

# Marking notes

**November 2017**

**Literature and performance**

**Standard level**

**Paper 2**

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### Assessment criteria

These notes to examiners are intended only as guidelines to assist marking and as a supplement to the published external assessment criteria for written paper 2. They are not offered as an exhaustive and fixed set of responses or approaches to which all answers must rigidly adhere. Good ideas or angles not offered here should be acknowledged and rewarded as appropriate. Similarly, answers which do not include all the ideas or approaches suggested here should not be so heavily penalized as to distort appreciation of individuality.

With reference to criterion C, the better answers will contain examples that show an adequate sense of stylistic features with some awareness of their effects, using critical analysis and pertinent detail.

The best answers will show a strong sense of the stylistic and comparable features of the works, as well as the effects of these features.

**Of course, some of the points listed below will appear in weaker papers, but are unlikely to be developed.**

**These apply to all answers below.**

A maximum of **[5 marks]** may be awarded for each of the five criteria.

#### Criteria A and B

The danger of rewarding or penalizing the use of illustration/references/quotations twice in both these categories should be avoided.

#### Criterion B

“Personal response” and “independence of thought” appear as the levels of the descriptors increase. What is sought is an engaged and individual treatment of the chosen topic. Engaged and individual essays will usually make themselves clear by showing insight into the implications of the question and the quality and interest of the details cited in support.

The first person singular does not automatically constitute a personal response and conversely an impersonal academic style does not necessarily indicate a lack of personal response.

#### Criterion C

It is expected that every question set will provide candidates with ample opportunities to demonstrate their awareness of the demands of this criterion. However, where a question does not explicitly offer such opportunities, examiners should interpret criterion C broadly, to ensure that candidates are not unfairly disadvantaged. In such cases it would be sufficient for candidates to show, as appropriate to the question, an awareness of how elements such as plot, character, setting, structure, voice, *etc* are used by writers to meet their purposes. No matter how the question is phrased, candidates must also address related matters of style and technique.

“Awareness” and “appreciation” of literary features are the key elements under this criterion. The mere labelling, without appreciation, of literary features will not score the highest marks. On the other hand, the candidate who is attentive to literary features and deals with them in a meaningful way, but who does not consistently use the vocabulary of literary criticism, can still be awarded the higher achievement levels.

**Reminder:** the term “literary features” is broad and includes elements as basic as plot, character *etc*, attention to which is valid and must be rewarded as appropriate.

### **Criterion D**

Any form of structuring to the essay will be rewarded if it is effective and appropriate. Different conventions are in operation and therefore all approaches are acceptable and will be judged on the basis of their effectiveness. Examiners should remember that structure does not exist by itself, but any structure must be measured by appropriate reference to the terms of the question and by its capacity to integrate these towards the development of an organized and coherent essay.

**Reminder:** in this criterion, supporting examples must be evaluated in terms of how fluently they are incorporated/integrated to shape/advance the argument, **not** in terms of their appropriateness or accuracy.

### **Criterion E**

If you have reservations about awarding a four, you should ensure that these are well founded before awarding a three. The broadness of achievement in level three sometimes makes examiners reluctant to award four.

Judgment needs to be used when dealing with lapses in grammar, spelling and punctuation; therefore do not unduly penalize.

Mechanical accuracy is only part of this criterion. Ensure that all the other elements are considered.

Examiners should be careful to avoid being prejudiced in their application of this criterion by achievement levels in other criteria. It is possible to score highly on this criterion even if candidates have scored in the lower levels on other criteria, and vice versa.

1. An adequate to good answer will need to select both, from the question and the poem, some specific focuses: “present”, “future”, “quiet”, “intensify”, and select appropriate examples. There may be a range of interpretation about all of these terms, but an adequate answer will be built around a clear position on particular elements and pursue a discussion of both, the content and the tone, of at least two poems. Since the question asks “in what ways”, the candidate will also need to include some address of stylistic choice, whatever is appropriate to the poems selected.

A very good to excellent answer may also be able to make a more judicious and pointed selection among the terms of the question, offering a more confident definition of the terms. The selection of details from the poems may be more ample and looked at with greater consistency from the angles of both content and form. Further, such answers may provide a more ample account of the context out of which the angle of vision in the poem has developed.

2. A candidate should surely, in an adequate to good answer, be able to describe the structuring of at least two poems by different poets. Connecting meaning and effect to choices about structure (introductions and conclusions, lines which recur, stanzas, run-on lines, visual arrangement on the page and the like) should characterize the discussion, with at least some consideration about how structure has shaped or affected meaning in the poems.

A very good to excellent answer may well be more precise about details of the poems’ structures, identifying particular effects in a more aesthetically informed way. There may also be some comparison of different structures within one poet’s work, or some comparison about how different choices produce different effects on the meaning and the audience.

3. Adequate to good answers will very likely choose poems in which there is some clear rhetorical intention (political, social, emotional) and describe what intent is at work to persuade an audience of a view or at least an understanding of a situation or response the poet has made to some experience. The “ways of persuasion” should constitute part of the answer as the candidate explores the stylistic choices that support the intent to persuade.

A very good to excellent answer may likely consider how valid it is for poetry to engage in an act of persuasion and consider that what appears to be an intent to persuade may have complicated underpinnings or subtexts. Another path such an answer might follow is to consider what factors work to convince an audience or, on the other hand, fall short in persuasiveness.

4. A good to adequate response will have identified the center of the question as about the use of comparison by poets to express a vision of the world. Such an answer may take many approaches to how particular poets see the world, but essentially the candidate must focus on the way two poets have used comparison as one of their stylistic techniques and, also, make some estimate of the effects of these comparisons.

A very good to excellent answer may also integrate comparison as a technique more fully into the whole response of the poets to the world. Such an answer may also investigate the prompt about imagination in relation to the desire to explore the world in terms of similarities. A possible further avenue for such responses would be the comparison of the way different poets employ comparison.

5. Good to adequate answers will have ample scope here to investigate the mysterious and invisible, even the ghostly, or fragments of memory. It will be important that candidates use terminology in a judicious way, connecting the material of the poems to some aspects permitted or suggested by the question. Some assessment of how these matters engage the interest of the audience will appear in the better answers in this category.

A very good to excellent answer may ground the terminology suggested by the question into very firm definitions and examples and be able to see more astutely how such materials are well crafted by the poet to encourage both credibility and appreciation. There is much scope in this question, and successful answers in this category will likely choose successful ways of shaping an essay in response.

6. An adequate to good answer will either choose the suggested domestic topics or select others that have equal validity as long as they are rationalized. The candidate will need to show how these matters have been shaped into poetry. Both portrayal and reflection are likely ways the poets have used these materials and the candidates may take a variety of approaches, but they must certainly move beyond report or description into an analysis of the stylistic choices in the poems.

A very good to excellent answer will fulfill the demands of the adequate to good answer, but may go beyond those to provide close and perspicacious analysis of the appeal to poets of such domestic matters. A consciousness of tone might be important to answers in this category along with a greater degree of close stylistic analysis.

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