

English General Senior Syllabus 2019 v1.5

Subject report 2020

February 2021

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Introduction

The first summative year for the new Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) system was unexpectedly challenging. The demands of delivering new assessment requirements and processes were amplified by disruptions to senior schooling arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant the new system was forced to adapt before it had been introduced — the number of summative internal assessments was reduced from three to two in all General subjects. Schools and the QCAA worked together to implement the new assessment processes and the 2020 Year 12 cohort received accurate and reliable subject results.

Queensland's innovative new senior assessment system combines the flexibility and authenticity of school-based assessment, developed and marked by classroom teachers, with the rigour and consistency of external assessment set and marked by QCAA-trained assessment writers and markers. The system does not privilege one form of assessment over another, and both teachers and QCAA assessors share the role of making high-stakes judgments about the achievement of students. Our commitment to rigorous external quality assurance guarantees the reliability of both internal and external assessment outcomes.

Using evidence of student learning to make judgments on student achievement is just one purpose of assessment. In a sophisticated assessment system, it is also used by teachers to inform pedagogy and by students to monitor and reflect on their progress.

This post-cycle report on the summative assessment program is not simply being produced as a matter of record. It is intended that it will play an active role in future assessment cycles by providing observations and findings in a way that is meaningful and helpful to support the teaching and learning process, provide future students with guidance to support their preparations for summative assessment, and promote transparency and accountability in the broader education community. Reflection and research are necessary for the new system to achieve stability and to continue to evolve. The annual subject report is a key medium for making it accessible to schools and others.

Background

Purpose

The annual subject report is an analysis of the previous year's full summative assessment cycle. This includes endorsement of summative internal assessment instruments, confirmation of internal assessment marks and external assessment.

The report provides an overview of the key outcomes of one full teaching, learning and assessment cycle for each subject, including:

- information about the application of the syllabus objectives through the design and marking of internal and external assessments
- information about the patterns of student achievement in each subject for the assessment cycle.

It also provides advice to schools to promote continuous improvement, including:

- identification of effective practices in the design and marking of valid, accessible and reliable assessments
- identification of areas for improvement and recommendations to enhance the design and marking of valid, accessible and reliable assessment instruments
- provision of tangible examples of best practice where relevant, possible and appropriate.

Audience and use

This report should be read by school leaders, subject leaders and teachers to inform teaching and learning and assessment preparation. The report is to be used by schools and teachers to assist in assessment design practice, in making assessment decisions and in preparing students for external assessment.

The report is publicly available to promote transparency and accountability. Students, parents, community members and other education stakeholders can learn about the assessment practices and outcomes for General subjects (including alternative sequences and Senior External Examination subjects, where relevant) and General (Extension) subjects.

Report preparation

The report includes analyses of data and other information from the processes of endorsement, confirmation and external assessment, and advice from the chief confirmer, chief endorser and chief marker, developed in consultation with and support from QCAA subject matter experts.

Subject data summary

Subject enrolments

- Number of schools offering the subject: 441.

Completion of units	Unit 1	Unit 2	Units 3 and 4*
Number of students completed	26 522	26 837	26 809

*Units 3 and 4 figure includes students who were not rated.

Units 1 and 2 results

Number of students	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Not rated
Unit 1	25 615	881	26
Unit 2	25 558	1233	46

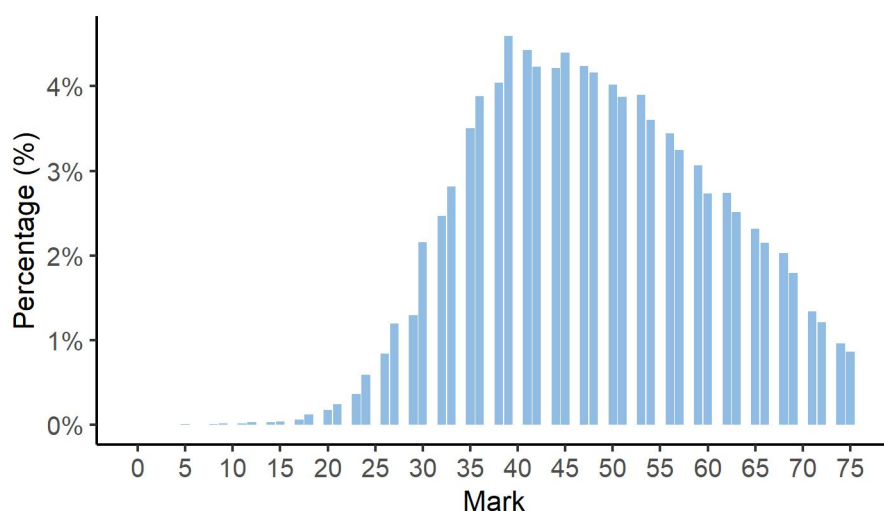
Units 3 and 4 internal assessment results

2020 COVID-19 adjustments

To support Queensland schools, teachers and students to manage learning and assessment during the evolving COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the QCAA Board approved the removal of one internal assessment for students completing Units 3 and 4 in General and Applied subjects.

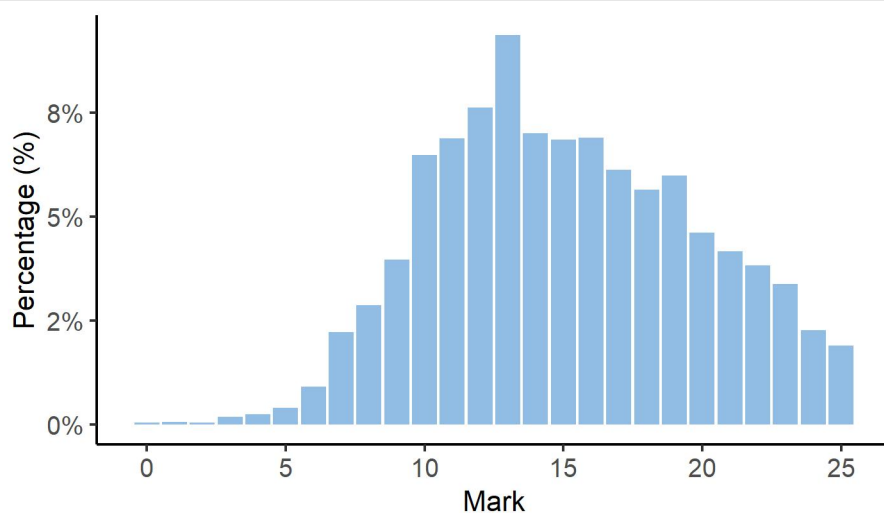
In General subjects, students completed two internal assessments and an external assessment. Schools made decisions based on QCAA advice and their school context. Therefore, across the state some instruments were completed by most schools, some completed by fewer schools and others completed by few or no schools. In the case of the latter, the data and information for these instruments has not been included.

