

IM SYLLABUS (2027)

ENGLISH

IM 10

SYLLABUS

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English	(Available in September)
Syllabus	1 Paper: Oral (15 minutes) + Written (3 hours)

Introduction

The aim of this syllabus is to provide candidates sitting for the Intermediate level examination in English with information about the aims, assessment objectives, subject content and scheme of assessment.

The syllabus is structured in three sections, namely:

- A. General Policies
- B. Oral Session
- C. Written Paper

In **Section A**, the overall aims of a programme leading to the attainment of an Intermediate level in English are explained. The assessment objectives derived from the programme are listed and these indicate what candidates should be able to do or demonstrate during the examination. A note about the quality of English expected of candidates is included to emphasise its importance in the examination.

Section B consists of a detailed explication of the oral session forming part of the examination. Each one of the three parts of the oral session is described in terms of content, tasks, marks, marking criteria, timing, learning outcomes, and procedures. *Assessment of candidates' performance is based on the learning outcomes.*

In **Section C**, each one of the three components forming part of the written paper in the examination is described in terms of content, tasks, marks, marking criteria, timing, text types, and learning outcomes. *Assessment of candidates' performance is based on the learning outcomes.*

B. General Policies

A.1 Aims

This syllabus assumes proficiency in English Language at SEC level. It aims to consolidate knowledge, skills and competences, and to extend them to include more advanced concepts, which are dealt with in a broad manner. Most of these new concepts are included to provide a general and coherent view of the subject.

The syllabus aims to develop:

- The skills to analyse and evaluate different types of written texts
- A critical and informed response to writing in a range of forms, styles and contexts

- Independent thinking skills
- The skills of reading, analysis and communication in a variety of contexts
- The ability to discern and consider values and attitudes in texts
- Informed personal responses and independent judgements on short stories in English
- Accurate, effective and task-appropriate communication
- A firm foundation for using English as the main medium of communication in preparation for further/higher education.

A.2 Assessment Objectives

The examination assesses a candidate's ability to:

- AO 1 Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of English language and its use in the given contexts
- AO 2 Understand spoken English and to communicate clearly, effectively and appropriately in the English language
- AO 3 Read with understanding and analyse writing in a variety of forms and contexts
- AO 4 Write clearly, accurately and fluently for different purposes/audiences, using appropriate vocabulary and style
- AO 5 Write with a special focus on the convention particular to the text type
- AO 6 Organise the writing in a coherent and cohesive way
- AO 7 Summarise or adapt material for a given purpose
- AO 8 Demonstrate an understanding of the content and purpose of previously unseen material, drawn from a wide variety of (non-fiction) sources
- AO 9 Present reasoned explanations, show recognition of a writer's attitudes and values and communicate them clearly and logically
- AO 10 Demonstrate an understanding of how writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings
- AO 11 Produce informed, independent opinions and judgements on literary texts
- AO 12 Understand and produce an informed response on the interplay between characters, plot and ideas in a text.

Assessment Objectives	Oral Session	Written Paper		
		Writing	Reading & Language Awareness	Literary Awareness
AO 1	✓	✓	✓	✓
AO 2	✓			
AO 3			✓	✓
AO 4		✓	✓	✓
AO 5		✓		✓
AO 6		✓	✓	✓
AO 7			✓	✓
AO 8	✓		✓	
AO 9			✓	✓
AO 10			✓	✓
AO 11				✓
AO 12				✓

A.3 Quality of Language

Candidates are also assessed on their ability to organise and present information, ideas, descriptions and arguments clearly and logically, taking into account their use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. In all questions, the marks awarded take into account the quality of the language used by the candidate.

B. Oral Session

(10 Marks)

The oral session is approximately 15 minutes long and consists of three parts.

- Part 1: Guided Examiner-to-Candidate Conversation
- Part 2: Guided Examiner-to-Candidate Conversation
- Part 3: Guided Candidate-to-Examiner Long Turn

Generic Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Express themselves in a fluent and coherent manner
- LO 2 Express themselves effortlessly and intelligibly by means of a standard pronunciation
- LO 3 Use a wide range of lexis and idiomatic expression that is appropriate to context and topic
- LO 4 Use both simple and complex structures accurately.

Marking Criteria

The oral session assesses candidates' spoken English on the basis of four criteria that carry equal weighting:

- Fluency and Coherence
- Pronunciation
- Vocabulary
- Grammar

B.1 Part 1: Guided Examiner-to-Candidate Conversation

(about 3 minutes – 2 marks)

Part 1 consists of an informal interview intended as a conversation starter where the examiner will ask basic questions about topics such as *Career*, *Leisure Plans*, *Study*, and *Work*. The task takes the form of a two-way exchange initiated by the examiner where the candidate is expected to provide one- or two-sentence/utterance responses to the questions posed. The questions asked by the examiner may focus on past, present or future situations.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Indicate basic information about themselves
- LO 2 State general views as well as specific details on familiar topics.

