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Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In English Language (4EA1) Paper 03

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This was a very small series with most centres submitting very few candidates and only a handful of full centre submissions.

Administration

Every centre submitted work promptly and this helped the process to run smoothly and on time. The vast majority of centres submitted folders with the correct cover sheets and information in place and with folders neatly secured and treasury tagged.

Cover sheets were, in the main, appropriately completed. We do ask that the subtotals for the Reading work (essay + commentary) and Writing work (AO4 + AO5) are recorded clearly and separately before providing an overall total. Supporting comments for those marks should be completed, again so that the moderator can see at a glance the centre's final decision making, rather than putting 'see inside' on the cover sheet. Thank you to those centres who secured their folders with treasury tags, making them safe and easy to handle for the team. Loose sheets however, are insecure and unhelpful.

Task Setting

Assignment A:

In the main, task setting was varied and appropriate, but I would like to reiterate the advice given after the summer series with regard to 'comparison'. Whilst the specification invites responses to any two texts from the anthology, the work on these two texts should be addressing the following assessment objectives:

AO1: read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives

and AO2: understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects.

Essentially here, AO1 is looking for a demonstration of the 'what' – the comprehension skill demonstrated by the candidate and AO2 is looking for a demonstration of the 'how' – the analytical skill of the candidate and their ability to comment on the effect of writers' choices. Though assignments are marked holistically, centres should note the weighting of those marks in the essay as 6 and 18 respectively.

There are no marks for comparison in this assignment. As in the summer, I discovered weaker candidates submitting the title 'Poetry Comparison' or similar and then making little more than simple links between the texts in terms of content and theme. This precluded them from achieving marks for AO2 in anything but the simplest form, whereas writing about the texts concurrently and in more detail would have been more enabling. Occasionally, very able candidates had been set a comparison task, the response to which, despite being well expressed and interesting in terms of its interpretations, marginalised or even completely ignored AO2. These responses were often given very high marks initially by the centre, but were clearly not meeting the requirements of the specification.

Commentaries:

In this series, commentaries were much more securely handled. Those centres who submitted pieces of approximately 300 words, clearly and separately labelled away from the main essay, with interesting explanations of the choice of

text against the backdrop of the rest of the texts in the anthology were the most successful. Again, it must be remembered that commentaries are marked only for AO1 and so extended references to language and structure are not creditworthy in this part of the coursework.

Assignment B: was once again tackled really well by the majority of candidates. Most candidates had chosen to write narratives and many of these were successful, engaging and entertaining. Vocabulary was a strength for many candidates and there was some effective use of description and imagery for effect. Many candidates took highly dramatic events or disasters as their scenario but the better responses took a more subtle approach and were thereby more convincing overall.

The vast majority of candidates in this series wrote in clearly defined paragraphs following a narrative structure where appropriate. There was some very good spelling in evidence across the board. Technical inaccuracies tended to be within syntax and agreement. Use of punctuation was generally good with most candidates displaying a better than working knowledge of a range. However, comma splicing was still an issue for some candidates.

Assessment, annotation and internal moderation:

As this was a small series, where many centres had single or small submissions, there was clear evidence that most centres had applied the mark scheme fairly and annotated their work appropriately. In the vast majority of cases there was also evidence of a second marker. Thank you to those centres who completed this process so diligently.

Occasionally, some leniency was observed where centres had applied very high marks to folders with no real justification. To award marks at the top of a level there should be clear evidence of all five skills in the level and these should be clearly noted in the formative annotation. Where this happens it is often the case that an intelligent response has been awarded high marks but has not addressed AO2 appropriately. This is often due to task setting which has not allowed the candidate to demonstrate this objective.

One last reminder from the summer is that annotations and comments to the candidate are redundant – the piece of work submitted to the moderator is no longer a draft and all annotation should be there to provide evidence for the moderator.

Overall, the vast majority of submissions showed hard work from both candidates and centres and were, on the whole, an absolute pleasure to read and moderate.