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Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

November 2021

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In English Language (4EA1)
Paper 03: Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative
Writing (NEA)

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4EA1_03 Principal Moderator's Report November 2021

This was an extremely small series with the majority of centres submitting resit entries comprising of only one or two candidates. Most entries received this time were from home rather than overseas candidates.

Administration

There were some difficulties experienced by some centres this time in terms of administration. By the date we were due to standardise the series, very few folders had been submitted for moderation. Centres are reminded that even when there is just one or two candidates, folders need to be submitted to the moderator by the required date and should always have the required cover sheet and EDI printout accompanying the work. Folders should be securely fastened with treasury tags or a staple for security and not submitted as loose sheets please.

Assessment, annotation, and internal moderation

It is always helpful for the moderator to see summative comments transposed to the cover sheet rather than a request to see the comments on the pieces themselves. In this way, the moderator can see that the language and descriptors used on the summative comment match with the totals applied on the cover sheet. This can then be evaluated against the formative annotation and comments within.

A number of centres had applied very careful thoughts 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.

Where formative annotation linked to mark scheme descriptors is not used, or overuse of ticking, this is often where a lack of precision occurs. It often seems to be the case that leniency occurs in the reading section of the folder and severity in the writing. The leniency can often occur when centres have not considered the weightings for AO1 and AO2 and the emphasis placed on AO2 skills in the mark scheme grids – particularly in terms of the explanation or exploration of the effects of writer's choices. Severity can occur when centres have circled and corrected technical errors in spelling and punctuation, perhaps leading to a more negative impression – the focus then being on what the candidate can't do, rather than what they can.

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 this [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

However, it must be said that assessment in this series was, overall, carried out extremely successfully and fairly and I would like to thank centres for their careful work on this in what has again been an extremely unusual and challenging term.

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. However, there are still some centres setting tasks which take a generalised 'comparative' approach, suggesting they have not updated their task setting in line with this new specification which has now been operable since June 2018. This does not benefit candidates. Additionally, 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 reference above are extremely helpful and supportive if you are new to the course or if this has been flagged in your individual centre feedback.

Assignment A

Many candidates this time were perhaps resitting this component and it was noted that many folders contained reading tasks based on poetry texts. 'Disabled' and 'Out, Out-' regained their popularity, though 'Still I Rise' and 'The Bright Lights of Sarajevo' were also popular choices. Very few candidates this time tackled the prose texts.

As a result of the improved task setting mentioned above, we also saw more focused responses, though at times references to language and structure can be rather generic and reliant on one or two mentions of imagery or structure. Whilst feature spotting is not to be encouraged, secure identification of precise choices and aspects of language and structure with clear exemplification can encourage candidates to write in more depth about their effects and what we might imagine, feel, or be led to think of through those choices. In turn this can lead candidates more securely into the higher reaches of the mark scheme if we note that some of the key words for Level 4 are 'thorough', 'detailed' and 'sustained'.

Assignment B

Assignment B was a real pleasure to moderate this series. It was noticeable that many candidates seem to have self-selected their task, rather than having a task set for them. Perhaps this was due to the nature of the cohort, but it is something really to be encouraged within centres. Candidates who had made a free choice in their writing provided a rich variety of narrative styles: tense mysteries, dystopian stories, science fiction as well as a number of highly descriptive pieces of travel writing and evocations of place. There was real enjoyment in so many of the pieces, distinctive stylistic choices, well-handled dialogue, and creation of character as well as several interesting structural choices and plot twists.

Encouragement of a wide range of vocabulary choices can benefit candidates as it also creates the opportunity to demonstrate spelling skills. Specific teaching of different sentence types and how they may be punctuated for effect can also be beneficial for AO5. Many of the highest achieving candidates use the control and selection of varied sentences to extremely good effect and this can have real impact on the writing as a whole.

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