Total results for internal assessment

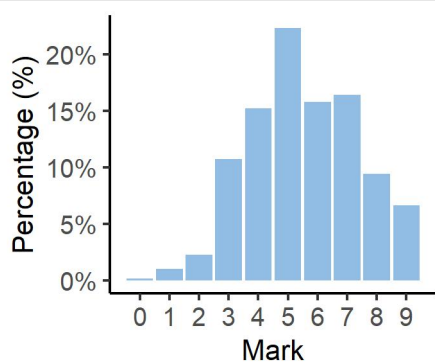


IA1 results

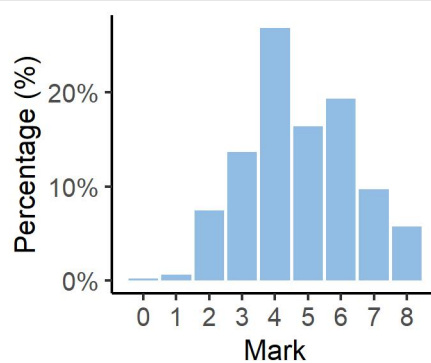
IA1 total



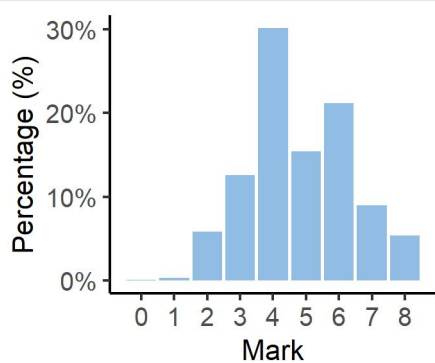
IA1 Criterion 1



IA1 Criterion 2

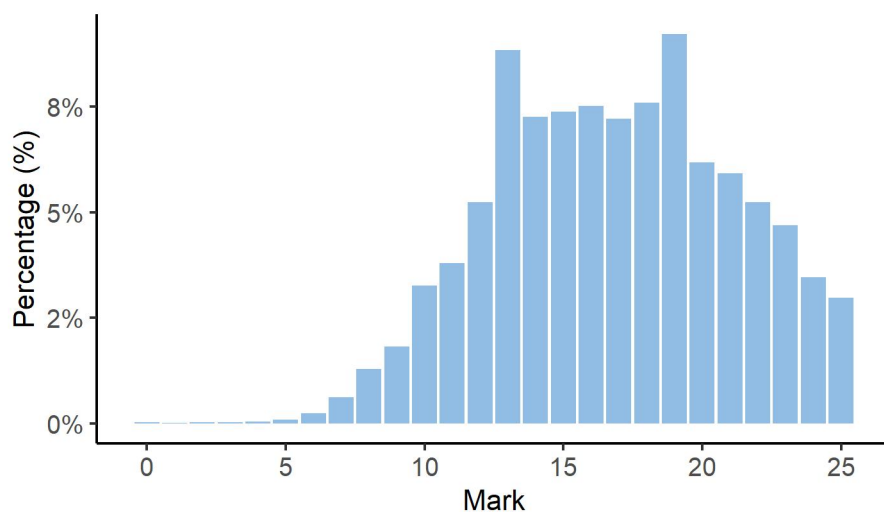


IA1 Criterion 3

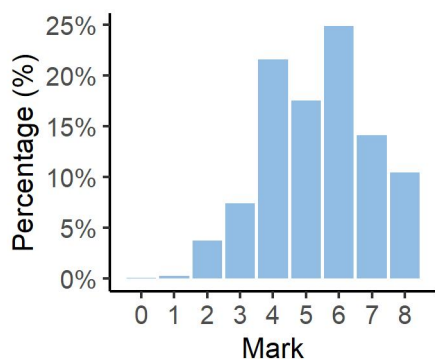


IA2 results

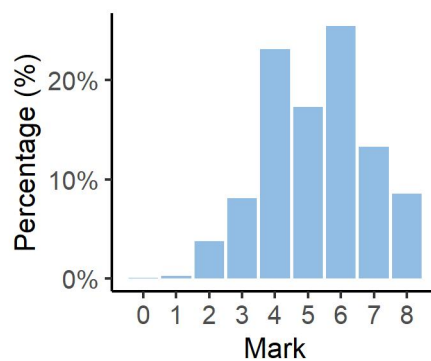
IA2 total



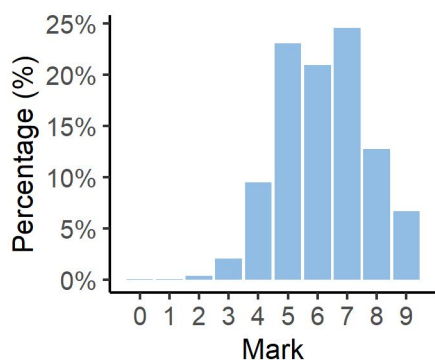
IA2 Criterion 1



IA2 Criterion 2



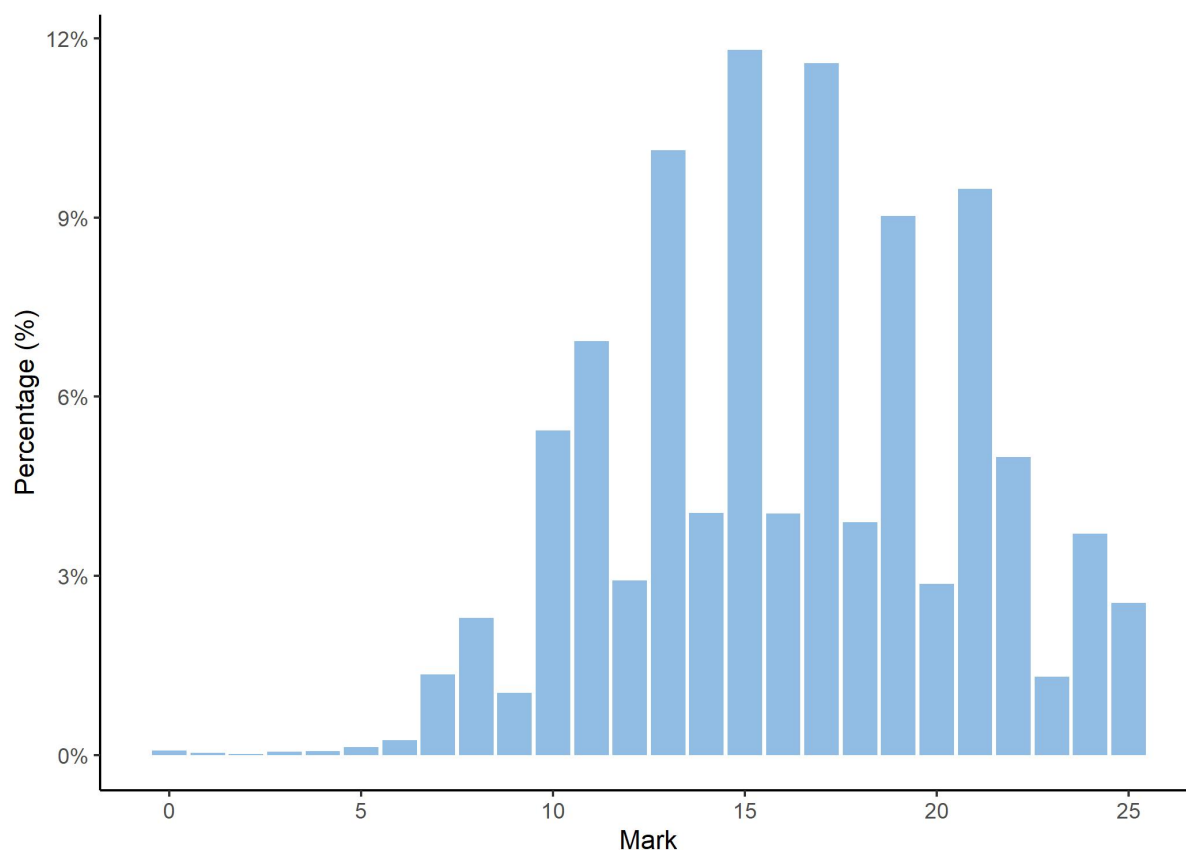
IA2 Criterion 3



IA3 results

Due to COVID-19 pandemic adjustments, there were insufficient student responses to this instrument to provide useful analytics.

External assessment results



Final standards allocation

The number of students awarded each standard across the state are as follows.

Standard	A	B	C	D	E
Number of students	5099	10 757	9356	1391	5

Grade boundaries

The grade boundaries are determined using a process to compare results on a numeric scale to the reporting standards.

Standard	A	B	C	D	E
Marks achieved	100–80	79–60	59–42	41–14	13–0

Internal assessment

The following information and advice pertain to the assessment design and assessment decisions for each IA in Units 3 and 4. These instruments have undergone quality assurance processes informed by the attributes of quality assessment (validity, accessibility and reliability).

Endorsement

Endorsement is the quality assurance process based on the attributes of validity and accessibility. These attributes are categorised further as priorities for assessment and each priority can be further broken down into assessment practices. Data presented in the assessment design sections identifies the reasons why IA instruments were not endorsed at Application 1, by the priority for assessments. An IA may have been identified more than once for a priority for assessment, e.g. it may have demonstrated a misalignment to both subject matter and to the assessment objective. Refer to the quality assurance tools for detailed information about the assessment practices for each assessment instrument.