Procedure

- B.** The examiner greets the candidate and asks him/her to confirm their identity.
- 2. The examiner explains the procedure to be followed in Part 1.
- 3. The examiner then asks a set of questions within the time available (3 minutes).
- 4. If the candidate answers a particular question at length, the examiner intervenes and proceeds to the next question. If the candidate answers a question too briefly or is unable to move beyond one- or two- word responses, the examiner moves on to the next question or to the next part of the oral session.

B.2 Part 2: Guided Examiner-to-Candidate Conversation

(about 4 minutes – 3 marks)

Part 2 consists of a conversation initiated by the examiner, based on a visual prompt that consists of one/two photograph(s)/image(s) that are presented to the candidate at this point in the interview. This task is made up of two stages: (a) a brief description of the visual prompt; and (b) a two-way exchange between the examiner and the candidate where topics and issues related to the visual prompt are developed.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Describe the visual prompt in as much detail as possible
- LO 2 Use vocabulary and expression that are relevant and appropriate to what is portrayed in the visual prompt and to the questions asked
- LO 3 Identify similarities and differences within the visual prompt
- LO 4 Explore possibilities associated with what is portrayed in the visual prompt
- LO 5 Evaluate topics and issues related to the visual prompt
- LO 6 Discuss themes/situations/experiences linked to the topics and issues associated with the visual prompt
- LO 7 Propose alternative perspectives linked to the topics and issues of the visual prompt.

Procedure

- B.** The examiner explains to the candidate the procedure to be followed in Part 2.
- 2. The examiner presents the candidate with a visual prompt and provides the candidate with 30 seconds to look at it, before the examiner proceeds to ask the candidate to briefly describe the visual prompt.
- 3. The candidate's turn is expected to take one minute.
- 4. At the end of the one minute, the examiner stops the candidate and proceeds to the next stage of Part 2. If the candidate is unable to sustain his/her turn for one minute, the examiner proceeds to the second stage of Part 2.
- 5. The examiner then follows by asking a set of questions. The examiner asks *all* the questions in the set within the time available (3 minutes).

6. If the candidate answers a particular question at length, the examiner intervenes and proceeds to the next question. If the candidate answers a question too briefly or is unable to express him/herself fluently and coherently, the examiner moves on to the next question or to Part 3.
7. After the candidate has answered all the questions in the set, the examiner collects the candidate's paper (visual prompt) and proceeds to Part 3.

B.3 Part 3: Guided Candidate-to-Examiner Long Turn

(about 3 minutes – 5 marks)

Part 3 consists of a presentation expressed as a long turn by the candidate based on a topic (which could be in the form of a question or a title) selected by the candidate from a list of five presented to him/her *some* minutes before entering the examination room for Part 1. The list of five topics reflects five of the following: *art, culture, current affairs, education, entertainment, environment, lifestyle, modern technology, music, relationships, religion, sport, and war or conflict*.

This task focuses on extended, structured speaking on a clearly defined topic to assess the candidate's fluency and accuracy in presenting, defining, developing, and exploring a topic. The questions/titles presented to the candidate do not focus exclusively on personal experience and are worded in such a way as to ensure that the candidate can move from a general to a more specific development of the topic. The candidate may include personal experience as one of the various factors/aspects within the presentation.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Introduce the topic by means of an overview of the main issues to be presented
- LO 2 Define particular aspects relevant to the topic
- LO 3 Structure their presentation according to different perspectives/aspects
- LO 4 Indicate different stages of the presentation by means of appropriate signposting
- LO 5 Illustrate specific issues to add weight to their main ideas
- LO 6 Use functional patterns of discourse as appropriate, e.g. cause-effect, comparison-contrast, problem-solution, generalisation-qualification
- LO 7 Summarise the main issues discussed in their presentation
- LO 8 Identify the main areas of concern and future developments with respect to the topic
- LO 9 Propose a course of action related to the topic
- LO 10 Indicate their personal opinion in relation to the topic if applicable.

Procedure

1. The candidate is allowed ten minutes to think about and plan the presentation before entering the examination room for Part 1 and Part 2. The candidate is not to bring into the examination room any kind of written or printed material.

