Information about the 2015 examination

The examination will be based on the English Senior External Syllabus 2004. It will consist of two papers.

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Each paper will consist of three questions requiring extended written responses. All six responses will contribute equally to the candidate’s level of achievement.

Task specifications and study scope

Task specifications for the 2015 examination are on pages 2 and 3. Teachers and candidates should also be familiar with the syllabus requirements directing the examination questions (Section 6.2 of the syllabus).

Notified poems

The notified poems for 2015 are on pages 5 to 18.

Particular terminology

Candidates should be familiar with the following terminology:

- silenced characters
- marginalised characters
- alternative versions
- perspectives
- foreground
- textual features
- privilege
- representations
- readings
- invited readings
- values
- assumptions
- attitudes
- beliefs
- ideologies.

Word length guidelines

Responses should be about 500 words in length (excluding quotations).
Level of achievement

Each candidate’s level of achievement will be determined by applying the syllabus standards to an overall assessment of responses across both Paper One and Paper Two.

Task specifications: Paper One

Part A

Question 1 — Drama: Imaginative response to literature

Candidates are to write in role as a character from the text and respond in one of the following forms:

- Interior monologue
- Letter.

Candidates are required to:

- demonstrate understanding of the text
- provide evidence from the text
- apply the conventions of the stipulated genre and exploit the roles and relationships of this genre.

Part B

Question 2 — Novel: Persuasive/reflective response to literature suitable for a public audience

Candidates are to write in role and respond in one of the following forms:

- Persuasive speech
- Opinion column.

Candidates are required to:

- demonstrate understanding of the text
- provide evidence from the text
- apply the conventions of the stipulated genre and exploit the roles and relationships of this genre.

Question 3 — Non-fiction prose: Persuasive/reflective response to literature suitable for the mass media or for speaking and/or presenting to an audience (specific or general)

Candidates are to write in role and respond in one of the following forms:

- Blog
- Book club speech.
Candidates are required to:

- demonstrate understanding of the text/s
- provide evidence through the use of paraphrasing and by making reference to key events and passages from the text/s
- apply terminology specific to the deconstruction of non-fiction prose
- apply the conventions of the stipulated genre and exploit the roles and relationships of this genre.

**Task specifications: Paper Two**

**Part A**

**Question 1 — Imaginative and reflective writing**

Candidates are to write in role and respond in **one** of the following forms:

- **Narrative/short story**
- **Autobiographical extract**.

Candidates are required to:

- employ narrative devices to promote particular values, assumptions, attitudes and beliefs
- use the stimulus and theme provided as springboards for writing
- apply the conventions of the stipulated genre and exploit the roles and relationships (provided in the stimulus) of this genre.

**Part B**

**Question 2 — Media: Analytical exposition**

Candidates are to write in role and analyse a documentary of their choosing in order to evaluate the treatment of its subject matter.

**Question 3 — Poetry: Analytical exposition**

Candidates select **one** of the following topics:

- **Topic 3A: Unseen poem**
- **Topic 3B: Notified poems**.

Candidates are to write in role and are required to:

- demonstrate understanding of the provided poem/s
- apply terminology specific to the deconstruction of poetry
- apply the conventions of analytical exposition and exploit the roles and relationships of this genre.

**Topic 3A: Unseen poem**

Candidates are to identify the invited reading of the poem and explain how this reading is achieved.
Topic 3B: Notified poems

Candidates are to compare any two of the notified poems. Attention should be given to the:

- treatment of values, assumptions, attitudes and beliefs, language devices and subject matter
- representations of concepts and of the relationships and identities of individuals, groups, times and places.

Candidates are to use the attached notified poems in response to this option. The notified poems will also be included in the examination paper.

Enquiries

Telephone (07) 3864 0211 or email externalexams@qcaa.qld.edu.au.
Notified poems

**Last of His Tribe**

Change is the law. The new must oust the old.
I look at you and am back in the long ago,
Old pinnaroo lonely and lost here,
Last of your clan.
Left only with your memories, you sit
And think of the gay throng, the happy people,
The voices and the laughter
All gone, all gone,
And you remain alone.
I asked and you let me hear
The soft vowelly tongue to be heard now
No more for ever.
For me
You enact old scenes, old ways, you who have used
Boomerang and spear.
You singer of ancient tribal songs,
You leader once in the corroboree,
You twice in fierce tribal fights
With wild enemy blacks from over the river,
All gone, all gone. And I feel
The sudden sting of tears, Willie Mackenzie
In the Salvation Army Home.
Displaced person in your own country,
Lonely in teeming city crowds,
Last of your tribe.

