

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 9093/11 Reading</p>
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Key messages

- Candidates need to ensure that they read a wide range of material from a range of diverse sources such as advertisements, brochures, leaflets, editorials, news stories, articles, reviews, blogs, investigative journalism, letters, podcasts, (auto)biographies, travel writing, diaries, essays, scripted speech, narrative writing, and descriptive writing.
- Candidates need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the linguistic elements and features of texts, such as parts of speech/word classes, vocabulary, figurative language, phonology, morphology, rhetorical devices, voice, aspect, tense, modality, narrative perspective, word ordering and sentence structure, paragraph- and text-level structure, formality/informality of tone, and pragmatics.
- Candidates should develop an intimate knowledge and understanding of the conventions and discourses associated with a diverse range of genres, styles and contexts, enabling them to respond reflectively, analytically, discursively and creatively, as is appropriate to the task or context.
- For **Question 1(a)**, the accompanying instructions and text provide the context and background information to guide the candidates as they produce their directed response. Candidates should use these to make carefully considered choices of appropriate lexis, register and tone to suit the task set and ensure they achieve the highest possible standards of accuracy and expression in their writing.
- For **Question 1(b)**, candidates need to ensure they compare the form, structure and language of the original text and their own, with a clear emphasis on selecting elements from both texts that may be analysed to demonstrate how writers' stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning.
- For **Question 2**, candidates need to comment on the form, structure and language of a text. They are required to identify characteristic features of the text, relate them to the meaning, context and audience of the writing, organise information in their answers, and write using clear and appropriate language.
- A secure degree of technical accuracy – especially in the use of spelling, punctuation and tenses – is required at this level.

General comments

The rubric was generally understood, with only a few candidates omitting either a part of a question or a full question. However, there were some brief responses to **Question 1(a)**. Candidates are required to write between 150 and 200 words. While there is no direct penalty for failing to adhere to this requirement, this is an aspect of the response's relevance to purpose. As such, adherence to the word limit is assessed as part of the second bullet point of AO2. Candidates should remember that responses are marked for task focus and relevant content as well as expression and accuracy. Largely speaking, though, the paper was handled with understanding and competence. Only a few responses suffered from a lack of the necessary language skills for text analysis. This session only a few candidates seemed to struggle to manage their time appropriately, consequently leaving the last response incomplete.

Specific language features were generally well understood, but candidates must ensure that the features they identify are genuinely present in the passage and that they use specific examples of language use to support the identification of those features and link them to effects created. Most candidates clearly understood the need to make precise connections between language features and their contribution to the full effect of the passage. There was also attention to the effects of punctuation, especially dashes and commas.

Question 1(a) is a directed response task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by the language, style and structure to fit a specific form, purpose and audience – in this session the original text was a newspaper article about pollution created by new plastic. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this session it was the text for an email to a large company (150–200 words) urging them to take action to reduce their plastic waste. Careful consideration of the target audience is required. Candidates are expected to write clearly and accurately, with relevant content, and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is indispensable in responding to **Question 1(b)**, where candidates are required to compare the text produced for **1(a)** with the given text, analysing form, structure and language. Here, candidates are assessed for their ability to demonstrate comparative understanding of texts with clear reference to characteristic features and comparative analysis of form, structure and language and how a writer's stylistic choices relate to audience to shape meaning. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach in their response to **Question 1(b)**. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a conclusion can be used to emphasise the essential similarities and differences between the two texts. Those who adopted a topical approach tended to demonstrate the most comprehensive linguistic understanding. Some candidates compared the given text for **Question 1** with that given for **Question 2**, generally writing their comparative commentary after writing their directed response. These candidates did not respond appropriately to the **Question 1(b)** text analysis task.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed on demonstration of their understanding of a text in terms of meaning, context and audience with reference to characteristic features and their analysis of form, structure and language. In the case of most candidates, there was a clear understanding of the need to make precise connections between language features and their contribution to the full effect of the given text. Less successful responses could often have been improved through more precise use of language to link evidence with explanatory comments; phrases such as 'the writer is trying to persuade the readers' and 'this helps the readers to imagine' cannot be considered useful text analysis.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates were asked to read a newspaper article about pollution created by new plastic. They were then required to write an email to a large company, urging them to take action to reduce their plastic waste.

The characteristic features and conventions of an email were adopted, and most responses showed clear understanding of the text. Most candidates acknowledged the directions of the rubric and were prompted by the content of the text, addressing their emails to a large company: Amazon (for its packaging), Target (for plastic bags), and Danone, Coca-Cola and Nestlé (for plastic bottles) were frequent. They provided a clear sense of purpose, as directed: to urge the company 'to take action to reduce their plastic waste'.

Stronger responses employed some key conventions of the form, including an email address line, a subject line and an appropriate salutation and valediction (To ..., Dear Sir/Madam/Dear John Doe and Yours sincerely/Yours faithfully). These paid careful attention to the audience and the context of the piece, adopting an appropriate, formal register and a respectful but insistent tone.

Most often, candidates adopted a combination of first and second person: setting out their personal experiences of plastic waste and the nature of their concerns in first person and their demands for the company to take action in second person and/or first-person plural. They employed third person when citing evidence from the text: dates, statistical data and expert opinion/advice were usual. Several candidates outlined their own credentials as an authoritative figure when asserting their demands. The most effective pieces employed a range of moods: declarative, interrogative and imperative. They made effective use of encouraging, motivational tones of voice – advising the company about the negative effects of plastic pollution though not lecturing in a hectoring manner, presenting possible solutions without making demands about their adoption and managing a balanced approach with both 'problem' and 'solution' content addressed. Many candidates were deliberate in their use of tenses, employing present tense for a sense of immediacy and appropriate modal verbs to create a sense of the subjunctive mood. Candidates often took their

prompt from the source text in structuring their email, providing either an enumerated or a bullet pointed list of changes to be implemented forthwith. The most effective of these understood the need to utilise base or root form verbs when forming the imperative mood.

Many emails included concluding comments. These most often took the form of a summary, an expression of gratitude or a request for a speedy response; some provided contact details in the event of follow up. Several concluded on a strong triadic note: 'reduce, reuse and recycle'. A few responses, notably, employed chiasmus and allusion in their concluding remarks: 'change is not happening alone, and alone change will never happen'; 'it's not what our planet does for us, but what WE can do for our planet'; 'let's kill off the plastic before plastic kills us'. Occasionally, candidates suggested further communication or establishment of a working party to ensure the company and the public could work together for mutual societal as well as environmental benefit.

Weaker responses often simply listed pieces of information presented in the article without much attempt to shape it to the requirements of the task, especially regarding form, purpose and register. Many of these weaker responses focused extensively on the content concerning the impact of plastic waste on the environment and human health without addressing solutions at all or did so very sparingly. Furthermore, they expressed great concern about the threat to aquatic life with a considerable attempt to make the large company feel guilty in order to influence their behaviour (for example 'Can you live with yourself knowing your children's future health and well-being will be tragically compromised by further environment degradation because you failed to implement a few simple procedures?') without integration of the source text. Candidates would benefit from having a firm ability to employ appropriate devices to argue, persuade and create different effects, for example a sense of danger or urgency. Some candidates, for example, instead of *urging* the recipients of their communication (as required by the question) to change their ways, used insulting and threatening language.

Many weaker responses offered a summary of the extract, drifted from the focus of the question and original text or quoted large amounts from the original text, which was rarely justified.

Getting the balance between showing understanding of the text and crafting an effective response is the key to this question and the tendency was perhaps to be a little too safe. It is important for candidates to be aware that understanding is not necessarily demonstrated by rearranging chunks of the text. Often, the most effective writing came at the end of responses when candidates freed themselves from checklisting the text.

Most of the candidates abided by the guidelines concerning the length of their responses (150–200 words). Several candidates wrote considerably shorter pieces that did not best suit the form and purpose specified.

- (b)** Candidates were asked to compare their email with the newspaper article, analysing form, structure and language.

To do well in this task, candidates need to analyse form, structure and language and to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them, i.e. the text given and the one that they have just created. An integrated approach is more effective for this type of comparative task than dealing with each text separately. Where textual evidence is selected, candidates should remember to offer clear analysis of how the writer's choices of form, structure and language relate to audience and shape meaning.

Most candidates adopted the framework of the rubric in their responses, comparing and commenting on each aspect in turn. Many responses lacked supporting evidence. It is advised that candidates focus on the difference in formality, tone and register, and collaborate language with form and structure to give a more robust response in terms of analysis.

Generally, stronger responses included appropriate and accurate critical terminology to link evidence and explanatory comments on the effects created by the writers of the original passage and directed response. These stronger responses showed a clear distinction between the conventions of an email and those of a newspaper article; these responses regarded the extract and their own writing as of equal status and commented on both extensively. Such responses also offered a considerable amount of detail to illustrate points, showing a strong grasp of each feature and detail selected and how each related to audience and shaped meaning. More successful

responses did not take a reflective commentary approach when analysing their own writing, which is a requirement of Paper 2. The strongest noted that the newspaper article about plastic pollution was an article partly based on a *special report in the journal Science*, and these were able to draw a clear distinction between the journalist/reporter and the editor of *Science* or the scientists involved in writing the previously published *Science* report.

Comparative points in limited responses were often straightforward, with little attempt to provide evidence from each text or to analyse the features identified. These responses were often brief, focused more – occasionally entirely – on the extract than on their own directed response, and tended to summarise content rather than to analyse comparatively, with few or no supporting examples from the texts. They were often very general, showing little awareness of how writers' stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning. Some candidates mainly listed the conventions of writing associated with the genres; and merely pointed out the variety of sentence types or length of paragraphs without any reference to effect.

In respect of **form**, many responses involved obvious statements: 'one is a news article, and the other is an email' was usual. Candidates often had a stereotyped notion of emails: they are 'informal' and they are 'chatty'; they are 'short' compared to other forms of writing. This stereotype was exemplified in their writing pieces and reflected in their commentaries and usually hindered the effectiveness of their pieces. That said, candidates generally compared the audience of each text: the newspaper article was addressed to a wider, public audience; the email was more personal in being addressed to a single individual in a company. Some consideration was given to the purpose of each text: both informed and both involved 'a call to action'. Clear responses compared the conventions of each form: the use of the headline and subheading in the news article; the use of subject line, salutation and valediction in the email. More detailed responses considered how each text addressed its audience in terms of the register employed and also considered how each text targeted its audience in terms of number and person. A few candidates compared the conventional uses of passive and active voice.