2. The examiner explains to the candidate the procedure to be followed in Part 3.
3. The candidate is given two minutes to go over the main points of the presentation, and is provided with a pencil and a sheet of paper to make notes. The candidate may begin earlier if he/she wishes. The notes made by the candidate during the two minutes prior to the initiation of Part 3 must not be taken out of the examination room.
4. The examiner asks the candidate which topic/question/title has been selected and invites him/her to begin the presentation.
5. At the end of the three minutes, the examiner stops the candidate and brings the test to an end. If the candidate is unable to maintain discourse for the required three minutes, the examiner poses just one prompt to assist the candidate. If the candidate is still unable to proceed, then the examiner brings the test to an end.
6. At the end of the presentation, the examiner collects paper and pencil, and the candidate's paper.

C. Written Paper

(90 Marks)

The written session is three hours long and consists of three components.

- Component 1: Writing (30 marks)
- Component 2: Reading and Language Awareness (30 marks)
- Component 3: Literary Awareness (30 marks)

C.1 Component 1: Writing

(30% of global mark)

In this section of the written paper, candidates are asked to produce a text of 450 (+/- 10%) words. The text they choose to produce is derived from a list of text types that consists of at least one example of each of the following kinds of writing: descriptive, narrative, discursive, letter/email, and report. Whenever the rubric indicates or specifies how a title needs to be interpreted candidates will be expected to adhere to the conventions of that text type. If an essay title does not unequivocally indicate a specific text type (for example, a one-word title) different interpretations will be accepted.

Generic Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Use a good range of context appropriate vocabulary
- LO 2 Produce writing which is free of grammatical and spelling errors
- LO 3 Use paragraphs and correct punctuation to make the sequence of events/ideas coherent and clear.

Marking Criteria

In this component, candidates' written English is assessed on the basis of four criteria that carry equal weighting:

- Task Achievement
- Organisation
- Elaboration, support and style
- Grammar, punctuation and spelling

C.1.1 Descriptive Writing

Guidelines

Descriptive writing is about using all the language tools necessary to make words form pictures in the reader's mind. The main purpose of this task is writing to describe a person, object, place, situation or event. Good descriptive writing fulfils its purpose by presenting a clear and complete picture to a reader/audience, which is organised in a logical order. It involves vivid sensory details that capitalise on the five senses: sight, smell, sound, taste and touch. Effective descriptive writing is created through the use of similes and metaphors, and through precise and concise language; the latter two rely on clear choice of words relevant to the intended description. Use of vague adjectives is not recommended.

For organised descriptive writing, it is necessary to choose appropriate transition words/phrases and develop well-structured paragraphs that control detail and progression effectively. Organisation should follow a logical order, which could be either in terms of space and/or time.

Descriptive writing relies on the writer's ability to *show* and not *tell* the underlying dominant focus through detailed and vivid words that paint the world for the reader. It is important to avoid: (a) unnecessary words (mainly the overuse of adjectives) which are not directly relevant to the description; (b) overused fixed expressions; (c) complex narratives given that the focus in this task is writing to describe.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Select the main purpose of the task in response to the question
- LO 2 Choose a focus appropriate to the task
- LO 3 Identify the importance of structure in descriptive writing
- LO 4 Adapt description appropriate to purpose
- LO 5 Adapt description appropriate to reader/audience
- LO 6 Describe people, objects, places, situations or events effectively
- LO 7 Develop clear points of view and/or different perspectives
- LO 8 Use sensory description that reflects three or more senses
- LO 9 Organise their writing by using appropriate transition words/phrases
- LO 10 Structure paragraphs that follow a logical order, whether chronological or spatial.

C.1.2 Narrative Writing

Guidelines

The narrative writing task focuses on *story* writing and therefore it follows the typical features of a narrative convention and includes introduction, plot, characters, setting, climax, and conclusion. Good narrative writing possesses the following four main characteristics: (a) awareness of purpose and audience/reader; (b) organisation; (c) content; and (d) descriptive language.

Effective narration requires a writer to have a clear sense of the audience/readers, and provide information to orient and engage readers. The text structure should reflect the *purpose* of the narrative, and organise *orientation*, *complication* and *resolution*. Crucial to organisation, paragraphs should follow an ordered and logical structure, and have clear topic sentences that follow the text structure determined by the choice of purpose. An effective narration consists of *content* that depends on the creation and selection of ideas that are relevant and offer sufficient information to allow the reader to infer meanings whenever these are not presented concretely. Similar to descriptive writing, *effective descriptions* involve vivid sensory details that capitalise on the five senses: sight, smell, sound, taste and touch.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Select the main purpose of the task in response to the question
- LO 2 Choose a focus appropriate to the task
- LO 3 Choose a text structure for orientation, complication and resolution
- LO 4 Adapt description appropriate to purpose
- LO 5 Create and select ideas closely related to the focus of the narrative
- LO 6 Develop clear points of view and/or different perspectives
- LO 7 Use topic sentences for each paragraph to orient and guide the reader (for example, but not limited to, when introducing a new character/event/setting or a change in time)
- LO 8 Organise their writing by using appropriate transition words/phrases
- LO 9 Structure paragraphs that follow a logical order, whether chronological or spatial