Total number of items endorsed in Application 1

Number of items submitted each event	IA1	IA2	IA3
Total number of instruments	442	442	442
Percentage endorsed in Application 1	67	65	54

Confirmation

Confirmation is the quality assurance process based on the attribute of reliability. Teachers make judgments about the evidence in students' responses using the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG) to indicate the alignment of students' work with performance-level descriptors and determine a mark for each criterion. These are provisional criterion marks. The QCAA makes the final decision about student results through the confirmation processes. Data presented in the assessment decisions section identifies the level of agreement between provisional and final results.

Number of samples reviewed at initial, supplementary and extraordinary review

IA	Number of schools	Number of samples requested	Supplementary samples requested	Extraordinary review	School review	Percentage agreement with provisional
1	441	3364	707	334	9	98.98
2	438	3545	609	56	11	99.18

Internal assessment 1 (IA1)

Extended response — written response for a public audience (25%)

An open-ended task, this assessment requires students to analyse representations of concepts, identities, times or places across two different types of texts and is written for an interested public audience. Students offer a considered perspective, positioning the reader to think about the texts in particular ways and in relation to one another. One of the texts must be from the prescribed text list (Syllabus section 4.5.1).

Assessment design

Validity

Validity in assessment design considers the extent to which an assessment item accurately measures what it is intended to measure and that the evidence of student learning collected from an assessment can be legitimately used for the purpose specified in the syllabus.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment — validity practices

Validity priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Alignment	78
Authentication	14
Authenticity	27
Item construction	42
Scope and scale	40

*Total number of submissions: 442. Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that featured:

- clear alignment with the assessment specifications, which required students to analyse a representation of a concept, identity, time or place in two different types of texts, e.g. a novel and a film
- an open-ended question/task or a range of topic options to encourage students to provide their own unique response
- clear indication of publication and audience that is suitable for purpose and content.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- clearly prompt students to analyse a representation of a concept, identity, time or place across the two texts
- provide clear guidance, based on the scaffolding in the syllabus specifications, that directs students to formulate a thesis or perspective on the representations in the texts, and their connections to one another. This overall perspective should be focused and manageable in its development within the given conditions, e.g. requiring students to examine how 'the concept of human life' is represented across the two texts might be too broad. Guide students to

choose a focus for their response that allows them to be discerning, e.g. by developing a perspective on the representation of a relevant aspect of human life across the two texts

- align with syllabus specifications in the number, type and choice of texts. Ensure the choice of texts is manageable for the student's response, e.g. if the focus of analysis includes a television series, students may choose to focus on a particular, relevant episode as one of the two texts to be analysed, allowing opportunities for discernment
- indicate the adopted strategy for authentication
- provide students with a clear role, purpose and audience for the assessment. The audience for the assessment must be one that allows the students to demonstrate Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5 in relation to analysis of the representations in the two texts, such as a literary online or print publication (Syllabus section 4.5.1)
- are not a direct or partial copy of the QCAA samples.

Accessibility

Accessibility in assessment design ensures that no student or group of students is disadvantaged in their capacity to access an assessment.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment — accessibility practices

Accessibility priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Transparency	36
Language	47
Layout	13
Bias avoidance	2

*Total number of submissions: 442. Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that featured:

- clear task expectations, including texts to be used, context, genre, purpose and audience
- consistent formatting.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- be framed using clear, concise instructions
- model accurate textual features
- clearly state the school-selected genre or text type in the assessment instrument, and refer to it consistently across the assessment instrument, e.g. if students are expected to produce a 'literary article', this should be consistently referred to throughout the instrument, rather than using terms such as 'media text' and 'magazine article' interchangeably.

Additional advice

- When the audience and purpose stipulated in the task is too general, students can produce responses that, while matching the patterns and conventions of a particular written response for a public audience, are more focused on persuasion or reflection than analysis.

- Clearly define the context for the response to explicitly cue students to its primary purpose. The response needs to offer the public audience an informed perspective about a particular representation common to the two texts, and the connections between them. While writing for public audiences may involve creative, reflective and persuasive elements, the primary purpose of this response is to analyse.
- Guide students to select concepts, or aspects of concepts, which allow for a discerning, perceptive and focused analysis of representations in texts.
- Construct task statements that draw directly from the task specifications of IA1 and express expectations using the cognitive verbs referenced in the syllabus.
- Use scaffolding to identify and explain task specifications to students according to the specifications in the syllabus, and direct them to the specific skills and cognitions referenced in the ISMG.
- Provide instructions in the task specifications to facilitate the development of student perspectives on texts that go beyond obvious and superficial statements and demonstrate the informed and insightful analysis of texts necessary to demonstrate characteristics associated with higher performance levels on the ISMG.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

Reliability is a judgment about the measurements of assessment. It refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error.

Agreement trends between provisional and final results

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional
1	Knowledge application	98.86	1.11	0.03
2	Organisation and development	98.92	1.08	0
3	Textual features	99.15	0.77	0.08

Effective practices

Accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA was most effective when:

- for the Knowledge application criterion, judgments that the analysis of the representations of concepts in texts was *discerning* were matched to the following characteristics in sample student responses
 - depth of analysis of the concept as represented in each text
 - perceptive analysis of the connections between the two texts in their representations of the concept
 - interpretations that showed a depth of knowledge of each text and its subtleties and complexities
 - well-considered and informed perspectives on the ways each text is underpinned by cultural assumptions, attitudes and beliefs, and how these position the audience in relation to the concept

- purposeful and insightful explanations of the ways specific, relevant aspects of texts — aesthetic features and stylistic devices — prompt particular emotional and critical reactions that shape meaning
- for the Organisation and development criterion, judgments that the organisation and development of the analysis was *discerning* were matched to the following characteristics in sample student responses
 - integrated analysis of both texts
 - skilful deployment of patterns and conventions of the school-chosen genre to offer a public audience an informed analysis of the representation of a specific concept in and across both texts
 - selection of specific textual details that allowed for an intellectually perceptive analysis in support of the writer’s perspective on the representation of the selected concept
 - substantive textual evidence seamlessly integrated into the discussion and tightly linked to propositions and observations to develop the analysis and support the writer’s perspective on the representation of the concept
 - organisation of subject matter that facilitated the development of the analysis and the perspective offered
 - synthesis of subject matter that demonstrated a high level of design in controlling the flow of ideas and information throughout the response while remaining concise and coherent
 - skilful use of a range of cohesive devices that served both analytical purposes and reflected the contextual aspects of the task, such as place of publication and the audience
- for the Textual features criterion, judgments that the use of textual features was *discerning* were matched to the following characteristics in sample student responses
 - judicious language choices that added conceptual depth to the analysis and reflected the contextual aspects of the task such as place of publication and the audience
 - subtle and accurate use of vocabulary, including terminology, clearly selected for purpose and to engage the implied reader of the school-chosen genre
 - combinations of sentence and clause types that demonstrated a very high level of control and a perceptive awareness of the impact of grammatical choices on the reader
 - precision in the spelling of apt vocabulary
 - precision in the use of a range of punctuation marks
 - strategic use of complementary features matched to the context of the school-chosen genre and used to be impactful.

Samples of effective practices

The following are excerpts from responses that illustrate the characteristics for the criteria at the performance levels indicated. The samples may provide evidence of more than one criterion. The characteristics highlighted may not be the only time the characteristics have occurred throughout the responses.

Knowledge application (8–9 marks)

This response demonstrates:

- discerning analysis of perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places in the two selected texts: the film, *Hidden Figures*, and the poem 'Naked Girl and Mirror' by Judith Wright. The opening paragraph establishes the parameters for an insightful and focused analysis to follow
- discerning analysis of the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs regarding women in the context of the 1960s underpin the texts and invite audiences to take up positions, e.g. the discussion of Wright's poem indicates a purposeful explanation of the ways specific aesthetic and stylistic aspects of the text prompt a critical reaction in readers in relation to the 'silenced voice of women in the 1960s'.

Excerpt 1



Figure 1: NASA mathematician Katherine Goble Johnson at her desk at the Langley Research Centre. Source: NASA (1966).

EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALITY

The trailblazing women who forged a sky with no limits.