With regard to **structure**, many responses were limited in that they simply itemised the paragraphs in each piece and discussed their lengths, often at length. Such responses also discussed long and short sentences in a limited manner. Clear responses compared the ways in which the setting out of 'problem and solution' governed the structure of each text (referring to the bulleted list in the newspaper article and their own usage where this had been deployed), with a few candidates discussing the conventional use of the 'inverted pyramid' in the newspaper article. Some consideration was given to the opening and closure of each text and to the ways in which 'card stacking' was employed in the newspaper article (with its use of dates, statistics, quotations and/or direct speech) to endorse the assertions presented. The latter was compared to the use of rhetorical features in the email – hypophora, repetition, metaphor and emotive language were usual – that served to affirm the demand(s) being made.

For comments on **language**, comparisons were often formulaic. It was usual for candidates to respond in terms of logos, ethos and pathos. Candidates noted the use of dates, statistics and expert opinion/advice (logos) in the newspaper article and compared this to the use of emotive language and rhetorical devices in their emails (pathos). Candidates commented on the credibility that the former lent to the newspaper article, with one candidate noting that 'quotes from experts have more provenance'. Low-frequency and high-frequency lexis was compared; however, there was often misunderstanding about low frequency, and candidates commented on the third person, factual/objective language of the newspaper article as opposed to their own use of subjective/emotive language, e.g. 'as our environment dies, your business grows', 'your pollution is a silent genocide'. A few candidates noted the use of the emotive metaphor in the newspaper article (*their dark side*) and discussed the 'loaded language' in the reference to *virgin* plastic, with one candidate commenting that this is 'an uncomfortable term' to give to something new or 'untainted given its destructive nature'. Many candidates compared the tones of each text, commenting on features that suggested that each message was serious and urgent. Several candidates compared the newspaper article's use of kairos to their own where this was employed; *the time for changing the future of plastics in our world, however, is now* was cited.

Candidates would be well advised to note that 'comparative' is the most discriminating skill in terms of analysis – analysis that not only explains how a technique works generally but also how specific effects are created that relate to audience and shape meaning. Furthermore, responses would benefit from clear references to the relevant text; this is particularly important when following a topical approach.

Question 2

Candidates were asked to read an article from a travel company's newsletter about a hiking tour of the little-known Marche region of Italy.

They were then required to analyse the text, focusing on form, structure and language.

Most of the responses began with the overview of purpose and audience and commented on the descriptive and reflective nature of the excerpt.

There were many detailed and clear responses about the conventions of the **form**. Most candidates had a clear sense of the 'soft sales' tactic of Sawday's travel company and commented on conventions including the informative, persuasive and entertaining features of the text, together with the ways in which it appealed to 'an audience of like-minded hikers', the 'outdoorsy type' or 'travel aficionados' or even 'environmentalists', given that, as one candidate noted, hiking is 'low on environmental impact'. For many, the primary purpose of this text was to provide a first-hand account of a 'unique' and 'fantastic' vacation in Italy. Hence, the geographical overview of the location together with place names and culture-specific building names have 'an exotic appeal'; the 'striking geological features' lend Marche its 'prehistoric', 'unchanging' and 'magical' air; the 'conducive climate' is 'perpetually sunny'. The secondary purpose, albeit 'subliminal', was to convince the company's newsletter readers of 'the joys of travelling with Sawday's'. Hence, this 'representative' hiker encountered only 'welcoming and helpful hosts and people'; they were only exposed to 'great sensory experiences' (visual, auditory and gustatory) and had consequently found 'a quiet, hidden oasis unbothered by people' with 'relatively cheap food'. A few candidates commented on the irony of Sawday's soft sell: 'with an influx of tourism' how long would 'the unchanged beauty of the Marche still be there?'

In respect of features of **structure**, most candidates commented on the chronological features of this text and the ways in which the writer's shift to past tense in the opening paragraph to recount events keeps the reader engaged: 'the reader feels as though they are there' was usual. Reference was made to long and short paragraphs and to the variety of sentence structures, with a few candidates accurately identifying and effectively discussing the writer's use of sentence fragments and ellipses, such as *Slowly and simply* and *The same* Several candidates commented on the writer's zoom-in-zoom-out technique, zooming out, in third person, say, to provide factual details about the location of Marche (*Marche is squidged between ...*) and zooming in, in first person, to provide anecdotal evidence (*we had lunch...*). Some candidates commented on the impactful opening of the first sentence with its 'implicitly emphatic endorsement' of this trip (*We never regret ...*) and the 'whimsical feeling' of the text's closure: Marche is 'not only a region of elegant ease but it exemplifies the *Italy of yesteryear*'. For some candidates, the text has a kind of 'circularity' in being 'punctuated by the writer's musings about the present and the past': *How long had this view remained unchanged?* and *How different was it then compared to now?*

Regarding **language**, most candidates commented on the first-person plural, anonymous and 'bubbly' voice of this text, with more detailed responses noting the shifts to third. The writer's language was seen as 'overwhelmingly positive' or 'friendly' with many candidates noting that, in addition to contraction and colloquial phrases, the writer's informal register could be located in the first-name terms of Madeline, Tim and Jimmy which 'intensified the welcoming air'. Candidates commented on the range of sensory imagery, as above, and the writer's use of alliteration and sibilance – the latter *Slowly and simply* being employed to 'enhance peacefulness' and the 'unchanged rhythms of life'. For many candidates, this usage together with the writer's repetition/anaphora of 'same' (*same handsome farmhouse; same dramatic rolling countryside; same glow; same place*) were referenced which not only 'endorsed Marche as a peaceful getaway' but virtually 'guaranteed it for everyone'. Repetition and hyperbole were also noted in the writer's references to size. Proportions and even portions were seen as 'larger than life' – *giant prehistoric sea, giant chasms, giant drifts of snow* and *giant portions of delicious pasta* were referenced. Even Tim's *treasure trove of knowledge*, variously identified as metaphor, cliché or hyperbole, embodied, for many, not only 'value but disproportional size'. For many candidates, exaggeration or hyperbole extended to the writer's descriptions of the views. They are not just simply *beautiful*, they are *breathtaking* and the 'scenery is described in a 'magical', 'enchanted' or 'mythical' way with its references to *an aura of ancient wilderness* and *wolves living high up*. The writer's 'theme of adventure' was commented upon. This hiking trip offered 'something for every adventurous type': *chance encounters, slow exploration* and even the discovery of a *long-hidden route*. As one candidate put it, 'with all this on offer, why would not you want to go?'

In summary, stronger responses generally showed awareness of the conventions of travel writing especially chronological structure, location-focused and impressionistic descriptions and anecdotal or experiential content with retrospective observations integrated, in addition to the dissemination of facts, for example

place names and the reasonable cost of lunch at €5. These responses engaged well with figurative language features, especially the metaphor *treasure trove of knowledge* as above, instances of personification *handsome farmhouse* and *gentle hum of village life* and the rhetorical questions that invite a reader's reflection on the immediately preceding content. They were also sharply focused on lexis conveying the enjoyment of hiking/walking and geographic and natural features, including ones observed at a distance such as *the Apennines, still snow-capped even in May*, and gastronomic *delicacies*.

Weaker responses usually demonstrated a struggle to make more than a few disparate observations about textual features with correct use of terminology, identification of an apt example and some attempt to describe (if not explain) a direct effect created. They were often unclear about the nature of the relationship between the writer (as one member of the walking group) and the occupants of Marche they encountered, especially Tim and Jimmy; these responses did not clearly distinguish between the region of Marche and the country, Italy.

Such weaker responses often described style, mood, and vocabulary as having 'positive connotations' or 'negative connotations', with little further elaboration or definition. Similarly, a range of precisely constructed language effects were sometimes summed up as 'creating an interesting image' or 'to paint a picture'. It is important that candidates use precise terminology to access the higher levels. These weaker responses tended to list techniques without reference, example or explanation.

Basic responses offered very generalised comments. These responses identified some language features but offered minimal analysis. These weaker responses tended to summarise the contents of the text and they generally did this at great length.

Selection of evidence by way of quotation was not always expertly used in these weaker responses, with some candidates quoting at far too great a length, or merely referring to a range of lines. Quotation from the text should always be precise, as concise as possible and linked to explanatory comments. Candidates should be advised to: use quotations, evidence and evaluation to produce precise, meaningful commentaries; use appropriate language to link quotations and evidence with explanatory comments; and integrate quotations and evidence into a cohesive argument.

It would be helpful for candidates to be aware that the discriminator 'analysis is coherent and effectively structured' is a feature of the higher levels; a whole-text approach can often provide sophisticated and coherent analysis. Another consequence of the line by-line approach was repetition of the same point, such as the author's use of alliteration. It is worth remembering that the same point cannot be rewarded twice.

Candidates would also be well advised to avoid dependence on too formulaic an approach to analysis. The categorisation of elements of a text as representative of 'ethos' or 'logos' or 'pathos', for example, needs to be precisely developed by reference to exact effects of language. Candidates should also be advised that a glossary is not part of a given text but provided by Cambridge to provide definitions for words or phrases that may be unfamiliar, or that have specialised or technical meaning within the context of the document – consequently, they have no need to comment on it.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 9093/12 Reading</p>
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Key messages

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- Candidates need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the linguistic elements and features of texts, such as parts of speech/word classes, vocabulary, figurative language, phonology, morphology, rhetorical devices, voice, aspect, tense, modality, narrative perspective, word ordering and sentence structure, paragraph- and text-level structure, formality/informality of tone, and pragmatics.
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- For **Question 1(a)**, the accompanying instructions and text provide the context and background information to guide the candidates as they produce their directed response. Candidates should use these to make carefully considered choices of appropriate lexis, register and tone to suit the task set and ensure they achieve the highest possible standards of accuracy and expression in their writing.
- For **Question 1(b)**, candidates need to ensure they compare the form, structure and language of the original text and their own, with a clear emphasis on selecting elements from both texts that may be analysed to demonstrate how writers' stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning.
- For **Question 2**, candidates need to comment on the form, structure and language of a text. They are required to identify characteristic features of the text, relate them to the meaning, context and audience of the writing, organise information in their answers, and write using clear and appropriate language.
- A secure degree of technical accuracy – especially in the use of spelling, punctuation and tenses – is required at this level.

