidates did a very good job in their extended essay research and writing. With only a few exceptions, most candidates checked their work carefully before submitting their final product.

Criterion A: research question

Most of the candidates had a clear idea about what a research question was. They stated the research question explicitly in the abstract and concentrated their discussion around the research question throughout the essay.

Criterion B: introduction

Most candidates introduced the background of their topics and related this to the research question very well. Only a few of them did not put the research question into the context in the introduction. Some had an introduction which was too simple and short.

Criterion C: investigation

All of the candidates did a great deal of research for their topics by reading printed materials or searching on the internet. For those who chose topics related to Language, or Culture and Society, a number of candidates actually ventured to gather first-hand data by doing surveys or interviews and analyzed the data. These candidates showed excellent skills in critical thinking.

Criterion D: knowledge and understanding of the topic studied

All of the candidates had a fairly good knowledge about their topics. Almost all of them got this from references on the internet or resources in print. However, the degree of understanding of the topics varied as it was clear that some essays were just summaries or repetition of the materials collected.

Criterion E: reasoned argument

Most of the candidates could develop reasoned arguments in relation to the research question. They could organize their ideas in a logical and coherent manner by using subtitles to divide their EE into different sections. Some, however, were rather weak in this aspect.

Criterion F: application of analytical and evaluative skills

Some candidates were capable of thinking independently and providing some insightful viewpoints. Others, however, lacked this kind of ability and simply repeated what they found from the resources.

Criterion G: use of language

The language level of almost all of the candidates was fairly high. They used very fluent and idiomatic language in their writing. Only two or three of them were a little weak in this aspect.

Criterion H: conclusion

Many candidates were good at summarizing their previously mentioned points, but were a little weak in offering an insightful personal view.

Criterion I: formal presentation

Most of the candidates met the format requirements for the EE very well. However, some of them seemed to be weak in providing references, especially in the form of footnotes or numbered notes in the middle of the essays.

Criterion J: abstract

Most of the candidates did well in this area by stating their research question clearly in this section.

Criterion K: holistic judgment

Quite a few of the candidates were rewarded a full or nearly full mark for their creativity, intellectual initiative, deep understanding and insightfulness, especially those who conducted a survey or interview and did in-depth analyses of the results.

Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

Those candidates who gathered data through surveys and interviews were often concentrated in a few schools, which meant that teachers had taught candidates how to demonstrate their independent thinking through meaningful investigation. This approach is recommended.