**Oodgeroo Noonuccal (1920–1993)**
Metho Drinker

Under the death of winter’s leaves he lies
who cried to Nothing and the terrible night
to be his home and bread. ‘O take from me
the weight and waterfall of ceaseless Time
that batters down my weakness; the knives of light
whose thrust I cannot turn; the cruelty
of human eyes that dare not touch nor pity.’
Under the worn leaves of the winter city
safe in the house of Nothing now he lies.

His white and burning girl, his woman of fire,
creeps to his heart and sets a candle there
to melt away the flesh that hides the bone,
to eat the nerve that tethers him in Time.
He will lie warm until the bone is bare
and on a dead dark moon he wakes alone.
It was for Death he took her; death is but this
and yet he is uneasy under her kiss
and winces from that acid of her desire.

Judith Wright (1915–2000)
At Cooloola

The blue crane fishing in Cooloola's twilight
has fished there longer than our centuries.
He is the certain heir of lake and evening,
and he will wear their colour till he dies,

but I'm a stranger, come of a conquering people.
I cannot share his calm, who watch his lake,
being unloved by all my eyes delight in,
and made uneasy, for an old murder's sake.

Those dark-skinned people who once named Cooloola
knew that no land is lost or won by wars,
for earth is spirit, the invader's feet will tangle
in nets there and his blood be thinned by fears.

Riding at noon and ninety years ago,
my grandfather was beckoned by a ghost —
a black accoutred warrior armed for fighting,
who sank into bare plain, as now into time past.

White shores of sand, plumed reed and paperbark,
clear heavenly levels frequented by crane and swan —
I know that we are justified only by love,
but oppressed by arrogant guilt, have room for none.

And walking on clean sand among the prints
of bird and animal, I am challenged by a driftwood spear
thrust from the water; and, like my grandfather,
must quiet a heart accused by its own fear.

Judith Wright (1915–2000)
William Street

The red globes of light, the liquor-green,  
The pulsing arrows and the running fire  
Spilt on the stones, go deeper than a stream;  
You find this ugly, I find it lovely.

Ghosts’ trousers, like the dangle of hung men,  
In pawnshop-windows, bumping knee by knee,  
But none inside to suffer or condemn;  
You find this ugly, I find it lovely.

Smells rich and rasping, smoke and fat and fish  
And puffs of paraffin that crimp the nose,  
Or grease that blesses onions with a hiss;  
You find it ugly, I find it lovely.

The dips and molls, with flip and shiny gaze  
(Death at their elbows, hunger at their heels)  
Ranging the pavements of their pasturage;  
You find it ugly, I find it lovely.

Kenneth Slessor (1901–1971)
One Tuesday in Summer

That sultry afternoon the world went strange.
Under a violet and leaden bruise
The air was filled with sinister yellow light;
Trees, houses, grass took on unnatural hues.

Thunder rolled near. The intensity grew and grew
Like doom itself with lightnings on its face.
And Mr Pitt, the grocer's order-man,
Who made his call on Tuesdays at our place,

Said to my mother, looking at the sky,
'You'd think the ending of the world had come.'
A leathern little man, with bicycle-clips
Around his ankles, doing our weekly sum,

He too looked strange in that uncanny light;
As in the Bible ordinary men
Turn out to be angelic messengers,
Pronouncing the Lord's judgments why and when.

I watched the scurry of the small black ants
That sensed the storm. What Mr Pitt had said
I didn't quite believe, or disbelieve;
But still the words had got into my head,

For nothing less seemed worthy of the scene.
The darkening imminence hung on and on,
Till suddenly, with lightning-stroke and rain,
Apocalypse exploded, and was gone.

By nightfall things had their familiar look.
But I had seen the world stand in dismay
Under the aspect of another meaning
That rain or time would hardly wash away.

James McAuley (1917–1976)
My Country

The love of field and coppice,
   Of green and shaded lanes,
Of ordered woods and gardens
   Is running in your veins.
Strong love of grey-blue distance
   Brown streams and soft, dim skies —
I know but cannot share it,
   My love is otherwise.

I love a sunburnt country,
   A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges,
   Of droughts and flooding rains.
I love her far horizons,
   I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror —
   The wide brown land for me!

The stark white ring-barked forests,
   All tragic to the moon,
The sapphire-misted mountains,
   The hot gold hush of noon.
Green tangle of the brushes,
   Where lixe lianas coil,
And orchids deck the tree tops
   And ferns the warm dark soil.

Core of my heart, my country!
   Her pitiless blue sky,
When sick at heart, around us,
   We see the cattle die —
But then the grey clouds gather,
   And we can bless again
The drumming of an army,
   The steady, soaking rain.