General comments

The rubric was generally understood, with only a few candidates omitting either a part of a question or a full question. However, there were some brief responses to **Question 1(a)**. Candidates are required to write between 150 and 200 words. While there is no direct penalty for failing to adhere to this requirement, this is an aspect of the response's relevance to purpose. As such, adherence to the word limit is assessed as part of the second bullet point of AO2. Candidates should remember that responses are marked for task focus and relevant content as well as expression and accuracy. Largely speaking, though, the paper was handled with understanding and competence. Only a few responses suffered from a lack of the necessary language skills for text analysis. This session there was evidence that some candidates struggled to manage their time appropriately, consequently leaving the last response incomplete.

There were some strikingly perceptive and well-written text analyses. However, a few responses were inhibited where they demonstrated a lack of the necessary language skills and knowledge of critical terminologies.

Specific language features were generally well understood, but candidates must ensure that the features they identify are genuinely present in the passage and that they use specific examples of language use to support the identification of those features and link them to effects created. Most candidates clearly

understood the need to make precise connections between language features and their contribution to the full effect of the passage.

Question 1(a) is a directed response task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by the language, style and structure to fit a specific form, purpose and audience – in this session the original text was an article from an online newspaper. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this session it was an advertisement (150 – 200 words) in response to the article. Careful consideration of the target audience is required. Candidates are expected to write clearly, accurately with relevant content and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is indispensable in responding to **Question 1(b)**, where candidates are required to compare the text produced for **1(a)** with the given text, analysing form, structure and language. Here, candidates are assessed for their ability to demonstrate comparative understanding of texts with clear reference to characteristic features and comparative analysis of form, structure and language and how a writer's stylistic choices relate to audience to shape meaning. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach in their response to **Question 1(b)**. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a conclusion can be used to emphasise the essential similarities and differences between the two texts. Those who adopted a topical approach tended to demonstrate the most comprehensive linguistic understanding. Some candidates compared the given text for **Question 1** with that given for **Question 2**, generally writing their comparative commentary after writing their directed response. These candidates did not respond appropriately to the **Question 1(b)** text analysis task.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed on demonstration of their understanding of a text in terms of meaning, context and audience with reference to characteristic features and their analysis of form, structure and language. In the case of most candidates, there was a clear understanding of the need to make precise connections between language features and their contribution to the full effect of the given text. Less successful responses could often have been improved through more precise use of language to link evidence with explanatory comments; phrases such as 'the writer is trying to persuade the readers' and 'this helps the readers to imagine' cannot be considered useful text analysis.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates were asked to read an article from an online newspaper about an innovative art exhibition in Madrid, Spain. They were required to write an advertisement to be published in a brochure publicising the exhibition.

Candidates understood the conventions of writing an advertisement to publicise the Brueghel exhibition. Most identified the product/service/experience and outlined what the experience consisted of; they used persuasive language to appeal to the audience, they included information or facts to support the articulation and take up of the experience and many ended with a call to action. These features formed a point of structural comparison in **Question 1(b)**.

Most candidates paid attention to their audience, with many adopting a broad stance whilst others targeted a niche market: 'Art lovers, how many times have you looked at a piece of art ... if you can relate, I have just the exhibit for you'. A range of strategies were adopted to engage. Some adopted an effective title: 'The Scents of Art', 'Palette of Odours', 'Time Travel through the Sense of Smell'. Others began their pieces in direct address – for example, 'Have you ever been enchanted by a painting' or first person, 'Here at the Prado, we ...' and some in third, 'They say that it is relaxing to get lost in a good book every once in a while, perhaps, a similar notion could be applied to paintings.'

More successful responses focused on the purpose to inform, adapting details from the source text to include information about the location, information about the specific exhibit itself, with the focus on *The Sense of Smell* and pithy information about the *curators and researchers* involved in creating the scents together with dates and times of the event. These responses provided persuasive and entertaining elements, employing number and person (as above) together with a range of rhetorical devices and varied register, tone and mood. Some pieces were also advisory,

providing advice about what type of experience was to be had from such an event: 'unforgettable' and one that will furnish you with a 'memory that you will hold on to dearly'.

Candidates who wrote the most effective advertisements utilised topic sentences to signpost aspects of significant interest concerning the exhibition (visual art enhanced by olfactory stimulus and the unexpected opportunity to encounter *the smell of the past*; they selected specific details that might appeal especially to art lovers, for example Brueghel's use of *single-hair brushes and a magnifying glass* as opposed to those that might pique the interest of a broad audience such as the *olfactory memory* concept and commonly encountered examples from childhood and during notable life milestones. These more effective responses made a virtue of the involvement of *Puig perfume house* as a 'selling' point and clearly identified that there are five paintings to view. In terms of form, the most effective adopted journalese paragraphing – typically between one to three sentences long – to convey information efficiently; contact and location information was rendered in a final section with reference to *room 83* and the recommended viewing time of 45 minutes.

Weaker responses did not successfully identify content that best suited the purpose of the directed response task, i.e. an advertisement publicising the exhibition. Some of these weaker responses employed aggressive vocabulary and strident declarative sentences, whereas viewing an exhibition is not an urgent activity but a leisure one. These responses often showed errors with use of grammar and incorrect tenses, frequently as a result of overambition with language choices. Several of these weaker responses offered a summary of the extract.

Getting the balance between showing understanding of the text and crafting an effective response is the key to this question and the tendency was perhaps to be a little too safe. It is important for candidates to be aware that understanding is not necessarily demonstrated by rearranging chunks of the text. Often, the most effective writing came at the end of responses when candidates freed themselves from checklisting the text.

Most of the candidates abided by the guidelines concerning the length of their responses (150–200 words). Several candidates wrote considerably shorter pieces that did not best suit the form and purpose specified.

- (b) Candidates were asked to compare their advertisement with the article, analysing form, structure and language.

To do well in this task, candidates need to analyse form, structure and language and to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them, i.e. the text given and the one that they have just created. An integrated approach is more effective for this type of comparative task than dealing with each text separately. Where textual evidence is selected, candidates should remember to offer clear analysis of how the writer's choices of form, structure and language relate to audience and shape meaning.

It is advised that candidates focus on the difference in formality, tone and registers, and collaborate language with form and structure to give a more robust response in terms of their analysis.

Generally, candidates demonstrated adequate knowledge and understanding of a range of conventions of an article and an advertisement.

Specifically in respect of **form**, in more successful responses, candidates compared the ways in which the conventions of the article from an online newspaper and an advertisement were adhered to in the texts. They compared the purpose of each text: to inform, entertain and promote; to inform and to persuade and/or 'to entice'. Many candidates noted the overlap in the purpose of each text since 'they both promote the exhibition' in various ways. Candidates compared the audience of each piece, noting that the audience of the article is broader than that of the advertisement which is directed more towards 'Art lovers' and those who wish, specifically, 'to learn about the latest exhibition', such as 'tourists'. Candidates also compared the register of each piece; the article being considered largely formal with some degree of informality as exemplified in the 'direct quotes' and given the contractions employed; the advertisement being considered largely informal or 'relaxed', given the uses of direct address 'to appeal and to personalise' together with colloquial language, 'vivid imagery' and 'rhetorical features' to 'glamorise' and 'entice'. The tone of each piece was compared. The tone of the article was considered more informative, 'serious' and 'matter of fact' whilst the advertisement was considered more persuasive, 'conversational' and 'lively'. Candidates noted that both pieces made use of dates and names to provide credibility.

In terms of **structure**, whilst some candidates simply enumerated paragraphs, in more successful responses, some candidates compared the use of headings. The most effective commented on the pun in the title of the article with its allusion to 'sense' in 'scents' whilst their own titles served to 'draw in readers and pique their interest to attend'. For some candidates, the article's structure was arranged in 'bite sized' paragraphs, incorporating direct speech, to recount the exhibition creators' thought process as well as the steps taken to bring this idea to fruition, whilst the advert 'summarized' key details from the text to provide 'a more punchy overview' of the event. Hence, the article showcases 'a range of perspectives' whilst the advert has 'only one'. For a few candidates, the structure of the article had a 'narrative' quality with various 'shifts in focus' which are supported by a 'different tense'; the advert employed 'a range of subheadings and paragraphs' for easy navigation whilst providing 'immediacy' in its use of present and future tense. Some candidates compared the opening and closing sections of the article with their adverts and how the references to historical fact and *olfactory memory* had formed the basis of their response: thus, there were many references to time travel to engage an audience and to *the smell of the past*. Several candidates commented on how they had closed on a 'call to action', unlike the article – *Join us at Prado* – whilst others provided website information and an address.

In terms of **language**, candidates compared how each text addressed its audience. They commented on the mixture of third and first person in the article and their own uses of first and third person and direct address. The register and tone of each text was compared, with one candidate noting that 'the formality of the newspaper article is heightened by the integration of an historical lexical field' that conveyed 'objectivity' and 'seriousness' whilst the informal register of the advert with its 'chatty tone' conveyed a 'light-hearted mood'. For some, the article employed mainly declaratives 'that describe, inform and explain' whilst their own text employed interrogatives, exclamatives and imperatives to engage, to excite and/or to prompt. Other key features of language included comparisons of the variety of listing in both. The positive lexis of each was noted together with alliteration, intensifiers and vivid imagery where it was employed.

Generally, stronger responses showed a clear distinction between the conventions of an article and those of an advertisement; these stronger responses regarded the extract and their own report as of equal status and commented on both extensively. Such responses also offered a considerable amount of detail to illustrate points, showing a strong grasp of each feature and detail selected, and how each related to audience and shaped meaning. Stronger responses focused more attention to comparison of language; they recognised the value of extensively analysing the advertisement produced for **Question 1(a)**; engaged effectively with adjectives and verbs when commenting on the visual aspects of Brueghel's work; the strongest engaged with *palette of odours* as a 'cross-sensory metaphor'.

More successful responses did not take a reflective commentary approach when analysing their own writing, which is a requirement of Paper 2.

Comparative comments in limited responses were often brief, focused more – occasionally entirely – on the extract than on their own directed response, and tended to summarise content rather than to analyse comparatively, with few or no supporting examples from the texts. They were often very general, showing little awareness of how writers' stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning. Some candidates mainly listed the conventions of writing associated with the respective genres; and merely pointed out the variety of sentence types or length of paragraphs without any reference to effect. Some responses could have explored in more detail the formality of each text type. Comparative points were often straightforward with little attempt to provide evidence from each text or to analyse the features identified. These weaker responses focused on a comparison of content and neglected language analysis.