By [redacted]

In all of human history, our rights and liberties have never been more recognised, exercised, and celebrated. The late 20th century was a significant period for the progression of women's rights, especially for women of colour. Prior, the woman's role was assigned in the home, and it was the norm to follow beauty ideals established by society. Women's collective experiences of prejudice and justice throughout 1960s were perfectly captured by Margot Lee Shetterly's *Hidden Figures*; the film adaptation of the same name directed by Theodore Melfi narrated the experiences of trailblazing NASA mathematicians Katherine Goble Johnson, Mary Jackson, and Dorothy Vaughan. At the same time as these women shattered the glass ceiling from Virginia, United States, Australian poet Judith Wright was also ahead her time when she wrote *Naked Girl and Mirror*. *Hidden Figures* and *Naked Girl and Mirror* celebrate female experience and progression. Similarly, both texts convey the power of individuality without conforming to traditional female roles and expectations.

In the 1960s, when *Hidden Figures* was set and Judith Wright penned her poetry, society was patriarchal. In the 1930s and early 1940s, as men were drafted to war, a gap in the workforce provided women job opportunities traditionally exclusive to men; in defence plants, civil service, academia and research, and factories.

Excerpt 2

Judith Wright's *Naked Girl and Mirror* is narrated in the eyes of an adolescent girl as she addresses her physical body; the person in the mirror. Young women are represented as self-conscious and lost as the speaker fights to find her self-identity in her journey to adulthood. However, the poem's message challenges the acceptance to social standards and amplifies the silenced voices of women in the 1960s.

'This is not I. I had no body once-, only what served my need to laugh and run and stare at stars and tentatively dance.' (Wright, 1966).

Here, the narrator denies the changes she acquires in her path to womanhood and objects her forced transition out of a carefree childhood.

'I stare at you in fear, dark brimming eyes...No I have been betrayed...from eyes I will not answer; shut out here, from my own self, by its new body's grace- for I am betrayed by someone lovely.' (Wright, 1966). Repetition of the word 'betrayed' emphasises the girl's feelings of isolation from an uncontrollable reality, her fear of adolescence – physically, mentally, and emotionally maturing, and future unreadiness.

The narrator continues to reject her adolescence as being the root of her insecurities: 'Your lips in the mirror tremble as I refuse to know or claim you. Let me go – let me be gone...Why should I tend you?' (Wright, 1966). Wright portrays reason for the narrator's self-loathing

words: 'You are half of some other who may never come. You are not my own: you seek that other – he will be your home.' (Wright, 1966). This line indicates her fear of becoming someone who will only mature and conform to the role she is given – to become a dutiful wife and homemaker; and makes it clear that this is not who she wants to become.

'Yet I pity your eyes in the mirror, misted with tears...I must serve you; I will obey. Some day we may love...though I shall always resent your dumb and fruitful years. Your lovers shall learn better, and bitterly too, if their arrogance dares to think I am a part of you.' (Wright, 1966).

Wright's use of 'must', 'will', 'always', 'shall', and 'dares' indicates the narrator begrudgingly accepts her body's transition, an inevitable part of her. Through self-acceptance, utilisation of strengths, and combining her feelings of love and hate, the narrator recreates a harmony between her body and her mind that she once had as a child. Throughout the poem, Wright

represents the mirror as an important symbolism, both as an object that can distort self-perspective and prompt a search for the true self (Messing, 2013). Despite a melancholy surface, further deconstruction of the poem reveals a hopeful encouragement towards staying true to oneself, a balance that can only be reached by not letting social pressures influence the fragile mind.

which line?

Hidden Figures and Naked Girl and Mirror



A young woman faces her mirror. Source: Anscombe, 2018.

challenge traditional ideology and celebrate individuality, which continue to impact modern-day society. The turn of the millennium saw racial and gender discrimination quelled by changing social expectations. Broader acceptance now exists

towards self-expression and creation of identity in stereotypically male-dominated areas, such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths. Young women today are encouraged to pursue STEM careers and leadership roles, and movements such as body-positivity and feminism empower women of all races.

Role models like Australian Turia Pitt are the forefront of female empowerment. Pitt was a mining engineer who overcame criticism throughout in her academic journey - underestimated and ridiculed for subject choices, and in university classmates assumed that she was lost in the wrong class.

"He said I wasn't smart enough. If someone tells me I can't do something, it drives me to prove them wrong. So I studied my arse off." (Pitt, as cited by Muldowney, 2019).



Turia Pitt is a mining engineer and activist who advocates for female empowerment. Source: Turia Pitt, (n.d.)

Organisation and development (7–8 marks)

This response demonstrates:

- discerning use of the patterns and conventions of an online literary article and the role of the article writer to achieve a particular purpose. The writer engages the public audience in a lively analysis of the two chosen texts: *The Great Gatsby* and *The Castle*, in relation to a focused, specific thesis. This overall argument sets the scope for an integrated analysis of both texts in relation to their representation of the central idea of the need to belong. The concluding paragraph draws the analysis together, prompting the reader to critically reflect on the representations in the two texts
- discerning selection and synthesis of subject matter to support the perspective that the protagonist of each text ruthlessly pursues a goal they believe will lead to their happiness
- discerning organisation and sequencing of subject matter, including discerning use of cohesive devices to emphasise ideas and connect parts of a text.

Excerpt 1: Opening paragraphs

MENU   

KILL YOUR DARLINGS

0 items - \$0.00

Log Out

A Provisional Evaluation of Aspirations in Fiction

By 

6/03/2020

While big dreams and a good work ethic are commonly praised, one's extraordinary efforts may ultimately be in vain if such goals do not satisfy the fundamental human need to belong.

It is difficult to hear that what we are actively working to achieve will not bring us what we truly want and in fact such a message often inspires selective hearing, excuses and denial. Unfortunately, it is absolutely necessary to endure the laborious task of evaluating one's aspirations and for that we will turn to fiction. F. Scott Fitzgerald's 150-page-manual of what not to do that is *The Great Gatsby* and Rob Sitch's indie masterpiece and cult classic, *The Castle*, convey the message that a sense of belonging is best sought through genuine human connection rather than the superficial glamour of high social status or the fleeting satisfaction of material wealth.

Redacted
for copyright

In 2012, the United Nation's secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, declared that "the pursuit of happiness lies at the core of human endeavours". It can be assumed then that any human character aspires towards a particular goal because they believe it will make them happy; they believe they will feel content and they will belong. With this in mind, the comparison of what the characters of *The Great Gatsby* and *The Castle* desire calls into question *what* will make us happy, *what* will bring us contentment and belonging.

The characters have the same fundamental goal of any human endeavour and yet their actions suggest that they believe this will be achieved through different means.

Jay Gatsby wants the untouchable girl, endless wealth, and social status to rival that of old money. Darryl Kerrigan wants to keep his pool room and patio-in-progress next to an airport runway and visible powerlines. Gatsby may not admit to himself that the “grail” he had “committed himself to following” was his own fabricated, idealised life superimposed onto Daisy Buchanan but Nick Carraway’s limited third person perspective allows the reader to see this. Upon Daisy and Gatsby’s interaction it becomes evident that this is not in fact a tragic love story, but the story of a man blindly chasing a dream in vain. Fitzgerald uses the recurring imagery of gold and pale yellow—colours widely associated with wealth—to show what it is the characters desire. Gatsby dotes on his “big yellow car”, orchestrates the “yellow cocktail music” and “yellow light” for his parties, and of course, does everything for “the golden girl”.

On the other hand, Darryl makes it abundantly clear that he’s “not interested in [generous financial] compensation” but rather his priority is the sentimental value of a family home that was “worth almost as much today as when [they] bought it”. Darryl’s comparatively modest dreams make him no less ruthless in his goal of keeping a family home and by extension, the underlying aspiration to belong. So, while Jay Gatsby and Darryl Kerrigan’s specific desires may be drastically disparate, at their core *The Great Gatsby* and *The Castle* are stories of two men’s ruthless pursuits of a goal which they believe will lead to their happiness and belonging.

*

Excerpt 2: Concluding paragraph

Neither text explicitly tells us what to desire, but both call into question what we truly *need*. Maybe you weren’t pining for a mansion in the Hamptons, or a married woman but *The Great Gatsby* suggests our greatest desires may not be all that. Maybe you wouldn’t go to the high court to keep a house which is declining in value but nonetheless *The Castle* shows us that modest aspirations can be the most valuable. We’ve all heard that money and status won’t give us a sense of belonging, but are we actually allowing this message to influence our lives?