C.1.3 Discursive Writing

Guidelines

Discursive writing is a formal style of writing that explores a particular topic, issue or problem. The formal register is characterised by linking words and phrases, as well as by compound and complex sentences. When engaged in discursive writing, candidates avoid using contractions, colloquial expressions, simplistic vocabulary and linkers, and strings of simple sentences. In discursive writing, the introductory paragraph opens with general statements and ends with a thesis statement. The conclusion moves from a specific statement to general statements. The body is made up of well-developed paragraphs that consist of clear topic sentences, justifications, and concluding sentences. Paragraphs usually contain generalisations, references to different sources, quoted or paraphrased information, and sequencing of ideas. Candidates avoid using highly emotional language, expressing personal opinions forcefully, over-generalising, referring to information without citing its source, and using clichés and personal examples. Discursive writing is commonly categorised in terms of three main essay types: for and against; opinion; and solutions to problems.

Generic Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Select which type of essay to write in response to a question
- LO 2 Employ a formal style of writing

- LO 3 Arrange ideas by means of linking words and phrases
- LO 4 Formulate ideas by means of compound and complex sentences
- LO 5 Write with clarity and precision in the choice of language
- LO 6 Organise their writing by means of an introduction, a series of body paragraphs, and a conclusion
- LO 7 Arrange the introduction in terms of general to specific statements
- LO 8 Summarize the gist of the essay by means of a thesis statement at the end of the introduction
- LO 9 Construct each body paragraph in terms of a topic sentence, a justification, and a concluding sentence
- LO 10 Arrange the conclusion in terms of specific to general statements.

C.1.3.1 For and Against Essay

Guidelines

The for and against essay provides a balanced and objective discussion of a topic by examining two opposing sides of an issue. This essay consists of an introductory paragraph in which the candidate identifies the topic to be discussed. The introduction does not typically feature the candidate's personal opinion. The main body consists of a number of paragraphs in which the candidate discusses the points for and against the issue together with justifications, explanations, reasons and examples. Each paragraph focuses on a separate aspect of the issue and starts with a topic sentence that signposts the topic of the paragraph. The discussion for and against the issue should be balanced by means of the same number of paragraphs in relation to the two sides. If the candidate considers either one of the two sides to be stronger and worthy of more support, then this side should be presented in the fourth and fifth paragraphs. The concluding paragraph consists of either a balanced consideration of the two opposing sides or else of the candidate's opinion on the topic. The conclusion is the only place where the candidate may use opinion words (e.g. *I think, In my opinion* etc.).

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Identify the topic to be discussed in the introduction
- LO 2 Discuss a separate aspect of an issue in each body paragraph
- LO 3 Produce a balanced discussion of the points for and against an issue in the body
- LO 4 Evaluate the two opposing sides of an issue in the conclusion; *or*
- LO 5 Produce their opinion on the topic in the conclusion.

C.1.3.2 Opinion Essay

Guidelines

The opinion essay consists of the candidate's personal opinion on a topic as well as reasons in support of it. The introductory paragraph presents the candidate's clearly stated opinion on the topic in the form of sentences using opinion words. The main body is made up of a number of paragraphs that discuss the candidate's viewpoints on the topic, each one being reinforced by reasons, explanations and examples. Each paragraph focuses on a separate viewpoint and this is signposted by means of a topic sentence. Another paragraph that features in the main body is the one in which the candidate presents the opposing

viewpoint and reasons in support of it; however, the candidate seeks to demonstrate why this viewpoint is not adequately convincing. This paragraph usually constitutes the essay's second or penultimate paragraph. In all body paragraphs, the candidate typically avoids using opinion words. The concluding paragraph summarises the candidate's opinion on the topic by means of opinion words.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 State their personal opinion on a topic in the introduction
- LO 2 Discuss each one of their viewpoints on a topic in discrete body paragraphs
- LO 3 Criticise the opposing viewpoint in a separate body paragraph
- LO 4 Summarise their opinion on the topic in the conclusion