Candidates would be well advised to note that 'comparative' is the most discriminating skill in terms of analysis – analysis that not only explains how a technique works generally but also how specific effects are created that relate to audience and shape meaning. Furthermore, responses would benefit from clear references to the relevant text; this is particularly important when following a topical approach.

Question 2

Candidates were asked to read an extract from an article from an online sports magazine, featuring an interview with South African cricketer Shabnim Ismail.

They were then required to analyse the text, focusing on form, structure and language.

There was wide range of responses with a considerable number showing sophisticated understanding and analysis. There were only a few short answers.

In terms of **form**, stronger responses addressed the conventions of this article, paying specific attention to the fact that it features an interview. Candidates commented on the appeal of the title and the way that it connects with *speed demon* in the subheading and with the references to speed in the body of the text, *faster and faster*. They were clear that the writer's use of direct address in the opening of the first paragraph, referred to as 'synthetic personalisation' by one candidate, was a device used to hook or engage an audience of 'cricket lovers' or a broader audience of 'sports fans' and that 'a challenge' to that audience was presented in *But you are unlikely to guess what it was*. Candidates were clear that the question presented in 'the single sentence paragraph' by the interviewer *A what?* was directed at Shabnim Ismail, herself, and that her use of direct address in response to the question was 'informal and colloquial' and addressed to the interviewer. Candidates recognised the article's primary purposes – to inform and entertain – commenting that the 'light tone' of the piece together with 'the casual interview' style fulfilled one of the conventions of a sports magazine. Many identified its secondary purpose: to inspire. For one candidate, the text 'offers inspiration to similar young girls to pursue their dreams without fear'. For another, the text 'acknowledges women's sports' and promotes 'a sense of equality between men and women', given the professionalisation of women's cricket. Candidates commented on the writer's use of factual background details (the dates and the names of people and places) as a convention of the form which 'lends credibility' to the text. They commented on the mixed register of the article, noting the formality of the interviewer's third person, the interviewer's informative 'asides' and the informality of the direct speech enclosed by quotation marks with its contractions and 'culturally specific slang as in *rag* and *vibe*'. Candidates commented on the mixture of tenses of the text, given its partly 'biographical nature' and that the interviewer is reporting on what the interviewees say 'to give the impression that the interview is live'. Further, the interviewees', themselves, comment on the present situation – *She's a competitor* – and on the past – *she just wanted to bowl*. Their quotations 'provide authenticity'.

In terms of **structure**, in addition to comments on paragraph length and the variety of sentence structure, stronger responses included comment on the non-chronological nature of this text – for one candidate, the structure could best be described as 'choppy' with its many 'shifts from interviewer to interviewee'. For some candidates, even though Shabnim Ismail is named in the title of the text, the audience's curiosity is aroused by the subheading, because Shabnim Ismail 'is feared by batters across the world'. This 'sets the tone' of the piece and 'connects with the content and structure' of the text: 'anecdotal evidence is interspersed with journalistic comment' to explain 'how she became 'feared''. For one candidate, direct audience engagement 'is limited to the beginning of the text'. This informal approach is balanced out by 'the more formalised register used by the interviewer throughout' the rest of the text. For some candidates, the structure was cyclical in that it begins with *From playing in the streets with boys* and ends with Ismail's nostalgic closure, *I miss those days [...] going to play with the boys*.

For **language**, in addition to features mentioned above, successful responses commented on the subject-specific lexis of the text with its references to sports and cricket. They noted the contrast or juxtaposition between Ismail's 'friendly', 'humble' or 'down to earth' tone and the description of her as a '*speed demon*' with its connotations of 'malevolence'. Candidates also noted that this phrase implied not only her 'talent and passion' but also her 'perseverance' and 'determination' to succeed in her chosen sport. Indeed, for several candidates, Ismail succeeded against the odds, given that she did not 'have much' and that she was surrounded by boys. The pun in the title of the text was noted, with candidates commenting on the humour involved, given that Ismail is like *fast bowler Beuran Hendricks, who grew up not far from Ismail's childhood home*. The writer's use of hyperbole or metaphor or idiom was noted in *born to bowl* which suggested 'predetermination'. In addition, Hendrick's testimony served an endorsement of Ismail's 'strength of mind' in overcoming 'gender barriers': *you could see the character in her eyes*. Finally, many candidates commented on Ismail's sense of community and familial pride, referring to her repetition of first-person plural, *we had, we'd play, we'd get* and referring to her descriptions of her mother as a *role model* and having *her genes*. One candidate commented on Ismail's sense of 'nationalism' in being picked for Cricket South Africa.

The most effective responses showed highly perceptive understanding of how the article appeals to cricket fans or sports fans in general, but also those who are or might be inspired by Shabnim's struggle for

acceptance as a female cricketer in a male-dominated cricket establishment and particularly her determination and perseverance: *We would rag her, He used to hit me now and then, I had to make a decision, playing with the boys definitely made me stronger*. These responses showed understanding of interview content, including the way that Hendricks' biographical 'character sketch' contributions were integrated into the writer's over-arching reportage that chiefly focuses on the past rather than the present. For these most effective responses, there was not only strong engagement with lexis focused on cricket but also the praise offered – *born to bowl, accomplished* –, being nurtured – *coaxed, cultivating her love for the game* – and humbleness – *I was a bit scared*. Furthermore, they commented on the irony that Shabnim is a fast bowler whose prior day-to-day job when still an amateur was a *speed-point technician*, initially described in the given text as *first paid job had something to do with speed*. These effective responses were often characterised by the greater clarity in the critical terminology employed in analysing form, structure and language.

Weaker responses did not recognise the function of title and sub-heading as journalistic conventions; they did not appreciate much of the content beyond that related to cricket and especially fast bowling; these responses showed apparent confusion by the non-chronological structure. Furthermore, these responses often included general comments and described style, mood, and vocabulary as having 'positive connotations' or 'negative connotations', with little further elaboration or definition.

Similarly, a range of precisely constructed language effects were sometimes summed up as 'creating an interesting image' or 'stopping the reader from being bored'. It is important that candidates use precise terminology to access the higher levels. These weaker responses listed techniques without reference, example or explanation.

Such weaker responses mostly adopted a paragraph-by-paragraph approach, using the phrase 'in the ... paragraph' or adopted an approach to analysis which ranged haphazardly across the text. It would be helpful for candidates to be aware that the discriminator 'analysis is coherent and effectively structured' is a feature of the higher levels; a whole-text approach can often provide sophisticated and coherent analysis. Another consequence of the line by-line approach was repetition of the same point, such as the author's use of alliteration. It is worth remembering that the same point cannot be rewarded twice.

Basic responses offered very generalised comments. These responses identified some language features but offered minimal analysis. These weaker responses tended to summarise the contents of the text and they generally did this at great length.

Selection of evidence by way of quotation was not always expertly used in these weaker responses, with some candidates quoting at far too great a length, or merely referring to a range of lines. Quotation from the text should always be precise, as concise as possible and linked to explanatory comments. Candidates should be advised to: use quotations, evidence and evaluation to produce precise, meaningful commentaries; use appropriate language to link quotations and evidence with explanatory comments; and integrate quotations and evidence into a cohesive argument.

Candidates would also be well advised to avoid dependence on too formulaic an approach to analysis. The categorisation of elements of a text as representative of 'ethos' or 'logos' or 'pathos', for example, needs to be precisely developed by reference to exact effects of language. Candidates should also be advised that a glossary is not part of a given text but provided by Cambridge to provide definitions for words or phrases that may be unfamiliar, or that have specialised or technical meaning within the context of the document – consequently, they have no need to comment on it.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 9093/13 Reading</p>
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Key messages

- Candidates need to ensure that they read a wide range of material from a range of diverse sources such as advertisements, brochures, leaflets, editorials, news stories, articles, reviews, blogs, investigative journalism, letters, podcasts, (auto)biographies, travel writing, diaries, essays, scripted speech, narrative writing, and descriptive writing.
- Candidates need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the linguistic elements and features of texts, such as parts of speech/word classes, vocabulary, figurative language, phonology, morphology, rhetorical devices, voice, aspect, tense, modality, narrative perspective, word ordering and sentence structure, paragraph- and text-level structure, formality/informality of tone, and pragmatics.
- Candidates should develop an intimate knowledge and understanding of the conventions and discourses associated with a diverse range of genres, styles and contexts, enabling them to respond reflectively, analytically, discursively and creatively, as is appropriate to the task or context.
- For **Question 1(a)**, the accompanying instructions and text provide the context and background information to guide the candidates as they produce their directed response. Candidates should use these to make carefully considered choices of appropriate lexis, register and tone to suit the task set and ensure they achieve the highest possible standards of accuracy and expression in their writing.
- For **Question 1(b)**, candidates need to ensure they compare the form, structure and language of the original text and their own, with a clear emphasis on selecting elements from both texts that may be analysed to demonstrate how writers' stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning.
- For **Question 2**, candidates need to comment on the form, structure and language of a text. They are required to identify characteristic features of the text, relate them to the meaning, context and audience of the writing, organise information in their answers, and write using clear and appropriate language.
- A secure degree of technical accuracy – especially in the use of spelling, punctuation and tenses – is required at this level.

General comments

The rubric was generally understood, with only a few candidates omitting either a part of a question or a full question. However, there were some brief responses to **Question 1(a)**. Candidates are required to write between 150 and 200 words. While there is no direct penalty for failing to adhere to this requirement, this is an aspect of the response's relevance to purpose. As such, adherence to the word limit is assessed as part of the second bullet point of AO2. Candidates should remember that responses are marked for task focus and relevant content as well as expression and accuracy. Largely speaking, though, the paper was handled with understanding and competence. Only a few responses suffered from a lack of the necessary language skills for text analysis. This session there was evidence that some candidates struggled to manage their time appropriately, consequently leaving the last response incomplete.

There were some strikingly perceptive and well-written text analyses. However, a few responses were inhibited where they demonstrated a lack of the necessary language skills and knowledge of critical terminologies.

Specific language features were generally well understood, but candidates must ensure that the features they identify are genuinely present in the passage and that they use specific examples of language use to support the identification of those features and link them to effects created. Most candidates clearly

understood the need to make precise connections between language features and their contribution to the full effect of the passage.