**Textual features
(7–8 marks)**

This response demonstrates:

- discerning language choices for analysis of two texts to engage a public audience. The response experiments with language to amuse and engage the public audience of this literary article
- discerning combination of a range of grammatically accurate/appropriate language structures, including clauses and sentences, to achieve particular purposes
- discerning use of written features, including conventional spelling and punctuation, to achieve particular purposes. The article employs strategic use of design elements to reflect the genre.

Please note student samples have not been corrected for spelling or grammar.

Since the foundations of their relationship was built on Mr Bennet's shallow attraction to youth and beauty, the love between the two was destined to fail. After realising that the young, fun-loving girl whom he fell in love with shared zero commonality with him, Mr Bennet seeks comfort in being a sarcastic jerk.

Austen writes that "to his wife [Mr Bennet] was very little otherwise indebted, then as her ignorance and folly had contributed to his amusement"⁵. Evidently, the only fulfillment Mr Bennet receives as his marriage progresses is out of mocking Mrs Bennet's character. ✓

The pain she endures through this relationship is revealed when she retaliates, "Mr Bennet... you take delight in vexing me. You have no compassion for my poor nerves"⁶. ✓ Although Mrs Bennet's character is quite laughable in her foolishness, the pain she undoubtedly bears further establishes why this treatment cannot be justified. ✓

Practices to strengthen

To further ensure accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG in this IA, it is recommended that when matching evidence in a student response to the performance characteristics for a criterion, consideration be given to the extent to which the student response demonstrates:

- for the Knowledge application criterion
 - analysis of perspectives and representations that engages with some of the subtle and complex aspects of each text in order to support the student writer's perspective
 - analysis of the ways each text is underpinned by cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs, providing convincing explanations of the possible effects of this cultural information on audiences' critical responses
 - analysis of the specific effects of aesthetic features and stylistic devices, demonstrating an astute knowledge of textual elements
- for the Organisation and development criterion
 - use of the patterns and conventions of the school-chosen genre and awareness of the need to balance any creative, reflective and/or persuasive elements of the genre without undermining the depth of the analysis

- use of cohesive devices that go beyond connecting ideas but also function to develop the analysis by adding emphasis
- selection of subject matter that is purposeful because it supports the writer’s perspective and positions the implied reader to think about the texts in particular ways and in relation to one another
- synthesis of subject matter, including textual evidence, to create a coherent response — a response that is unified and deliberately shaped by the contextual factors of purpose, audience and subject matter
- for the Textual features criterion
 - language choices show a nuanced understanding of the purpose of the response, namely to analyse texts and position audiences to think about texts individually and in relation to one another. The correct use of appropriate terminology and the impact of vocabulary on the implied reader should be considered in making judgments about language choices.

Additional advice

Provide opportunities in the teaching and learning cycle for students to consider the relationship between the assessment objectives assessed in Knowledge application:

- These are interrelated cognitions, but each addresses a specific dimension of text construction.
- The analysis of perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times, and places in texts requires examination of the specific meanings and viewpoints communicated by texts.
- The analysis of the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values, and beliefs underpin texts and invite audiences to take up positions requires examination of the effects of textual representations on audiences and the implicit cultural information texts convey.
- The analysis of the effects of aesthetic features and stylistic devices in the texts builds on the two preceding cognitions and requires examination of how texts are arranged and the devices and language forms text creators use to communicate their perspectives and create effects for audiences.

Internal assessment 2 (IA2)

Extended response — persuasive spoken response (25%)

Students are required to create a perspective through reasoned argument to persuade an audience. It is an open-ended task responding to representations of a contemporary social issue in the media within the previous year. Students construct and deliver a spoken, persuasive response that adds to the public dialogue or ‘conversation’ about the issue (Syllabus section 4.5.2).

Assessment design

Validity

Validity in assessment design considers the extent to which an assessment item accurately measures what it is intended to measure and that the evidence of student learning collected from an assessment can be legitimately used for the purpose specified in the syllabus.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment — validity practices

Validity priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Alignment	83
Authentication	4
Authenticity	58
Item construction	10
Scope and scale	35

*Total number of submissions: 442. Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that featured:

- the requirement that students respond in a persuasive spoken response to the representation of a contemporary social issue in the media in the last 12 months
- an opportunity to add to the ‘public conversation’
- clear identification of audience suitable for purpose and context
- cues to the choice of social issue presented in the media in the last 12 months to ensure that students are engaging with current ‘public conversations’.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- are constructed so that the purpose of the task is to respond to an issue and persuade an audience to support their contention
- focus on the persuasive purpose of the task rather than requiring students to analyse representations in the media. While students may refer to other media texts and perspectives from the ‘public conversation’ in their responses, they are not required to analyse other texts. Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5 require students to ‘create’ their own perspectives and

representations; make use of the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs underpin texts as they attempt to position their particular audience; use various aesthetic features/stylistic devices to persuade their specified audience (Syllabus section 4.5.2)

- clearly indicate the requirement to choose a contentious issue that has appeared in the media within the previous year
- provide students with a clear context, purpose and audience for their persuasive spoken response. This allows students to be discerning in their selection and synthesis of material to use, and judicious in their use of language for the context. A broad audience, such as a 'global audience', or vague context for the response may not provide students with opportunity to be discerning and demonstrate their capacity to position that particular audience through their control of the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs underpin texts and invite audiences to take up positions
- are not a direct or partial copy of the QCAA samples
- indicate clear checkpoints
- do not invite a pre-determined response, such as requiring students to argue a given contention. Students should be given opportunities to offer their own voice or perspective in contributing to the 'public conversation' in relation to a current issue
- do not require students to apply knowledge outside the requirements of the syllabus.

Accessibility

Accessibility in assessment design ensures that no student or group of students is disadvantaged in their capacity to access an assessment.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment — accessibility practices

Accessibility priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Transparency	12
Language	11
Layout	4
Bias avoidance	0

*Total number of submissions: 442. Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that featured:

- clarity regarding the relevance of the role of media in representing social issues
- the establishment of a clear purpose, context and audience to allow students opportunity to demonstrate the objectives as they attempt to persuasively position that audience within the given context
- formatting that allows for clear access to task and scaffolding.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- include consistent instructions throughout
- provide clear, audience-appropriate guidance based on the specifications in the syllabus.

Additional advice

- Construct task context statements that define aspects of the speaking context, the role of the speaker and the language purpose to prompt students to make thoughtful and purposeful language choices when planning and presenting their response, or, if students select their own audience, guide them closely in doing so. For example, if a student is 'speaking as a youth representative in parliament', consider why and when, e.g. in relation to relevant policy developments
- Consider how scaffolding may be used to prompt students to consider the relationship between language, argument and speaker presence when developing their response.
- Task context statements can be insufficiently linked to the task and not directly lead students to the requirement to construct a persuasive argument of their own that adds to the public dialogue.
- Tightly align the task's context with its requirements so that students are guided to consider the appropriate balance between information giving, examination of the issue, and argument in the development of a persuasive spoken response. This will ensure that the response is not just an 'information-sharing' exercise.
- Consider how scaffolding statements might be used to focus student attention on the need to prioritise persuasion and understand that the critical engagement with media texts functions to facilitate the development of their own argument or perspective.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

Reliability is a judgment about the measurements of assessment. It refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error.