Core of my heart, my country!
   Land of the Rainbow Gold,
For flood and fire and famine,
   She pays us back three-fold.
Over the thirsty paddocks,
   Watch, after many days,
The filmy veil of greenness
   That thickens as we gaze …

An opal-hearted country,
   A wilful, lavish land —
All you who have not loved her,
   You will not understand —
Though earth holds many splendours,
   Wherever I may die,
I know to what brown country
   My homing thoughts will fly.

Dorothea Mackellar (1885–1968)
Why we didn't go away on the long weekend

Let us go away for the weekend he said
out of the city
into the high country
after all we went to England to see the snow
and didn't — you arrange it
rang up trains — waited 6 hours for some one
to say hullo — rang up again to enquire times/
bookings etc. meanwhile
governments rose/fell there were 2 coups, 1½
rebellions, a revolution — nearly — the
president died — long live the king.
Knowing we had to get up early
we stayed up late arguing.

Slept
beyond the alarm into morning the train
went without us full of imagination he
booked a plane.

Rang taxis to take
us to airport — no answer — they (the taxis)
probably defected to Russia/china.

Above
the city heard the plane singing into the
high country and the sound of tourists trudging
into the snow with cars
of Kosciusko
for you they come walking

At home with wet feet sludgy
hearts we sat around a radiator
hating each other slowly

Colleen Burke (1943– )
There is a Place in Distant Seas

There is a place in distant seas
Full of contrarieties:
There, beasts have mallards’ bills and legs,
Have spurs like cocks, like hens lay eggs.
There parrots walk upon the ground,
And grass upon the trees is found;
On other trees, another wonder!
Leaves without upper sides or under.
There pears you’ll scarce with hatchet cut;
Stones are outside the cherries put;
Swans are not white, but black as soot.
There neither leaf, nor root, nor fruit
Will any Christian palate suit,
Unless in desperate need you’d fill ye
With root of fern and stalk of lily.
There missiles to far distance sent
Come whizzing back from whence they went;
There quadrupeds go on two feet,
And yet few quadrupeds so fleet;
There birds, although they cannot fly,
In swiftness with your greyhound vie.
With equal wonder you may see
The foxes fly from tree to tree;
And what they value most, so wary,
These foxes in their pockets carry.
There the voracious ewe-sheep crams
Her paunch with flesh of tender lambs,
Instead of beef, and bread, and broth,
Men feast on many a roasted moth.
The north winds scorch, but when the breeze is
Full from the south, why then it freezes;
The sun when you to face him turn ye,
From right to left performs his journey.
Now of what place could such strange tales
Be told with truth save New South Wales?

Richard Whately (1787–1863)
A Mid-Summer Noon in the Australian Forest

Not a bird disturbs the air,
There is quiet everywhere;
Over plains and over woods
What a mighty stillness broods.

Even the grasshoppers keep
Where the coolest shadows sleep;
Even the busy ants are found
Resting in their pebbled mound;
Even the locust clingeth now
In silence to the barky bough:
And over hills and over plains
Quiet, vast and slumbrous, reigns.

Only there’s a drowsy humming
From yon warm lagoon slow coming:
’Tis the dragon-hornet — see!
All bedaubed resplendently
With yellow on a tawny ground —
Each rich spot nor square nor round,
But rudely heart-shaped, as it were
The blurred and hasty impress there,

Of a vermeil-crusted seal
Dusted o’er with golden meal:
Only there’s a droning where
Yon bright beetle gleams the air —
Gleams it in its droning flight
With a slanting track of light,
Till rising in the sunshine higher,
Its shards flame out like gems on fire.

Every other thing is still,
Save the ever wakeful rill,
Whose cool murmur only throws
A cooler comfort round Repose;
Or some ripple in the sea
Of leafy boughs, where, lazily,
Tired Summer, in her forest bower
Turning with the noontide hour,
Heaves a slumbrous breath, ere she
Once more slumbers peacefully.

O’ tis easeful here to lie
Hidden from Noon’s scorching eye,
In this grassy cool recess
Musing thus of Quietness.

Charles Harpur (1813–1868)
The Mitchells

I am seeing this: two men are sitting on a pole
they have dug a hole for and will, after dinner, raise
I think for wires. Water boils in a prune tin.
Bees hum their shift in unthinning mists of white

bursaria blossom, under the noon of wattles.
The men eat big meat sandwiches out of a styrofoam
box with a handle. One is overheard saying:
drought that year. Yes. Like trying to farm the road.

The first man, if asked, would say I'm one of the Mitchells.
The other would gaze for a while, dried leaves in his palm,
and looking up, with pain and subtle amusement,

say I'm one of the Mitchells. Of the pair, one has been rich
but never stopped wearing his oil-stained felt hat. Nearly everything
they say is ritual. Sometimes the scene is an avenue.

Les Murray (1938– )
Debbie & Co.