Question 1(a) is a directed response task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by the language, style and structure to fit a specific form, purpose and audience – in this session the original text was an article from a newspaper website. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this session it was the opening of a speech (150 – 200 words) in response to the article. Careful consideration of the target audience is required. Candidates are expected to write clearly, accurately with relevant content and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is indispensable in responding to **Question 1(b)**, where candidates are required to compare the text produced for **1(a)** with the given text, analysing form, structure and language. Here, candidates are assessed for their ability to demonstrate comparative understanding of texts with clear reference to characteristic features and comparative analysis of form, structure and language and how a writer's stylistic choices relate to audience to shape meaning. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach in their response to **Question 1(b)**. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a conclusion can be used to emphasise the essential similarities and differences between the two texts. Those who adopted a topical approach tended to demonstrate the most comprehensive linguistic understanding. Some candidates compared the given text for **Question 1** with that given for **Question 2**, generally writing their comparative commentary after writing their directed response. These candidates did not respond appropriately to the **Question 1(b)** text analysis task.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed on demonstration of their understanding of a text in terms of meaning, context and audience with reference to characteristic features and their analysis of form, structure and language. In the case of most candidates, there was a clear understanding of the need to make precise connections between language features and their contribution to the full effect of the given text. Less successful responses could often have been improved through more precise use of language to link evidence with explanatory comments; phrases such as 'the writer is trying to persuade the readers' and 'this helps the readers to imagine' cannot be considered useful text analysis.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates were asked to read an article about bird conservation from a newspaper website. They were required to write the text for an opening of a speech to their classmates about the action that their community could take to help protect the local population of wild bird species.

Candidates understood the conventions of writing an opening of a speech: they stated the topic of their speech, used direct address to the audience, attempted to make the content relatable, most wrote in a register appropriate to their class and content showed unity, coherence and adequate development. These features formed a point of structural comparison in **Question 1(b)**. Weaker responses resembled generic essays, with no real engagement with their peers as an audience.

Most candidates had read the rubric carefully and understood the purpose of the speech opening: to persuade and inform their classmates about what action their community could take to help protect the local population of wild bird species. In terms of form, there was generally a suitable salutation – 'Good morning to all gathered here', 'Everyone in this room', 'Hello students' – and good use of topic sentences to guide the listeners through the content of the opening of a speech. There was some effective use of repetition (including anaphora) and triadic constructions.

Stronger responses employed symbolism with regards to the birds to better enhance their speeches, often having a sense of patriotism, referencing the 'bald eagle' and playing to their heritage in order to evoke a response from the audience. This was coupled with the use of rhetorical devices – 'Will you stand with me?' – and even shocking facts and statements – 'Imagine knowing today would be the last time you heard a bird' – further creating a link between cultural heritage, patriotism, and a sense of accountability and collective responsibility to our 'feathered friends'. Moreover, candidates' use of puns related to birds often showed a deeper understanding of the context of the situation and how language can be used effectively for a given audience and purpose. The use of anecdotes, e.g. 'I remember as a child', often created a more emotive

response, therefore allowing for the audience to resonate with familiar experiences. Such emotive phrases were then often juxtaposed with statements such as, 'But soon there will be no birds to hear', 'No chirps, no tweets' and 'They will be extinct!' effectively relaying the gravity of the situation.

Weaker responses often offered a straightforward summary of the text, tending to list information presented in the article without much apparent attempt to shape it to the requirements of the task, especially regarding form and register. Weaker responses frequently included large quantities of material lifted from the given text, especially *In the past half century, North America has lost more than one-fourth of its birds and Massive die-offs of flycatchers, swallows, bluebirds, sparrows and warblers – described as thousands of birds 'falling out of the sky' – have been recorded in recent years in New Mexico, Colorado, Texas, Arizona and Nebraska*. Alternatively, weaker responses offered very little information or content about the birds at all, focusing more on the bird's attributes and not the purpose of the task. Few such responses showed awareness of the task being an opening of (rather than a complete) a speech where they could perhaps preview the main points.

Furthermore, these weaker responses often showed errors with use of grammar and incorrect tenses, frequently as a result of overambition with language choices.

Getting the balance between showing understanding of the text and crafting an effective response is the key to this question and the tendency was perhaps to be a little too safe. It is important for candidates to be aware that understanding is not necessarily demonstrated by rearranging chunks of the text. Often, the most effective writing came at the end of responses when candidates freed themselves from checklisting the text.

Most of the candidates abided by the guidelines concerning the length of their responses (150–200 words). Several candidates wrote considerably shorter pieces that did not best suit the form and purpose specified.

- (b) Candidates were asked to compare their opening of a speech with the article, analysing form, structure and language.

To do well in this task, candidates need to analyse form, structure and language and to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them, i.e. the text given and the one that they have just created. An integrated approach is more effective for this type of comparative task than dealing with each text separately. Where textual evidence is selected, candidates should remember to offer clear analysis of how the writer's choices of form, structure and language relate to audience and shape meaning.

It is advised that candidates focus on the difference in formality, tone and registers, and collaborate language with form and structure to give a more robust response in terms of their analysis.

Generally, candidates demonstrated adequate knowledge and understanding of a range of conventions of an article and an email.

Specifically in respect of **form**, candidates compared the ways in which the conventions of a speech and the article were adhered to in the texts. They compared the purpose of each text: to inform and to outline (or persuade about) the actions that the local community could take. Candidates considered the opening of their own pieces but were often unclear or unsure about what to say about the original extract, although some made reference to the title of the article. They compared how each audience was specified by the purpose of each piece: the speech being to their peers; the article having a much wider audience. They compared the use of first person, with some noting that each text provides some 'insight' into the writer's thoughts. They commented on the register of each piece and how the audience dictated the register employed. They commented on the ways that audience was addressed in second person for the opening of the speech (as appropriate to their own writing) to provide a 'personal' tone and the ways in which the tone of the article is 'more neutral' because it is detailed and its primary purpose informative. The tone of the article was considered more informative, 'serious' and 'matter of fact' whilst the opening of the speech was considered to be more persuasive, 'conversational' and 'lively'. Candidates noted that both pieces made use of facts and geographical locations to provide credibility; one candidate astutely commented, 'The author employed the use of statistics *30 per cent of all birds are wild; the other 70 per cent are mostly poultry chickens*. By doing so the author conveys shocking statistics to

the audience, showing the gravity of the situation and bringing attention to the small number of birds that are left. This creates a call for action.'

In terms of **structure**, whilst some candidates simply enumerated paragraphs, in more successful responses, candidates compared the use of a heading/title for the article and mostly the lack of one for their own writing. Stronger responses noted that the beginning of the article referenced a poet, giving the writing a lyrical sense, and compared this with the passionate stance that they had often adopted; this allowed them to comment on the way in which the given text shifts focus from the poet's views to facts and statistics and the narrator's viewpoint. These stronger responses also noted how the use of a personal narrative enhanced the structure of the article and the way in which paragraphs were sequenced to present the personal viewpoint alongside facts – and indeed they had attempted to mirror this combination in their speech opening. Many had used short, one-sentence paragraphs in their own text, noting 'this builds anticipation', 'grabs attention', and 'the style and rhythm of short sentences can set the tone for the speech to convey the need for urgent action and be inspiring', which they then compared with the article's use of *They would not be alone* or *Their fate is ours*. Some responses commented on the way in which the final paragraph is used to prompt action in the reader and emphasise the positive impact of birds on human lives and the way in which the structure of their speech openings had 'ended' or provided a cue for continuation.

In terms of **language**, candidates compared how the use of first-person pronouns enables the reader to see things from the writer's/speaker's perspective and that the personal views and emotions expressed in the respective texts enabled the audience to connect with the originator's perspective. They compared how the use of interrogative to urge action in the article – *can we, the human race, in all our commerce and carbon-burning, somehow save our winged cousins?* – and speech opening where used – 'Where did those sounds go? We should step up to protect the birds in our area'.

Other key features of language included comparisons of the lexical field of loss in both texts, contrasted with the effect of positive language used in the final paragraph of the extract – *creates greater human satisfaction than a modest pay raise* – with that of their speech opening about the positive impact that community action could bring.

Generally, stronger responses showed a clear distinction between the conventions of an article and those of the opening of a speech. These candidates regarded the extract and their own report as of equal status and commented on both extensively. Such responses also offered a considerable amount of detail to illustrate points, showing a strong grasp of each feature and detail selected, and how each related to audience and shaped meaning. Stronger responses focused more attention to comparison of language, and they recognised the value of extensively analysing the speech opening produced for **Question 1(a)**.

More successful responses did not take a reflective commentary approach when analysing their own writing, which is a requirement of Paper 2.

Comparative comments in limited responses were often brief, focused more – occasionally entirely – on the extract than on their own directed response, and tended to summarise content rather than to analyse comparatively, with few or no supporting examples from the texts. They were often very general, showing little awareness of how writers' stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning. Some candidates mainly listed the conventions of writing associated with the respective genres; and merely pointed out the variety of sentence types or length of paragraphs without any reference to effect. Some responses could have explored in more detail the formality of each text type. Comparative points were often straightforward with little attempt to provide evidence from each text or to analyse the features identified. These weaker responses focused on a comparison of content and neglected language analysis.

Candidates would be well advised to note that 'comparative' is the most discriminating skill in terms of analysis – analysis that not only explains how a technique works generally but also how specific effects are created that relate to audience and shape meaning. Furthermore, responses would benefit from clear references to the relevant text; this is particularly important when following a topical approach.

Candidates should also be advised that a glossary is not part of a given text but provided by Cambridge to provide definitions for words or phrases that may be unfamiliar, or that have

specialised or technical meaning within the context of the document – consequently, they have no need to comment on it.

Question 2

Candidates were asked to read a piece of travel writing about a journey through the Himalayas. They were then required to analyse the text, focusing on form, structure and language.

There was wide range of responses with a considerable number showing sophisticated understanding and analysis. There were only a few short answers.

In terms of **form**, more successful responses addressed the conventions of travel writing. For one candidate, the use of the headline *Day Sixty: Tingri to Rongbuk, Tibet* with the reference to 'sixty' serves 'to underscore the lengthy and arduous nature of the journey' and inform the audience of their current location. For others, the use of the convention in the headline implies 'the aim is to document events' and 'It can be inferred that this entry is part of a series', given that the title specifically 'mentions Day Sixty'. Moreover, the headline serves 'to structure the entry from waking up to the high point of the day's journey'.