C.1.3.3 Solutions to Problems Essay

Guidelines

The solutions to problems essay consists of a number of solutions to a specific issue that could be considered problematic. For the purposes of the examination, candidates are expected to outline a problem, its causes and effects in the introductory paragraph. The introduction does not typically feature the candidate's personal opinion. The main body is made up of a number of paragraphs, in each of which the candidate suggests a solution and discusses its consequences. Each paragraph focuses on a separate solution and opens with a topic sentence that signposts the topic of the paragraph. An essay usually consists of four such paragraphs. The concluding paragraph summarises the candidate's opinion on the problem and the suggested solutions. The conclusion is the only place where the candidate may use opinion words.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Identify a problem, its causes and effects in the introduction
- LO 2 Discuss a separate solution and its consequences in each body paragraph
- LO 3 Summarise their opinion on the problem and suggested solutions in the conclusion

C.1.4 Report Writing

Guidelines

Report writing involves the production of a formal, informative and systematically presented text concerning a situation, person, place or plan. In the real world, one party usually asks or commissions a second party to write a report. This means that, amongst other things, report writing needs to evidence three clear characteristics: (a) adherence to the original request or brief; (b) a sustained perspective of who the report is supposedly being written by; and (c) an awareness of intended audience.

In report writing content must be organised, focused and presented in a manner that unequivocally satisfies the structures and conventions particular to

report writing. This includes a heading¹ (To, From, Subject and Date); an introductory paragraph stating the purpose and possibly signposting the report content; the main body made up of a number of paragraphs with subheadings each focusing on some aspect of the content; and a concluding paragraph that synthesises the most significant implications and/or, should the case be, forward recommendations. The use of the passive voice is encouraged. Report writing is commonly categorised in terms of a number of different types of report. The three main kinds of report that candidates will be expected to be familiar with are: informative; proposal; and assessment. They will write a report in response to a situation presented in a detailed rubric.

Generic Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Select which type of report to write in response to a question
- LO 2 Employ a formal style of writing
- LO 3 Arrange ideas by means of linking words and phrases
- LO 4 Formulate ideas by means of compound and complex sentences
- LO 5 Write with clarity and precision in the choice of language
- LO 6 Use the form, structures and conventions appropriate to report writing
- LO 7 State the purpose of the report in the introductory paragraph
- LO 8 Organise content by means of separate paragraphs clearly marked with subheadings
- LO 9 Select content that is immediately relevant to the subheading
- LO 10 Summarise the main points of the report in the concluding paragraph *and/or*
- LO 11 Produce their opinion and/or recommendations by way of a conclusion
- LO 12 Maintain the perspective of whomever the report is supposedly written by
- LO 13 Demonstrate an awareness of intended audience

C.1.4.1 Informative Report

Guidelines

An informative report is a formal, informative and systematically presented text intended either to forward information outlining the progress that has been made up to the point of writing concerning some future undertaking, or serve to inform readers and increase their knowledge about something. The introductory paragraph's function is to state the purpose and possibly also to signpost the content of the report. The main body of an informative report presents various aspects of the subject in separate paragraphs clearly marked with subheadings. The concluding paragraph summarises all the points mentioned in the main body.

C.1.4.2 Proposal Report

Guidelines

A proposal report is a formal, informative and systematically presented text intended to outline different aspects of a plan or intended future course of action, usually for approval purposes by superiors. The introductory paragraph's function is to state the purpose and possibly also to signpost the content of the

¹ Not to be included in the word count

report. The main body of a proposal report presents various aspects of the subject in separate paragraphs clearly marked with subheadings. The concluding paragraph summarises all the points mentioned in the main body and possibly presents the report writer's request for approval of the proposal in question.

C.1.4.3 Assessment Report

Guidelines

An assessment report is a formal, informative and systematically presented text intended to present and evaluate the positive and/or negative characteristics of a situation, person, place or plan. The introductory paragraph's function is to state the purpose and possibly also to signpost the content of the report. The main body presents the positive and negative aspects of the subject being assessed in paragraphs clearly marked with subheadings. The concluding paragraph presents a general assessment and may include the report writer's opinion, proposals and/or recommendations. The learning outcomes hereunder apply solely to the assessment report.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Identify the positive and negative aspects of the subject concerned
- LO 2 Sequence the positive and negative aspects of the subject in a manner that is conducive to the eventual conclusion
- LO 3 Produce a concluding evaluation that is either neutral or clearly favouring one specific position

C.1.5 Letter and Email Writing

Guidelines

Letters and emails are written for a variety of purposes. Candidates are expected to be familiar with the writing of these text types for the following functions: (a) giving information; (b) giving an opinion; (c) application; and (d) complaint. The first three functions may include, but are not limited to, the following text structures: description, sequence of events, comparisons and contrasts, cause-effect, and problem-solution. The second function comprises the acts of giving advice, and making suggestions and recommendations; the recipients of such a letter/email may include the authorities/newspaper or magazine editor. Although the fourth function may be similar to the first three, it should have an added focus on the tone of voice. A letter/email of complaint should always be polite, respectful but assertive. In fact, special emphasis should be placed on the modal verbs, and emotionally charged language must be avoided. Depending on the function required by the question, the learning outcomes listed for descriptive, narrative, and discursive writing apply. Candidates will write a letter/email in response to a situation presented in a detailed rubric.