Agreement trends between provisional and final results

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional
1	Knowledge application	99.1	0.86	0.04
2	Organisation and development	99.18	0.77	0.05
3	Textual features	99.27	0.63	0.09

Effective practices

Accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA was most effective when:

- for the Knowledge application criterion
 - a judgment that a response was in the upper performance levels for application of knowledge objectives was matched to the following characteristics in the response
 - a well-considered, consistent and convincing perspective on a topical issue, which was clearly the product of prior, critical engagement with a range of relevant media texts and a thoughtful consideration of the various perspectives on the issue being offered to the public

- representations of concepts, identities, times and places that were informed, nuanced, pertinent to the issue, and deliberately shaped to position the audience and serve the speaker's persuasive purpose
- deliberate and skilful manipulation of cultural values, assumptions, attitudes and beliefs underpinning the public debate about the issue, which provoked specific reactions from the audience and persuaded them to endorse the speaker's perspective
- skilful deployment of aesthetic features and stylistic devices to persuade the audience of the validity of the speaker's perspective and align themselves with the cultural assumptions, values, attitudes and beliefs underpinning that perspective
- strategic use of aesthetic features and stylistic devices that demonstrated awareness that the effectiveness of particular rhetorical strategies is determined by specific contextual factors such as the medium of communication, audience expectations, the nature of the contentious issue and pervasive cultural attitudes towards it and the degree of formality required by the speaking context
- for the Organisation and development criterion
 - a judgment that a response was in the upper performance levels for organisation and development of the persuasive text was matched to the following characteristics in the response
 - skilful deployment of the patterns and conventions of the specific persuasive text type stipulated by the task to deliberately achieve a persuasive purpose
 - exploitation of the role of the speaker to create and sustain a relationship with the audience and predispose them to accept the speaker's perspective
 - astute choices in the selection of subject matter, which functioned to validate the credibility of the speaker's stance on the issue
 - synthesis of subject matter demonstrated by the controlled management of information, arguments, evidence and reasoning across the response to create a coherent and convincing perspective
 - astute choices in the organisation and sequencing of contentions, explanations and support, which functioned to shape the audience's response to the issue and the speaker's point of view
 - cohesive devices that not only unified the various sections of the speech for the audience, but allowed for the development and refinement of arguments thus building the response's persuasiveness
- for the Textual features criterion
 - a judgment that a response was in the upper performance levels for use of textual features in the persuasive spoken response was matched to the following characteristics in the response
 - well-considered vocabulary choices, including terminology appropriate to the issue, deliberately used to express ideas and points of view, and thus elicit the emotional and intellectual responses from the audience needed to invite them to accept the speaker's stance on the issue
 - exploitation of a range of language structures, informed by an awareness of the persuasive possibilities offered by arranging clause structures in particular ways, and the recognition that the mode and context of delivery shapes the appropriateness and effectiveness of these structures

- strategic and skilful use of spoken and non-verbal language resources to establish the speaker's identity as a credible commentator and create persuasive effects, demonstrated by: deliberate variations in the use of vocal features (pitch, pace, pause, volume, pronunciation), matching these vocal features to the nature of the expressed ideas and communicating modality; the use of body language to establish presence and authority, create and reinforce meaning, complement vocal strategies and elicit support from the audience; and complex and purposeful manipulation of complementary features such as design elements, graphics, images and sound, as appropriate to the specific speaking context and text type stipulated by the task.

Practices to strengthen

To further ensure accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG in this IA, it is recommended that:

- for the Knowledge application criterion
 - when matching evidence in student responses to performance characteristics referenced in the ISMG, consider the extent to which student responses demonstrate
 - the creation of an informed and coherent perspective, and the crafting of representations that are complex, subtle and responsive to the contentious nature of their chosen issue within the contemporary public domain
 - the sustained framing and shaping of the audience's response to their perspective, deliberately appealing to shared cultural values, assumptions, attitudes and beliefs, and challenging them when appropriate to their persuasive purpose
 - the use of a variety of aesthetic features and stylistic devices that are contextually appropriate, strategically used throughout the response to create a sense of the speaker's identity, and designed to elicit specific emotional and intellectual responses from the audience at each stage of their argument's development
- for the Organisation and development criterion
 - when matching evidence in student responses to performance characteristics referenced in the ISMG, consider the extent to which student responses demonstrate
 - deployment of the distinctive patterns and conventions of the persuasive text type stipulated by the task (e.g. vlog, segment of a specific television program, political speech) such that their role as a persuasive speaker is consistently and convincingly created, and their interactions with the audience are conducive to persuasion
 - the selection of subject matter that is clearly related to the persuasive purpose and unified across the response to communicate a consistent and coherent perspective on the contentious issue
 - the arrangement of subject matter and the use of cohesive devices to connect and emphasise ideas and contentions across the response and which assist a viewing audience to follow the development of the speaker's argument without the aid of a printed script
- for the Textual features criterion
 - when matching evidence in student responses to performance characteristics referenced in the ISMG, consider the extent to which student responses demonstrate
 - flexibility and control of language choices, which are contextually suitable and successful in conveying meaning accurately and precisely, and which lend sophistication and appeal to arguments

- language structures that are appropriate to a spoken/signed delivery and are deliberately arranged and combined to create effects on the audience and achieve persuasive purposes
- the use of spoken/signed and non-verbal features that establish and consolidate interpersonal relations with the audience, which the persuasive speaker must establish to be viewed as confident, authoritative, credible and convincing to that audience
- the use of complementary features, if appropriate, which are carefully chosen, well designed, skilfully deployed and function to add meaning and position the audience.

Additional advice

Provide opportunities in the teaching and learning cycle for students to consider:

- the ways that spoken persuasive texts differ from written persuasive texts in their deployment of rhetorical strategies and stylistic devices
- the important role speaker presence plays in creating aesthetic effects and positioning an audience to accept a perspective
- the range of verbal and non-verbal strategies used by effective persuasive speakers to create an identity, build rapport with the audience and shape cultural beliefs, values and attitudes
- the distinctive genre patterns and conventions deployed by persuasive speakers operating in a specific context, e.g. tasks that require students to create texts for television or social media platforms can be effectively supported by teaching episodes that assist students to make informed decisions about editing, lighting, costuming, filming location, camera placement, the degree of informality that is appropriate, and the amount of rehearsal necessary for a fluent, effective delivery.

Internal assessment 3 (IA3)

Examination — imaginative written response (25%)

Based on an interpretation of a literary text from the prescribed text list, which acts as a springboard, students are to produce an imaginative written response to a particular situation, task or scenario (Syllabus section 5.5.1).

Assessment design

Validity

Validity in assessment design considers the extent to which an assessment item accurately measures what it is intended to measure and that the evidence of student learning collected from an assessment can be legitimately used for the purpose specified in the syllabus.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment — validity practices

Validity priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Alignment	182
Authentication	0
Authenticity	2
Item construction	3
Scope and scale	8

*Total number of submissions: 442. Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that featured:

- clear alignment to syllabus specifications
- a requirement for students to use a text from the prescribed text list as a springboard text for their imaginative response
- clear identification of the springboard text and required genre for the response.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- manage scope and scale by ensuring the task is manageable for students within the given conditions
- align with syllabus conditions and provide clarity that 'no notes allowed' includes the springboard text
- clearly identify the genre of the required response
- are based on a text from the prescribed text list.

Accessibility

Accessibility in assessment design ensures that no student or group of students is disadvantaged in their capacity to access an assessment.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment — accessibility practices

Accessibility priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Transparency	18
Language	17
Layout	5
Bias avoidance	1

*Total number of submissions: 442. Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that featured:

- clear task expectations and instructions
- succinct instructions.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- clearly state the conditions of assessment specifying that ‘no notes allowed’ includes the springboard text
- ensure that the school-selected genre is consistently referred to throughout the instrument. If students are required to produce a ‘short story’, this should be used consistently, rather than using terms such as ‘intervention’ and ‘narrative’ interchangeably across the assessment instrument.

Assessment decisions

Due to COVID-19 pandemic adjustments, there were insufficient student responses to this instrument to provide useful analytics.

External assessment

Examination — analytical written response (25%)

Assessment design

Assessment specifications and conditions

The examination is an analytical response to a literary text from the Prescribed text list for English and English as an Additional Language 2019–2021 in the form of an analytical essay for an audience with a deep understanding of the text. The purpose is to communicate an informed and critical perspective in response to an unseen question or task on the text studied in-depth in Unit 4.

- Time: 2 hours plus planning time (15 minutes)
- Length: 800–1000 words

The assessment instrument consisted of 16 questions/tasks, two for each of the eight external assessment texts on the prescribed text list. Students chose to respond to one of the two options for one of the eight prescribed texts. Questions were derived from the context of Unit 4: Close study of literary texts, Topic 2: Critical responses to literary texts. This assessment was used to determine student achievement in the following assessment objectives:

1. use patterns and conventions of an analytical essay to respond to an unseen question/task
2. establish and maintain the role of essay writer and relationships with readers
3. analyse perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places in a literary text
4. analyse the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs underpin a literary text and invite audiences to take up positions
5. analyse the effects of aesthetic features and stylistic devices in a literary text
6. select and synthesise subject matter to support perspectives in an essay response to an unseen question/task
7. organise and sequence subject matter to achieve particular purposes
8. use cohesive devices to emphasise ideas and connect parts of an essay
9. make language choices for particular purposes in an essay
10. use grammar and language structures for particular purposes in an essay
11. use written features to achieve particular purposes in an essay.