Candidates recognised the travel writing's primary purpose: to entertain. To that end, they commented on the use of first-person singular to document actions, experiences and feelings. They also commented on the use of first-person plural to create a sense of 'cohesion' amongst the travellers and Migmar. It was noted that the use of third person serves to describe the events of the day and to provide insight into the harshness of life and 'the beauty of the Tibetan culture'. In addition, setting themselves up as the traveller 'serves to emphasise the significance to what has been revealed' on this trip: 'the richness of decoration', 'Music seems to lighten the load' and 'every kind of rock formation'. For one more successful candidate, 'the different standards of life and culture' directly target the reason why we read such travel writing, adding value to the text. More successful candidates commented on the unconventional use of present tense and on the friendly, conversational tone. They noted the intention being to immerse the reader in the writing as if in 'real time' and, by doing so, the writer employs a range of sensory detail 'to engage the reader further'.

In terms of **structure**, in addition to comments on paragraph length and the variety of sentence structure, more successful responses were often characterised by comments on the chronological sequencing of the given text and the use of a heading to introduce the text with a specific day, places on the journey and to set it in context. It was noted that the 'temporal markers' (*continuing along, at one stop, we move on*) are conventional features of such a text. They noted the way in which the opening paragraph establishes the setting – *a yak calf helping itself to a bowl of water* – and commented on the way in which the text is structured to interlace personal anecdote – *I was engaged in an energy-consuming nocturnal trip, This is my first chance to have some time with Migmar* – and cultural details – *rich tradition of imaginative painting and coral earrings, flower pattern shirts and the traditional Tibetan chuba*. Sentence structure and paragraph structure were discussed; in particular, the strongest responses pointed out that the piece concludes on a 'high note' of 'awe' with 'one of the finest views in the world ... the full majestic spread of the central Himalayas' and the suggestion that the true marvels of the Himalayas are yet to come.

For **language**, in addition to features mentioned above, most noted the characteristic feature of listing and its effects, particularly with the qualities of the rock formations – *deep gullies, bluffs with soaring, scree covered slopes, exposed synclines and anticlines* – and the items of clothing worn by the locals – *big coral earrings, flower pattern shirts, the traditional Tibetan chuba*. Most identified (even if they did not discuss) the effect of the metaphoric language with the personification of the slopes as red and angry and the simile used to describe the peaks of the Central Himalayas as like white-topped waves in a frozen ocean. More successful responses made comment on the subject specific lexis of the text, with its references to the harshness of life for people living in this environment: 'etched on the faces' and 'Skin is weathered and faces prematurely aged, noses running and cheeks red and rough from the sun'. They noted the effects of contrast or juxtaposition between the harsh life of the people living in the 'shadow of the Himalayas' with the beauty of their clothing and dance and the 'richness of the decoration' and 'imaginative painting' of the Buddhist artwork. The strongest responses commented on the use of reported speech that enables the writer to involve the guide, Migmar, in telling this travel story. Furthermore, these responses discussed the use of amusing details to keep the reader engaged, such as 'an energy-consuming nocturnal strip'.

The most effective responses were often characterised by the greater clarity in the critical terminology employed in analysing form, structure and language.

Weaker responses focused more on the descriptions of the surroundings and offered a summary of *Day Sixty*. They neglected to appreciate the significance and function of the title or introductory sentence. These responses often included general comments and described style, mood, and vocabulary as having 'positive connotations' or 'negative connotations' without further elaboration or definition.

Similarly, a range of precisely constructed language effects were sometimes summed up as 'creating an interesting image' or 'stopping the reader from being bored'. It is important that candidates use precise terminology to access the higher levels. These weaker responses listed techniques without reference, example or explanation.

Such weaker responses mostly adopted a paragraph-by-paragraph approach, using the phrase 'in the ... paragraph' or adopted an approach to analysis which ranged haphazardly across the text. It would be helpful for candidates to be aware that the discriminator 'analysis is coherent and effectively structured' is a feature of the higher levels; a whole-text approach can often provide sophisticated and coherent analysis. Another consequence of the line by-line approach was repetition of the same point, such as the author's use of alliteration. It is worth remembering that the same point cannot be rewarded twice.

Basic responses offered very generalised comments. These responses identified some language features but offered minimal analysis. These weaker responses tended to summarise the contents of the text and they generally did this at great length.

Selection of evidence by way of quotation was not always expertly used in these weaker responses, with some candidates quoting at far too great a length, or merely referring to a range of lines. Quotation from the text should always be precise, as concise as possible and linked to explanatory comments. Candidates should be advised to: use quotations, evidence and evaluation to produce precise, meaningful commentaries; use appropriate language to link quotations and evidence with explanatory comments; and integrate quotations and evidence into a cohesive argument.

Candidates would also be well advised to avoid dependence on too formulaic an approach to analysis. The categorisation of elements of a text as representative of 'ethos' or 'logos' or 'pathos', for example, needs to be precisely developed by reference to exact effects of language.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 9093/21 Writing</p>

Key messages

- Candidates should manage their time carefully, allocating an equal amount of time for each section of the paper. Quite often the time spent on **Section A** seemed to have left candidates insufficient time to meet the required word count in **Section B** or to satisfactorily complete the task.
- Candidates must understand the importance of writing in clear, properly punctuated English, with accurate sentence demarcation, to perform well in this exam. Punctuation is a vital and essential aid to communication, especially as a guide to the structure of sentences, so it is imperative that candidates know and understand the basics of sentence construction if they are to succeed on this paper.
- Clear expression in simple and compound sentences with less variety is preferable to expression that does not flow, in long, rambling sentences. Some candidates lost control of grammar when they attempted to write in long, complex sentences. One error that occurred regularly was that of separating sentences with commas rather than full stops; another common error was writing in sentence fragments. Clear and accurate sentence demarcation is crucial, followed by the accurate use of a wider range of punctuation.
- Candidates should be aware that relevant content in the correct form is a key aspect of the overall assessment of responses for **Question 1(a)** and **Section B** tasks. To ensure that candidates understand the key requirements of each question, it may be helpful to underline key words within the question which indicate the specified form, content, audience and purpose of the tasks chosen. For example, in **Question 1(a)** the key instructions are to write the *opening of a story* and to *create a sense of drama and suspense*. In order to achieve the task, these instructions must be followed.
- Candidates who have difficulty with tense selection should focus on writing in one tense, preferably either the present tense or the simple past.
- Candidates should be encouraged to proofread carefully, particularly for accurate sentence demarcation and for tense confusion/inconsistency. Such errors impede, sometimes seriously, the overall sense of fluency and cohesion.
- Candidates must be aware of the need for clear paragraphing in their responses, including paragraphing for direct speech. A secure focus on structure is crucial since it helps the reader to feel that the candidate is in control of their writing.
- Candidates should be exposed to a wide variety of different text types, as outlined in the syllabus, so that they become familiar with the conventions of a variety of writing forms and purposes. They should be taught key features of those text types, to enable them to replicate these in their own writing.

General comments

Many candidates self-penalised on the grounds of rubric infringement: some **Section B** responses were appreciably short of the minimum word limit and a few candidates did not answer **Question 1(b)** at all. Some candidates wrote well over 400 words for **Question 1(a)**, often at the expense of **Section B**, which was either short or of lower quality (possibly indicating that they had run out of time to check their work).

In responses to **Question 1(a)**, stronger responses focused clearly on the question, comprising effective story openings with a clear sense of drama and suspense. They met all requirements of the question and did not waste time on vague or repetitive information, instead including significant detail and development of ideas. Weaker responses often began with lengthy, detailed accounts of morning routines before candidates seemed to run out of time to focus on the task and to create a sense of drama and suspense. Candidates

should avoid lengthy preambles before addressing the task; the guidance of 'no more than 400 words' means candidates are being guided to provide a purposeful, succinct response.

The strongest responses to **Question 1(b)** maintained a close focus on linguistic and stylistic choices, with the relationship between these features being explained and explored successfully. They used relevant terminology consistently and confidently, using language precisely and appropriately. Weaker responses focused mostly, or entirely, on content and therefore only provided minimal analysis by indirectly outlining the structure of the piece.

Stronger responses on **Section B** generally had a strong sense of the appropriate form for the task; (description, review or email), a clear focus on the question and included appropriate stylistic conventions, as well as relevant content.

Weaker responses on **Section B** generally contained frequent errors or lacked focus on what the task required. For example, some responses to **Question 2** were mainly narrative rather than descriptive; some responses to **Question 3** were simple recounts of the content of the introduction day, with very little in the way of critique or personal opinion; and some **Question 4** responses were quite repetitive and list-like, lacking any sense of responding to a newspaper article.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Shorter writing and reflective commentary

Question 1

Your teacher has asked you to write the opening of a story called *The Message*, about finding a piece of paper on your doorstep with a handwritten message on it.

- (a) Write the text for the opening of your story, using no more than 400 words. In your writing, create a sense of drama and suspense.**

While some candidates wrote complete stories and many lacked suspense and drama, some exceeded the word limit and others were underdeveloped, not making substantive use of the 400 words available. A few candidates chose to write the narrative from a third-person point of view. Many candidates wrote about a letter and a surprising number had the letters secured with a wax seal and the message written in blood.

Stronger story openings were well structured, with a focus on gradually creating drama and suspense through changes in mood. Creating a credible and viable setting was a feature of such stronger responses. The inside of houses and apartments were popular places for creating drama, with the outside representing a threat to the protagonist. Stronger responses focused on a shifting mood and atmosphere, gradually increasing tension. One candidate concentrated on sounds outside the protagonist's home; 'three gentle taps' on the front door with 'slow, quiet, scratchy sounds from upstairs' resulting in the character 'slowly opening the door'. Stronger responses paid attention to the 'handwritten message' by describing it clearly. In one response the candidate described the 'crooked, haunted looking letters and the 'cursive' writing. The note was carefully opened, increasing tension as the message was revealed. The brevity of messages often produced the most chilling effect: 'I can see you', 'I am waiting', 'See you later.'

One candidate received a message in a bottle delivered to his doorstep that he had thrown in the ocean many years previously when his mother was alive. This very thought-provoking piece on loss and grief began like this: 'I do not know exactly who returned the bottle, or how, or why they did, but I could not thank this person enough. The simple message has pulled me back from the darkest of days and brought me back to shore.'

Weaker responses often lacked in structure, frequently without any paragraph breaks at all. This affected coherence and the creative flow of the text. A common problem was inadequate or unclear punctuation, particularly the use of commas and inverted commas to indicate dialogue. There were also many instances of run-on sentences which required either a comma or coordinating conjunction to help the reader follow the main idea. There were also instances of one paragraph being constructed with one extremely long sentence yet containing multiple ideas. Many responses contained quite a lot of tense shifting.