Letters and emails share a number of learning outcomes. Firstly, they both require knowledge of the intended audience and a clear purpose of the message that the sender wishes to communicate to the recipient(s). Secondly, the content of both these modes of communication should follow a style of writing and forms of address appropriate to the audience and purpose of the message. In addition, the conventions for greeting/salutation and closing, and the names of the recipient and sender are similar. Lastly, senders are expected to follow a similar overall structure that includes: a brief statement about the

purpose of the message; a context for the message; a separate paragraph for every new idea/topic; and a clear statement of the desired outcome at the end of the message.

Generic Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Select which type of letter/email to write in response to a question
- LO 2 Identify the intended audience of the letter/email
- LO 3 Identify the purpose of the letter/email
- LO 4 Arrange ideas by means of linking words and phrases
- LO 5 Formulate ideas by means of compound and complex sentences if appropriate
- LO 6 Write with clarity and precision in the choice of language
- LO 7 Use a register appropriate to the intended audience and message, i.e. how formal or informal does the sender wish to be in their correspondence
- LO 8 Use a form of address appropriate to intended audience and message
- LO 9 Use an appropriate salutation and closing based on the level of formality and familiarity with the recipient

C.1.5.1 Letter

Guidelines

Normally, a letter may be handwritten or typed and includes a postal address or addresses – depending on the level of formality. This mode of communication is considered as traditional and even though nowadays it is common to send it as an email attachment, it may still follow the postal route and reach its recipient a day or more after it has been posted, which is why a date is always included. The UK layout is to be adopted for both formal and informal letters. A letter should include the sender's address in the top right hand corner. This is followed by the recipient's name and address below the sender's address², on the left. Usually, the date goes either on the left, below the recipient's address or on the right, below the sender's address. It has become common practice to include the subject of a letter directly below the greeting/salutation.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Specify the sender's postal address by placing it in the top right hand corner (if formal in style)
- LO 2 Specify the recipient's name and postal address by placing them below the sender's address (if included) on the left
- LO 3 Specify the date either by placing it on the left, below the recipient's address or on the right, below the sender's address
- LO 4 Specify the subject of the letter (if required) by placing it below the greeting/salutation

C.1.5.2 Email

Guidelines

As a mode of communication, an email differs from a letter in two main ways: the format of the message and the type of address(es). Unlike letters, emails are

² Addresses are not to be included in the word count

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normally typed onto a template that already includes three fields³: 'To', 'CC', and 'Subject'. The address included in the 'To' field is an electronic email address and as soon as the email is sent, it appears immediately in the recipient's inbox. The 'Subject' should be brief but offer a clear idea of what the email is about.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Specify the recipient's email address in the 'To' field
- LO 2 Specify a recipient's email address in the 'CC' field if someone else is being copied in the message
- LO 3 Select a specific and informative word or phrase to be placed in the 'Subject' field

C.2 Component 2: Reading and Language Awareness

(30% of global mark)

In this section of the written paper, candidates are expected to answer a number of questions on an expository text that is 1,200-1,300 words long. Candidates need to be able to answer questions focusing on the grammar of the English language and to describe aspects of the communicative function of a given text. Candidates also need to evidence understanding of the (non-fiction) text at basic comprehension and inference levels, as well as be able to summarise an aspect of the text.