The stimulus was a choice of one of the following 8 External assessment texts on the Prescribed text list for English and English as an Additional Language 2019–2021:

- *Burial Rites* — Hannah Kent
- *Cat's Eye* — Margaret Atwood
- *Hamlet* — William Shakespeare
- *Jane Eyre* — Charlotte Brontë

- *Macbeth* — William Shakespeare
- *Nineteen Eighty-Four* — George Orwell
- *The White Earth* — Andrew McGahan
- *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves* — Karen Joy Fowler.

Assessment decisions

Overall, students responded well to the following assessment aspects:

- Students were obviously prepared to make use of the varied and valid ways to respond in an analytical essay. They generally showed understanding of the purpose of an analytical essay, to inform the reader of an interpretation of a literary text ('Analytical essay', Syllabus section 1.2.5: Subject matter).
- Students demonstrated capacity to draw on detailed and specific evidence from the prescribed text studied, despite not having access to this text in the examination.
- While some students wrote about characters as 'real people', or summarised the plot rather than analysed, responses generally showed an understanding of the constructed nature of texts and the ways texts are underpinned by ideas.

Effective practices

The following samples were selected to illustrate highly effective student responses in some of the assessment objectives of the syllabus.

Extended response

Criteria: Knowledge application, Organisation and development, Textual features

Effective student responses:

- revealed a deep, close analysis of their chosen text, in a manner that fully and directly addressed the question posed. Effective responses showed flexibility in their understanding of the text in their responsiveness to the question. Some students seemed to be reproducing prepared responses, e.g. about ambition, or Lady Macbeth's role in *Macbeth*, in response to question b) for this text, rather than responding to the specific question asked about how insecurity shaped Macbeth's reign. The most effective responses demonstrated a complex and nuanced understanding of the text studied that was flexibly used to respond to the given question
- demonstrated an authoritative interpretation of the text based on the understanding that perspectives and representations are constructed through the textual and stylistic choices made by the writer. These responses revealed detailed analysis of the specific ways ideas, such as cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs, underpin the text
- showed a lucid and purposeful discussion of the stylistic and aesthetic choices made by the writer and their effects, seamlessly woven into the argument. Effective student responses went beyond merely identifying and labelling the use of stylistic devices, to interpret the effects of those choices as relevant to the point being made.

Student sample of effective responses

Criterion: Knowledge application

This excerpt has been included to:

- illustrate an authoritative interpretation of the text, detailing ways representations of characters are underpinned by specific ideas, and the ways these ideas are constructed by the aesthetic choices made by the writer. This excerpt reveals an understanding of the constructed nature of the text, examining how the contrast between the representation of Agnes and Sigga reveals the ways cultural assumptions and beliefs about women underpin the text. It explores how the character of Blöndal is representative of the patriarchal society of the time and how this was entrenched in the social and legal structures of society. Phrases such as 'invites readers to further sympathise', 'In this vein Kent evokes', and 'Kent positions readers to view' establish this authoritative interpretation of the textual constructions
- show a seamless discussion of relevant aesthetic and stylistic choices made by the writer to support the point made in this paragraph. These choices include the binary opposition between the representations of Agnes and Sigga, and how male authority sets the accepted notions of what a woman should be. The excerpt clearly articulates the effects of these choices on the construction of representations of character, and positioning audiences
- show how a deep, and close analysis of the text has been flexibly used to address the question posed; that is, to analyse the significance of Agnes' move to Illgustadir in the construction of her character.

**Knowledge application
(18 marks)**

This response:

- examines relevant perspectives or representations in the text
- provides an authoritative interpretation of these perspectives or representations
- examines how the text is underpinned by cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs
- provides an authoritative interpretation of these cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs
- examines how the writer's stylistic or aesthetic choices shape the text
- provides an authoritative interpretation of these stylistic or aesthetic choices.

Inevitably, Agnes' binary opposition with Sigga, the second convicted maid^{at Illugastadir}, invites readers to further sympathise with ~~a~~ Agnes' plight. Portrayed to be "dumb and pretty and young" as well as a reminder of Blondal's wife, Sigga's appeal is conveyed to be a product of her adherence to the notion of a good woman – submissive and "sweet." Thus, this incites injustice in readers on behalf of Agnes, as the perception of innocence is portrayed to be guided by antiquated patriarchal ideals, which ultimately determine her fate as "a dead woman, destined for the grave." In this vein, Kent evokes not only unfair sentiments, but by extension, a sense that Agnes' fate is indeed "knifed to the hilt" as it is governed by a dispassionate perception of her among male authoritative figures, most notably Blondal. Albeit under the guise of Christian duty, Kent insinuates that Blondal's enforcement of "a victory for justice" and his intention to "make an example" of ^{Agnes} her, serves only to perpetuate a patriarchal hierarchy through which he gains access to power by virtue of his gender and social class. Claiming that Toti will "not find proofs of innocence in her stories," Blondal's high modal language and intransigent views depict Agnes

to be a gross caricature - a "wicked" and "malevolent" woman motivated by vengeance and "unrequited affections" from her time at Illugastadir. However, by corroborating such remarks with the assertion that Agnes is "a woman loose with her emotions" and enraged by Natan's preference for Sigga's ~~intentions~~ "attentions", patriarchal biases are brought to light. In this way, Kent positions readers to view Agnes' condemnation as a product of Blondal's fondness of Sigga, the other maid from Illugastadir. Thus, readers are again invited to empathise with Agnes as she is victimised on the basis of ^{her contrast against} Sigga's goodness during her time at Illugastadir and beyond.

Criterion: Organisation and development

Effective student responses:

- established a thesis that was specific, credible and responsive to all aspects of the question. A specific and discriminating thesis reveals a depth of thought and an interpretation of the text as a whole. It establishes the parameters for an insightful argument to follow. In response to question b) for *Hamlet*, a thesis that states, 'Shakespeare communicates the idea that families are complicated' will more likely establish a superficial argument to follow than one that is more considered, such as 'Through the representation of Hamlet's relationships, Shakespeare reveals the complex nature of familial bonds as based on power structures.' Some theses did not address all aspects of the question, e.g. question b) for *Nineteen Eighty-Four* required an analysis of the role of surveillance in Winston's decision-making, not just the role surveillance plays in a totalitarian state. Similarly, in response to question a) for *The White Earth*, students were to analyse the impact of the rally in shaping Will's character, not just the role of the rally as a plot device
- organised a reasoned, fully resolved argument, established in the introduction, and developed logically across the response. In these responses, cohesive devices allowed for a tightly developed, cogent argument, navigating for the reader with assurance
- selected well-considered evidence from across the text used to explicitly support arguments. Effective essays incorporated evidence, whether direct or indirect, beyond the most obvious, and drew from across the whole text.

Student sample of effective responses

This excerpt has been included to:

- reveal a specific, credible thesis responsive to the question. The thesis establishes the constructed nature of the text, and provides the parameters for an insightful discussion to follow about how the novel communicates a perspective about the role of parents in shaping an individual's lifelong development
- show how the first body paragraph illustrates a reasoned argument that begins to develop the thesis by specifically examining how the representation of two mothers, Elaine's own mother and Mrs Smeath, shape the protagonist's development as a woman
- show the use of relevant evidence from across the text, synthesised cohesively to develop the idea examined in the paragraph.

Organisation and development (16 marks)

This response:

- provides a discriminating thesis that is to be substantiated
- develops arguments to support the thesis across the response
- provides well-considered selection of evidence from the text
- uses this explicitly to support arguments
- demonstrates logical sequencing of information and ideas in and between paragraphs
- uses cohesive devices to connect, develop, emphasise, and transition between ideas within paragraphs and across the response.