The Council Pool’s chockablock
with Greek kids shouting in Italian.
Isn’t it Sunday afternoon?
Half the school’s there, screaming,
skylarking, and bombing the deep end.
Nicky picks up her Nikon
and takes it all in, the racket
and the glare. Debbie strikes a pose.

In a patch of shade a grubby brat
dabbles ice-cream into the cement.
Tracey and Chris are missing,
mucking about behind the dressing sheds,
Nicky guesses. Who cares?
Debbie takes a dive. Emerging like a
porpoise at the edge of the pool
she finds a ledge, a covered gutter,
awash with bubbles and chlorine’s
chemical gossip. Debbie yells there,
and the rude words echo.
The piss-tinted water slaps the tiles.

Debbie dries off, lights a smoke,
and gazes at her friends fading out
around the corner of a dull relationship
and disappearing.

Under the democratic sun
her future drifts in and out of focus —
Tracey, Nicky, Chris, the whole arena
sinking into silence. Yet this is almost
Paradise: the Coke, the takeaway pizza,
a packet of Camels, Nicky’s dark glasses
reflecting the way the light glitters on
anything wet. Debbie’s tan needs
touching up. She lies back and dozes
on a terry-towelling print of Donald Duck.
She remembers how Brett was such a
dreamboat, until he turned into
somebody’s boring husband. Tracey
reappears, looking radiant. Nicky
browses through an Adult magazine.
Debbie goes to sleep.

John Tranter (1943– )
Suburban

Safe behind shady carports, sleeping under
the stars of the commonwealth and nylon gauze …

Asia is far off, its sheer white mountain-peaks, its millions
of hands; and shy bush-creatures in our headlamps

prop and swerve, small grass under the sprinklers
dreams itself ten feet tall as bull-ants lumber

between its stems — pushing
towards Sunday morning and the motor-blades …

Safe behind lawns and blondwood doors, in houses
of glass. No one throws stones. The moon dredges

a window square. Chrome faucets in the bathroom
hold back the tadpole-life that swarm in dams, a Kelvinator

preserves us from hook-worm. But there are days,
after drinks at the Marina, when dull headaches

like harbour fog roll in, black cats give off
blackness, children writhe out of our grip;

and only the cotton-wool in medicine bottles stands between us
and the capsules whose cool metallic colours

lift us to the stars. In sleep we drift
barefoot to the edge of town, pale moondust flares between our toes,

ghosts on a rotary-hoist fly in the wind …
under cold white snow-peaks tucked to the chin, we stare

at an empty shoe like Monday …
Sunlight arranges itself beyond our hands.

David Malouf (1934– )
Aboriginal Australia

To the others

You once smiled a friendly smile,
Said we were kin to one another,
Thus with guile for a short while
Became to me a brother.
Then you swamped my way of gladness,
Took my children from my side,
Snapped shut the lawbook, oh my sadness
At Yirrkala’s plea denied.
So, I remember Lake George hills,
The thin stick bones of people.
Sudden death and greed that kills,
That gave you church and steeple.
I cry again for Worrarra men,
Gone from kith and kind,
And I wondered when I would find a pen
To probe your freckled mind.
I mourned again for the Murray Tribe,
Gone too without a trace,
I thought of the soldier’s diatribe,
The smile on the Governor’s face.
You murdered me with rope, with gun,
The massacre my enclave,
You buried me deep on McClarty’s run
Flung into a common grave.
You propped me up with Christ, red tape,
Tobacco, grog and fears,
Then disease and lordly rape
Through the brutish years.
Now you primly say you’re justified,
And sing of a nation’s glory,
But I think of a people crucified —
The real Australian story.

Jack Davis (1917–2000)
Hunting Rabbits

The men would often go hunting rabbits
in the countryside around the hostel —
with guns and traps and children following
in the sunlight of afternoon paddocks:
m Ravelling in their native tongues
at the scent of eucalypts all around.

We never asked where the guns came from
or what was done with them later:
as each rifle’s echo cracked through the hills
and a rabbit would leap as if jerked
on a wire through the air —
or, watching hands release a trap
then listening to a neck being broken.

Later, I could never bring myself
to watch the animals being skinned
and cleaned —
excitedly
talking about the ones that escaped
and how white tails bobbed among brown tussocks.
For days afterwards
our rooms smelt of blood and fur
as the meat was cooked in pots
over a kerosene primus.

But eat I did, and asked for more,
as I learnt about the meaning of rations
and the length of queues in dining halls —
as well as the names of trees
from the surrounding hills that always seemed
to be flowering with wattles:
growing less and less frightened by gunshots
and what the smell of gunpowder meant —
quickly learning to walk and keep up with men
that strode through strange hills
as if their migration had still not come to an end.

Peter Skrzynecki (1945—)
Acknowledgments


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