(b) Write a reflective commentary on your text, explaining how your linguistic choices contribute to fulfilling the task set.

This question was answered poorly by many candidates. One approach that worked well for some candidates was to use a Point, Evidence, Explanation format to analyse the form, structure and language of their responses to **Question 1(a)**. They named, one by one, the techniques used, giving precise evidence from their answer and explaining the effect on the audience. However, most responses were limited in detail and did not provide evidence from their **Question 1(a)** response in their commentaries.

Most stronger responses approached this question in one of two ways, each of which proved to be successful: addressing form and structure, going through the content of the story opening and then concentrating on language; or going through the text, simultaneously analysing all language devices. Stronger responses included a range of features, such as anaphora and hypophora, and discussed their usage confidently. They gave precise examples and attempted to analyse how the writer's stylistic choices related to audience and shaped meaning, for example: 'The tactile imagery of a "horrifying chill engulfing his body" and the frequent descriptions of sweat such as "beads of sweat dotted his face" add to the tension and suspense of the opening. Furthermore, metaphorically comparing the trees to "looming stalks of wood" causes the trees to appear threatening, and as a result causes the main character to appear to be surrounded by danger.'

Many of the best responses identified the linguistic choice made, gave a short example and then explained how the choice achieved an element of suspense or had a dramatic impact on the reader. For example, one candidate wrote: 'I used first-person pronouns to involve the reader by helping them feel the speaker's fear: "My eyes widened as I realized the red ink was not ink, but blood ...". This almost makes the reader widen their own eyes in shock.'

Weaker responses tended to summarise the content of the **Question 1(a)** response rather than focus on the techniques used to build suspense and drama. They tended to mention linguistic techniques without giving examples or explaining how these different techniques and elements helped to build suspense and drama. For example, a lot of candidates commented on the chronological order of events but did not expand on the effect of the order. Focus on the number or length of paragraphs rarely led to any meaningful analysis. Some candidates listed linguistic features they said they had used without any supporting evidence: 'I used similes, metaphors, personification and short sentences.'

Many responses lacked understanding of what an analysis of the writer's stylistic choices requires. Numerous candidates had clearly been taught a range of terms, for example pathos and onomatopoeia, and some were able to identify them in their responses to **Question 1(a)**. However, there was often little attempt to explain how a technique's use furthered the writer's purpose other than making vague assertions that it created drama and suspense or that it helped the reader to understand the character.

Plenty of candidates claimed that various literary devices had been used, but failed to quote from their writing to support such claims. Often, candidates mentioned that they had included rhetorical questions; however, candidates should understand that not all questions are rhetorical – in fact most of the questions they asked in their stories about who wrote the note and why were not rhetorical. Other responses were extremely short, sometimes under 100 words, and in some case the question was not attempted.

Section B: Extended writing

Question 2 – Descriptive piece

Write a descriptive piece about a rubbish tip. In your writing, focus on colour, sound and movement to help your reader imagine the scene. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Some candidates misinterpreted the question; responses from such candidates ranged from a waiter or beauty salon worker's measly reward for a service well done, to a false tip from a police informer in an investigative raid, to others who identified a poorly-designed art tool as the rubbish tip. Description within such pieces was rewarded where it fulfilled the requirements of the question.

Stronger responses tended to be thoughtfully planned with the requirements of the task prioritised throughout. Some used original frameworks to create a cohesive image – such as following wild animals from the cold, quiet morning through a busy day and then returning to the quiet at sunset. There was also intentional focus on the three elements from the question – namely colour, sound and movement – to fully achieve the task set. The effective development of these elements using a higher level of vocabulary and complex, accurately constructed sentences is often what elevated responses to this question. For example, ‘All individual noises, the clank, the screech, the crash, the shriek, became one amorphous body that dominated all else.’ Stronger responses effectively employed descriptive techniques. Many used alliteration and onomatopoeia effectively as in, ‘The machine cracked and crashed; the insects now buzzed in a feverish and foreboding manner.’ Stronger responses featured effective use of linguistic techniques to create evocative and original imagery, such as: ‘Like a dying candlelight, like a falling soldier, like a desperate soul in their last few moments, the blades of grass descend down, down, down into darkness.’ Some focused on the workforce at the rubbish tip, as in this example: ‘Workers stream through the front gate, some of them boasting vibrantly yellow hard-hats. The crunching of their heavy boots on the gravel becomes the music to their steady march.’

Weaker responses lacked planning and so were more superficial in their descriptions, often repeating images or descriptions of the same elements. The descriptions tended to use more common vocabulary such as ‘very loud’ and tended to rely on the same techniques, whereas stronger responses tended to be characterised by a wide variety of devices. Weaker responses often also lacked control over sentence construction, with frequent sentence fragments and comma splice errors throughout.

Question 3 – Review

You recently attended an introduction day at the school you are going to join next year. You decide to write a review of the introduction day, which you will post on your blog. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Candidates were generally good at adjusting their register and tone appropriately for a blog entry of an introduction day; the degree of informality varied, only occasionally to an excessive degree that inhibited ambition and variety of expression in some cases. Candidates frequently organized their text in paragraphs focusing on different aspects of the orientation such as classrooms, cafeteria and presentations.

Stronger responses opened effectively, engaging the audience from the outset, as in this example, from a blog titled ‘Colin’s take’: ‘Hello my fellow opinionated friends! It’s your favourite commentator, Colin! Yesterday I attended East Bridlington Prep’s introduction day.’ Other openings were equally engaging, although less chatty, such as this example: ‘Introductions are scary things, often mired in mystery with no known conclusions, given the lack of familiarity between the subjects that are being introduced. Tall and imposing, with stone walls and a high spire, the Richmond Upper School casts quite the intimidating shadow in Hope’s Peak, Montana.’ Stronger reviews included variety, with appropriate register and tone, for example: ‘Furthermore, the academic achievement and success in this school rival that of college education! With pass rates of above 90 per cent in each and every subject, Bob Junior High School boasts a whopping fifteen years of being undefeated in all educational competitions, including the spelling bee.’

A simple yet effective choice, and appropriate for a blog, was to structure the response with subheadings, which avoided the repetitive structure of: ‘Next, we ...’, ‘And then we ...’. One example of incorporating headings, which took account of any emotions felt by students, included the following headings: ‘On site nerves’, ‘Guided Tour’, ‘Feeling at home’, ‘Advice from me to you’. Within each section, the candidate provided selected, concise commentary with their own point of view.

Weaker responses tended to be comprised of a step-by-step log of the activities instead of a review of the experience of the day. Many weaker responses lacked suitable focus and included unhelpful accounts of getting ready to leave the house and getting to the venue, as in this example: ‘I put my favorite outfit on and my favorite pair of shoes. I went downstairs and quickly ate my food because I did not want to miss the bus. My mom wished me good luck so I headed out the door.’ They logged their activities in a chronological fashion, taking the audience through a tedious account of the day and friends they had made. Others catalogued a list of places visited without offering critical opinion, often neglecting to clearly address the audience. Some weaker responses also lacked in development of ideas, often without paragraph breaks and falling well short of the minimum requirement of 600 words.

Question 4 – Email

You have read a newspaper article which said that people should go to shops instead of buying online, otherwise more and more shops will close. You decide to write an email to the editor, in response to this article, giving your opinion. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Writing to an editor requires a quite formal register and not all candidates acknowledged this. Not all candidates focused fully on the scenario of the question. The focus of the question concerns the matter of shops being driven out of business by online sales; for many, it became a more general tribute to the merits of one over the other. Some treated it as a binary dilemma – ‘bricks and mortar’ shops (Mom and Pop), or online (Amazon). More fully developed responses included consideration of the social significance in shops, that they are public spaces which encourage, or are necessary for, a sense of community. There were some thoughtful suggestions.

Stronger responses demonstrated several key traits and skills in this task. They used proper email formatting, including a clear subject line, appropriate salutation, and a polite sign-off. They also started with an accurate summary of the article to demonstrate understanding and relevance: ‘Dear Editor, I recently came across the article in the Fletcher Post, titled “The Death of In-Person Retail”. This article struck a chord within me; this is an issue I am passionate on, and I wholeheartedly agree with every word written.’ Their writing was clear and concise, maintaining a focused argument without digression. They used a respectful and professional tone, even when disagreeing, offering constructive criticism aimed at meaningful dialogue. Such emails featured engaging openings and memorable closings that reinforced their main points. Opinions were supported with relevant evidence and examples, sometimes including personal experiences for added depth. These emails had a logical structure with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion, ensuring an easy-to-follow argument. Effective use of language, such as clear and persuasive techniques, improved the message. These candidates paid attention to detail, evident through careful proofreading and correct formatting. They acknowledged arguments to present a balanced perspective, and their authentic voice conveyed passion and conviction, making their emails engaging and credible.

One candidate cited the ‘threat of exclusion of outdoor activities if people choose to ignore in-person shopping. The question then is: “Why go out?”’ Another point of view centred around the idea that shopping in person was ‘an outdated model’, one ‘which is out of touch with the digital world’. Some candidates adopted the persona of a shop keeper, struggling to attract customers, and one who ‘is at the mercy of the Amazon giant’. Such responses were engaging and convincing.

Weaker responses were characterized by poor structure and a lack of recognition of the purpose and audience of the writing. Many candidates simply wrote an opinion piece about shopping in general or argued for the different ways in which people get their goods delivered. Some candidates focused only on in-person shopping or online shopping and were not discursive in style, which is within the rubric for writing your own opinion. However, this led to one-sided letters that did not give scope for development of the key points and ideas. One candidate wrote: ‘I have always ordered my shopping online and I do not see that changing anytime soon. If people do not know how to use the internet to shop that is their fault and if the shops do not go online maybe they deserve to close down.’

Weaker responses offered limited development on the topic, with minimal attempts at text organisation, often with no paragraphing and inaccurate sentence demarcation further affecting coherence. These candidates tended to use ‘facts’ and ‘experts’ to support their arguments (‘83 per cent of candidates aim to keep up with global current affairs’) or rhetorical questions to strengthen their position (‘How can we deprive leaders from satisfying their curiosity?’). At times, the tone was variable or confusing, for example: ‘Good morning New Weekly US. This morning I had a fresh hot coffee when I was reading your newsletter. I want you to keep doing what you do best and publish more articles about the matter.’