The Role of Parents in "Cat's Eye"

"Cat's Eye", a fictional autobiography by Margaret Atwood, depicts the emotional development of Elaine through her characters through the incorporation of strong messages regarding the role of parents ^{on a child's experiences}. Throughout the novel, Atwood communicates to readers the integral role of parents in shaping an individual's lifelong development. Elaine's exposure to the behaviour of different parental figures is shown to have a significant effect on both her childhood and adulthood. Additionally, parenting is later revealed to have been a significant factor in the development of Elaine's childhood ~~lifelong~~ enemy, Cordelia.

Elaine's childhood development is shaped largely on her experiences with ^{different} parental figures, most notably, her mother ~~and~~ and her friend's mother, Mrs Smeath. Acwood depicts Elaine's mother as intelligent, 'stoic' and non-conformist. Her mother is shown to be outside ^{the expectations of 1940s Toronto,} ~~societal expectations & that of Canadian~~ ~~society's expectations~~ often wearing trousers and being a hater of housework. This disconnection from society's judgment however, reduces Elaine Mrs Risley's ability to help her with her child Elaine's childhood bullying. Elaine's mother tells Elaine to "stand up for yourself... don't be spineless," which Elaine interprets to mean that "what's happening to me is my own fault."

Criterion: Textual features

Effective student responses:

- used the language of literary analysis purposefully and with discrimination to develop ideas. Less effective responses used certain words and phrases, such as 'In the play', repetitively throughout the essay
- used register appropriate to the essay writer lucidly and confidently, fitting for the audience: readers with a deep knowledge of the text. Language was used with clarity and precision to engage the reader in a cogently presented argument. Evidence from the text was integrated seamlessly and used skilfully to drive the point forward, rather than repeat a point made
- used a combination of a range of grammatically accurate sentence structures for the purpose of analysis. While it is conventional to refer to a text in present tense in an analytical essay, less effective responses varied between past and present tense in reference to the text
- used a range of punctuation accurately and purposefully to guide the reader. Less effective responses used punctuation imprecisely, such as using a full stop instead of a comma between main and subordinate clauses across the essay
- spelled a range of simple and complex words accurately.

Student sample of effective responses

This excerpt has been included to:

- show a discerning and varied use of the language of literary analysis, such as in the following examples: 'It can be argued', 'providing a platform for an appropriate source of antagonism', 'the prevalent theme of violence', 'Shakespeare successfully uses this event to juxtapose', 'this event is telling of Macbeth's ferocity'
- show a register appropriate to the role of an essay writer. Direct quotation is woven seamlessly to move forward the argument that the murder of Macduff's household encourages sympathy for Macduff and sets the stage for his emergence as Macbeth's main antagonist
- demonstrate how accurate use of written features of grammar, punctuation and spelling allow for fluency and clarity of meaning.

Textual features (11 marks)

This response uses:

- grammatically accurate sentence structures
- vocabulary with discrimination to develop ideas
- register appropriate to the role of the essay writer with discrimination
- punctuation accurately and purposefully
- simple and complex words that can be understood in context.

acceptable means to Macbeth's demise. It can be argued that the murder of Macduff's family was necessary ~~for~~ realising the true nature of Macbeth's megalomania, not only in but also in providing a platform for an appropriate ~~antagonism~~ source of antagonism for Macbeth. When Malcolm encourages Macduff with the phrase "Be this [the grief caused by his slaughtered family] the whetstone of your sword... Blunt not the heart, enrage it," (IV. III), readers can sympathise with Macduff, as ~~Macbeth~~ ^{as} his retaliation not only seems justifiable, but also greatly encouraged. In ^{this way} itself at the climax of ~~Macbeth~~ the murder of Macduff's household. This event Shakespeare successfully uses this event to juxtapose and enhance Macbeth and Macduff's characters. The event is telling of Macbeth's ferocity and ^{unredeemable} moral corruption, and of the righteousness that Macduff's revenge holds to restore peace to Scotland. Its presence serves as a lesson in crime and punishment, demonstrating to readers ~~how~~ this act is Shakespeare's purpose in positioning the perversion and murder of ^a sacred familial bond as the most horrific and wicked act a person could execute.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that when preparing students for external assessment, teachers consider:

- engaging students with many different types of questions and topics, and deconstructing those so that students become confident in addressing all aspects of a question, e.g. many students analysed how Macbeth's insecurity affected him or Lady Macbeth but not necessarily how it impacted his reign. Students should avoid anticipating and preparing a specific response, and concentrate on engaging deeply with the complexities and nuances of the text as a whole through close analysis and using this knowledge flexibly to address the question asked
- encouraging students to spend time planning and using that planning to carefully construct a considered and specific overall argument or thesis that fully addresses the question and reveals a deep, considered knowledge of the text. A specific thesis sets the tone for an authoritative and insightful argument to follow
- explicitly teaching students techniques for organising and developing a cohesive argument overall. Cohesive techniques should be used to develop, emphasise, and transition smoothly between ideas as the argument becomes more complex. These techniques may include sequencing and organising paragraphs, strategic use of topic and concluding sentences, cohesive ties, varied sentence structures, word associations. Students should avoid using concluding sentences that do not reflect the substance of the point developed in the paragraph.

Senior External Examination

The following information relates to the English Senior External Examination, a standalone examination offered to eligible Year 12 students and adult learners. This commentary should be read in conjunction with the external assessment section of the preceding comments for the General subject.

Number of students completing senior external assessment for the English Senior External Examination: 60.

Standards allocation

The number of students awarded each standard across the state are as follows.

Standard	A	B	C	D	E
Number of students	7	14	17	10	1

Effective practices

Overall, students responded well to the following assessment aspects:

- for SEE 1, Section 1 — Extended written response for a public audience
 - when they showed depth of analysis of the concept of family represented in each text and elaborated on the beliefs and values that underpinned the concept in each text
 - when they showed knowledge of each text and its subtleties and complexities
 - when they developed informed perspectives on the ways each text is underpinned by cultural assumptions, attitudes and beliefs, and how these invite audiences to view the concept of family
 - when they incorporated a selection of well-considered textual details that supported analysis of the representation of the concept
 - when they organised subject matter logically to facilitate the development of the analysis and the perspective offered
 - when they used appropriate vocabulary, clearly selected for purpose and to engage the implied reader of the response
 - when they used a range of punctuation marks with precision
- for SEE 1, Section 2 — Persuasive written response
 - when they demonstrated a considered and convincing perspective on the issue, which was clearly the product of prior, critical engagement with a range of relevant media texts and a consideration of the various perspectives on the issue
 - when they addressed relevant representations of concepts, identities, times and places in a way that was informed and deliberately shaped to position the audience and serve the persuasive purpose
 - when they manipulated cultural values, assumptions, attitudes and beliefs underpinning the public debate about the issue to invite specific reactions from the audience and persuade them to endorse the speaker's perspective
 - when they targeted a particular aspect or aspects of the issue to help focus the reasoned argument effectively

- for SEE 2, Paper 1 — Imaginative written response
 - when they understood the patterns and conventions of the short story genre and how to use it to achieve particular purposes in the given context
 - when they were successful in creating perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places in using the given text to develop a short story
 - when they made use of the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs underpin the original text to create their own imaginative text to invite audiences to take up positions
 - when they appropriately controlled the narrative within the length requirements of the response.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that when preparing for the assessment for the Senior External Examination consideration be given to:

- for SEE 1, Section 1 — Extended written response for a public audience
 - synthesis of subject matter, including textual evidence, to create a coherent response that is unified and deliberately shaped by the contextual factors of purpose, audience and subject matter
 - purposeful inclusion of substantive evidence integrated into the discussion to support the writer's perspective and position the reader to think about the texts in relation to one another, and to the given concept
- for SEE 1, Section 2 — Persuasive written response
 - taking into account the appropriate balance between information giving, examination of the issue, and argument in the development of a persuasive spoken response. This will ensure the response is not just an 'information-sharing' exercise
 - sustained framing and shaping of a perspective, deliberately appealing to shared cultural values, assumptions, attitudes and beliefs, to achieve a particular persuasive purpose
 - selection of subject matter to communicate a consistent and coherent perspective on the contentious issue for a persuasive purpose
- for SEE 2, Paper 1 — Imaginative written response
 - purposeful selection and organisation of subject matter to engage the reader in a focused way
 - controlling the narrative by creating a clear sense of time and place within the constraints of the imaginative genre
 - the value of limiting the number of characters, relationships and incidents to help focus the imaginative response.