Generic Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Identify word classes, clause elements and sentence types
- LO 2 Explain the effect of rhetorical structure, cohesive devices, choice of language and graphological features
- LO 3 Explain facts and inferences
- LO 4 Summarise an aspect of an expository text

C.2.1 Word Classes, Clause Elements and Sentence Types

Overt focus on grammar should be concerned with:

<i>Word Classes</i>	nouns	proper, common, concrete, abstract, collective, singular, plural, possessive
	adjectives	comparative, superlative
	verbs	main, auxiliary, primary, modal, active, passive
	adverbs	manner, place, time
	pronouns	personal, possessive, reflexive, demonstrative, indefinite, relative, interrogative
	conjunctions	coordinating, subordinating
	prepositions	
	determiners	definite and indefinite article,

³ Not to be included in the word count

<i>Phrases and clauses</i>		demonstrative determiners
	phrase	headword, pre-modifiers, post-modifiers
	noun phrase	
	verb phrase	
<i>Sentence types</i>	clause	subject, verb, object, complement, adverbial (manner, place, time)
	sentence	simple, complex, compound

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Identify word classes, phrase and clause elements, and sentence types
- LO 2 Explain why a sentence is simple, complex or compound

C.2.2 The Effect Of Rhetorical Structure, Cohesive Devices, Choice of Language and Graphological Features

Guidelines

Authors write with a purpose. The intention might be to persuade, to inform, to teach, to entertain, to instruct or some other reason. Higher order reading skills mean that being 'in touch' with a text goes beyond comprehension and includes an awareness of the various devices employed by authors to achieve purposes and ends. Candidates are expected to evidence how text structure (rhetorical structure), grammatical and lexical cohesion, choice of language and graphological features (such as bold, italics, underline, diagram and image) may possibly be used by writers to further enhance text function.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Explain how text structure (rhetorical structure), grammatical and lexical cohesion, choice of language and graphological features may possibly be used by writers to further enhance text function

C.2.3 Facts and Inferences

Guidelines

Besides relying on what they actually write, authors also bank on the fact that there is a considerable amount of knowledge that they share with readers. A routine aspect of ongoing comprehension is that readers make sense of a text by relying on what is actually written and also by inferring accurately what shared knowledge has been omitted. Candidates are expected to answer questions both on facts present in the given passage as well as on ideas inferred from the text.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO1 Explain facts present in the passage
- LO2 Explain inferences present in the passage

C.2.4 Summary Writing

In this task, candidates are expected to write an 80- to 100-word summary focusing on an aspect of an expository text.

Guidelines

Summary writing involves rephrasing the key points of an aspect of a text in a concise and accurate manner. A summary condenses the main issues, ideas or events presented in specific parts of a text in the form of a continuous piece of writing. It consists of one paragraph made up of complete sentences written in the third person. When engaged in summary writing candidates focus on producing a synopsis of an aspect of the text predetermined by the task. A summary is expressed in candidates' own words and does not include their personal reflections on the text's content, nor does it feature ideas that are not present in the original text.

Only the most relevant and significant information is extracted from the text and this is presented in the summary in an abridged form. If deemed pertinent, questions found in the text are expressed as statements in the summary while direct speech is turned into reported speech. Repeated ideas, examples, comparisons, and illustrative details are omitted while generalisations are used to synthesise the ideas found in lists. Literal language is used instead of figurative language. While the meaning, point of view, expository tone and tenses of the original text are retained in the summary, the sequence of ideas might sometimes need to be changed. Continuity is facilitated by means of linking words and phrases. A good summary enables the reader to understand the essence of an aspect of the original text. Hence, it needs to be succinct, adequately balanced and comprehensive, as well as written with a high degree of clarity and precision.

Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Interpret which aspect of a text they are expected to summarise
- LO 2 Locate the key points of an aspect of a text
- LO 3 Identify the most relevant and significant information related to an aspect of the text
- LO 4 Organise the key points of an aspect of a text in a logical sequence
- LO 5 Summarise the key points of an aspect of a text in a concise and accurate manner
- LO 6 Rephrase the key points of an aspect of a text in their own words
- LO 7 Produce a summary in the form of one paragraph of continuous writing expressed in the third person
- LO 8 Transform an aspect of a text without compromising its meaning, point of view, tone and tenses
- LO 9 Arrange ideas by means of linking words and phrases
- LO 10 Rewrite parts of a text by using a literal style, statements, generalisations, or reported speech as appropriate
- LO 11 Use clarity and precision in the choice of language

C.3 Component 3: Literary Awareness

(30% of global mark)

The set short stories for this component are:

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- 'The Teddy Bear's Picnic' by William Trevor
- 'The Rough Crossing,' by F Scott Fitzgerald
- 'The Voyage' by Katherine Mansfield
- 'The Drover's Wife' by Henry Lawson
- 'A Devoted Son' by Anita Desai
- 'Mother's Help' by Ruth Rendell
- 'No Place to Park' by Alexander McCall Smith

In this section of the written paper, candidates are expected to demonstrate their knowledge of the set short stories by either opting for a literature essay question or a passage-based question. Both tasks share the same learning outcomes.

Generic Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to:

- LO 1 Identify the key terms mentioned in the question
- LO 2 Interpret which aspect of a text (or texts) they are expected to discuss
- LO 3 Employ a formal style of writing
- LO 4 Employ the appropriate tenses
- LO 5 Arrange ideas by means of linking words and phrases
- LO 6 Formulate ideas by means of compound and complex sentences
- LO 7 Write with clarity and precision in the choice of language
- LO 8 Construct each body paragraph in terms of a topic sentence, a justification, and a concluding sentence
- LO 9 Demonstrate a familiarity with the short story (or stories) they are expected to engage with in response to the question
- LO 10 Demonstrate an awareness of the literary terms needed to discuss the text
- LO 11 Discuss different features and issues of the text (or texts) by means of analysis and argumentation
- LO 12 Support their arguments about the text (or texts) by means of reasons, explanations, examples, and evidence drawn from the text
- LO 13 Refer closely to the text through the use of appropriate evidence
- LO 14 Select information that is relevant to the question
- LO 15 Discuss the effectiveness of a text's (or texts') figurative and linguistic features
- LO 16 Engage critically with the text (or texts)
- LO 17 Demonstrate an awareness of how different texts relate to each other or contrast with one another
- LO 18 Compare stories in terms of common features or issues that cut across them
- LO 19 Discuss theme and character

C.3.1 Literature Essay

If they opt for this task, candidates are expected to write a 500-word (+/- 10%) essay employing a discursive style of writing. This will either be in the form of an analysis of an individual story or else of a discussion of a group of stories.

Guidelines

The literature essay employs a discursive style of writing in the sense that it is constructed by means of argument and reasoning. It is an exploration of aspects of a set short story (or stories) that candidates would have read and studied prior to the examination. These might include plot, setting, narrative style, point of view, themes, characterisation, imagery and rhetoric. In a literature essay, candidates provide an interpretation of such features of a text by means of analysis and argumentation. Their discussion of the text is substantiated by means of reasons, explanations, examples, and evidence drawn from the text. In supporting their arguments, candidates demonstrate a close familiarity with the text. In response to certain questions, candidates manifest an awareness of how different texts relate to each other or contrast with one another. They make comparisons across short stories in terms of the features listed above, discussing issues that cut across a number of texts.

In a literature essay, the introductory paragraph demonstrates an understanding of the implications of the question and familiarity with how these relate to the short story (or stories) the candidate is expected to focus on. While the introduction opens with general statements and ends with a thesis statement, the conclusion moves from a specific statement to general statements. The thesis statement succinctly indicates the main arguments that will be presented in the essay in response to the question. These are recapitulated in the opening sentence of the conclusion. The body of a literature essay is made up of a number of well-developed paragraphs that consist of clear topic sentences, justifications, and concluding sentences. Each paragraph focuses on a specific issue related to the question and the argument in it is bolstered by means of explanations, examples, and quotations. In a literature essay, candidates avoid including any information about the text that is not pertinent to the question.

As an example of discursive writing, a literature essay entails the use of a formal register, which is characterised by linking words and phrases as well as a variety of sentence structures, including compound and complex sentences. When writing a literature essay, candidates avoid using contractions, colloquial expressions, simplistic vocabulary and linkers, and strings of simple sentences. The present tense is used for commentary, but not necessarily, in the entire essay, and the sequencing of ideas between paragraphs and within paragraphs is clearly signposted. Candidates avoid using highly emotional language or loosely expressed and unsupported opinions about a text.

C.3.2 Literary Awareness

Literary text analysis is a passage-based task in which candidates are expected to write an essay (or two-part answer) as a response to a given passage (or possibly two) from the short stories set for this examination. Their response must amount to a total of 500 words (+/- 10%).

Guidelines

The task provides an opportunity for candidates to write an answer that differs from the standard responses on characters and themes to evidence a close reading of the studied short stories. Grounding their answer in the given passage/s, candidates are expected to go beyond the plot and use evidence to

engage with and write critically about what and how the author and/or the piece communicates.

There is no standard rubric for this task (as is the case for the traditional gobbet and unseen literary criticism); candidates are guided accordingly as to what their analysis needs to focus on. For example, candidates may be asked to explain how the language in a particular passage contributes to create tension, how a particular passage synthesises the impression of a character in a story, the similarity or difference between two openings, the function of the presence or absence of details concerning setting, the way two different passages suggest a similar treatment of time by different authors or how an author makes effective use of direct speech in a particular moment in a story. The task is certainly consonant with aspects of literariness that candidates should be concerned with in their study of the set short stories. The main aim of the exercise is to see that candidates are in touch with the literature they have studied, have achieved an understanding beyond the story level and are able to write critically about it.