Weaker responses also lacked structure, with minimal paragraphing or long paragraphs that continued on a tangent without a clear point. Weaker responses also used an inappropriate tone which was rude or disrespectful towards the editor, such as: ‘Overall, I look forward to you editing this article with the author and thinking of some better arguments. If you do not, I will make sure that no one reads ANYTHING edited by you again.’

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 9093/22 Writing</p>

Key messages

- Candidates should manage their time carefully, allocating an equal amount of time for each section of the paper. Quite often the time spent on **Section A** seemed to have left candidates insufficient time to meet the required word count in **Section B** or to satisfactorily complete the task.
- Candidates must understand the importance of writing in clear, properly punctuated English, with accurate sentence demarcation, to perform well in this exam. Punctuation is a vital and essential aid to communication, especially as a guide to the structure of sentences, so it is imperative that candidates know and understand the basics of sentence construction if they are to succeed on this paper.
- Clear expression in simple and compound sentences with less variety is preferable to expression that does not flow, in long, rambling sentences. Some candidates lost control of grammar when they attempted to write in long, complex sentences. One error that occurred regularly was that of separating sentences with commas rather than full stops; another common error was writing in sentence fragments. Clear and accurate sentence demarcation is crucial, followed by the accurate use of a wider range of punctuation.
- Candidates should be aware that relevant content in the correct form is a key aspect of the overall assessment of responses for Question 1(a) and Section B tasks. To ensure that candidates understand the key requirements of each question, it may be helpful to underline key words within the question which indicate the specified form, content, audience and purpose of the tasks chosen. For example, in **Question 1(a)** the key instructions are to **write an email** and to **focus on the importance of reading about what is happening in other countries as well as your own**. In order to achieve the task (one of the Level 3 criteria on the mark scheme) these instructions must be followed.
- Candidates who have difficulty with tense selection should focus on writing in one tense, preferably either the present tense or the simple past.
- Candidates should be encouraged to proofread carefully, particularly for accurate sentence demarcation and for tense confusion/inconsistency. Such errors impede, sometimes seriously, the overall sense of fluency and cohesion.
- Candidates must be aware of the need for clear paragraphing in their responses, including paragraphing for direct speech. A secure focus on structure is crucial since it helps the reader to feel that the candidate is in control of their writing.
- Candidates should be exposed to a wide variety of different text types, as outlined in the syllabus, so that they become familiar with the conventions of a variety of writing forms and purposes. They should be taught key features of those text types, to enable them to replicate these in their own writing.

General comments

Many candidates self-penalised on the grounds of rubric infringement: some **Section B** responses were appreciably short of the minimum word limit and a few candidates did not answer **Question 1(b)** at all. Some candidates wrote well over 400 words for **Question 1(a)**, often at the expense of **Section B**, which was either short or of lower quality (possibly indicating that they had run out of time to check their work).

In responses to **Question 1(a)**, stronger responses focused clearly on the question, comprising effective emails which usually clearly referenced the editor's article and the editor's viewpoints. They ensured a clear structure and format, including a concise subject line, polite salutation, brief introduction, logically organized body, summarizing conclusion, and polite signature with their full name and credentials. Weaker responses were often disorganized, with points presented haphazardly, and did not provide a summarizing conclusion.

They inadequately engaged with the original article, often failing to mention its title or publication date and providing a poor summary.

The strongest responses to **Question 1(b)** maintained a close focus on linguistic and stylistic choices, with the relationship between these features being explained and explored successfully. They used relevant terminology consistently and confidently, using language precisely and appropriately. Weaker responses focused mostly, or entirely, on content and therefore only provided minimal analysis by indirectly outlining the structure of the piece.

Stronger responses on **Section B** generally had a strong sense of the appropriate form for the task; (speech, review or description), a clear focus on the question and included appropriate stylistic conventions, as well as relevant content.

Weaker responses on **Section B** generally contained frequent errors or lacked focus on what the task required. For example, some responses to **Question 2** lacked any sense of being in speech form; some responses to **Question 3** were simple recounts of the content of the cookery book, with very little in the way of critique or personal opinion; and some **Question 4** responses were mainly narrative rather than descriptive.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Shorter writing and reflective commentary

Question 1

You recently read a newspaper article which said that people are only interested in news stories about their country. You decide to write an email to the editor, in response to this article, giving your opinion.

- (a) Write the text for your email, using no more than 400 words. In your writing, focus on the importance of reading about what is happening in other countries as well as your own.**

Many candidates used the correct format of an email with a greeting and sign off; some offered fictitious email addresses and a subject line. The main idea in nearly all responses was that everyone should be interested in news from around the world. Many used some real-world examples from their own countries, such as disastrous local flooding, as well as from across the world.

In stronger responses, writers identified themselves and gave a reason for writing, such as in this example: 'I am Hosean and I make it my occupation to keep track of the state of world events.' They also made up fictitious quotations from the original article in order to refute the points made, for example: 'In your article, you say that "people are struggling in a rabbit hole of crisis on crisis". You suggest that the country is going through a political crisis, economic crisis, recession and other social problems so that all the nation would care about is their views and updates on Pakistan. I would disagree on that.' Stronger responses often analysed the article and then argued with it using vivid and intelligent examples: 'For example, what care can a shopkeeper in Zurich have of elections in the United States? He does not cater to the White House. He does, however, deal in American products. Political changes inevitably ripple economies and affect prices.'

There were some very sophisticated responses with candidates revealing a good knowledge of the importance of being aware of global issues: 'In a world where fast-paced globalisation and technological change is revolutionising the way we live, we have to acknowledge that countries are increasingly interdependent on each other both economically and politically.' They were able to develop their ideas to include the political situation worldwide and how that impacts their own country, tax policies, the local economy, new innovations in technology and the advancement in AI, natural disasters, ongoing conflicts and war. They expressed their ideas in a provocative and informed way. For example: 'After all, would not you agree that the world is a web, where every decision has a domino effect?'

Weaker responses suffered due to limited development on the topic with minimal attempts at text organisation, sometimes with no paragraphing and inaccurate sentence demarcation further affecting coherence. These candidates tended to use 'facts' and 'experts' to support their

arguments ('83 per cent of students aim to keep up with global current affairs') or rhetorical questions to strengthen their position ('How can we deprive leaders from satisfying their curiosity?'). Their argumentation was weak, with vague opinions unsupported by evidence and lacking consideration for the facts. Some used overly emotional language, resulting in a flat tone.

Often, less successful responses were brief or list-like and struggled with accuracy; the clarity of the ideas suffered as a consequence, as in this example: 'I hope this email finds you well, I came across your newspaper article just a couple of days back, which talks about how people only pays attention in news stories about their own country without considering other countries.'

(b) Write a reflective commentary on your text, explaining how your linguistic choices contribute to fulfilling the task set.

One approach that worked well for some candidates was to use a Point, Evidence, Explanation format to analyse the form, structure and language of their responses to **Question 1(a)**. They named, one by one, the techniques used, giving precise evidence from their answer and explaining the effect on the audience. However, most responses were limited in detail and did not provide evidence from their **Question 1(a)** response in their commentaries.

Stronger responses were intentionally structured to address form, structure, and language clearly. These candidates explained the reasons for their choices with precise terminology and were able to show how they met the criteria of the task through their linguistic techniques. For example, 'lengthier sentence constructions allowed me to elaborate on key thoughts and details.' Stronger responses included use of persuasive techniques, such as rhetorical questions, analogies, and effectively appealing to the reader's emotions and values in their emails to the editor. They supported their reflective commentaries with relevant evidence and examples, and sometimes concluded with a thought-provoking statement or question that encouraged further reflection on the topic.

One successful candidate stated clearly what they were aiming for: 'I wanted to highlight to the Editor the importance of a diversified, well-versed nation. Firstly, I achieved this by mentioning stark global differences that hold the potential of creating an impassible divide by using a semantic field relating to such: "immigrants or natives, citizens or tourists". I aimed to imply the strong sense of empathy in the targeted reader.' The strongest responses maintained clear focus on the choices made and the techniques used, and were precise in articulating how these enabled them to fulfil the key aspects of the task, as in this example: 'The tone I chose to employ was polite, formal and persuasive, attempting to convince the reader of my point of view. In order to do this effectively, I first stated how I mostly agreed with them – almost everyone likes to be affirmed; it puts them at ease rather than on the defensive.'

Weaker responses were brief and vague, with a considerable number only being a few lines. They tended to regurgitate the main points from their emails without including any analysis. Often, these lacked any linguistic terminology and instead focused on the content. Many of these responses also failed to use accurate vocabulary or gave effects that were very general such as: 'I wrote this to emphasize the feeling the narrator felt.' Sometimes this simplistic attempt at analysis seemed to have little point, as in this example: 'The text has been written with a high frequency, containing words such as 'nations', 'problems', 'country', which can be easily understood.'

Some weaker responses were significantly impeded where candidates seemed to struggle to express ideas with clarity, as in this example: 'The text I have used in my email is very simple yet a lesson for the people who finds international news boring. I have tried to use some story that will actually effect on people's minds.' Such candidates often wrote very short answers or very general answers, listing lots of features but with no adequate analysis of their effects. Incorrect terminology was also common. There were also many examples of candidates merely paraphrasing their emails or focusing solely on structure with little or no attention to language. Other responses were extremely short, sometimes under 100 words, and in some cases the question was not attempted.

Section B: Extended writing

Question 2 – Speech

You are going to take part in a debate at school about whether it is a good or bad thing that lots of teenagers want to be famous. Your headteacher has asked you to open the debate by giving a speech on the topic. Write the text for your speech, discussing both points of view and giving your opinion. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Most candidates focused on social media as the easiest way for teenagers to achieve fame. Many candidates showed an acute awareness of the exploitative nature of some popular platforms. Candidates argued that influencers often engage in excessive attention seeking which can engender anxiety, depression and low self-esteem. In contrast, quite a few candidates mentioned Greta Thunberg as a positive example of using social media to achieve fame.

Stronger responses fully addressed the genre conventions of a debate, focusing on the positives and negatives. They focused on a range of elements of being famous and the role this can play in society. For example, one candidate focused on celebrities such as Taylor Swift giving to charity and food banks. They made less common lexical choices such as ‘superb’, ‘ludicrous’ and ‘shambolic’, and created an effective tone that engaged the reader, as in these two examples: ‘That being said, fame is a two-sided coin. The other side, the much darker, gloomier, murkier side cannot be ignored’; ‘Fifteen minutes of fame is all I need! Just fifteen minutes! Possibly something we’ve heard from many in our lifetime. The problem lies in the desperation, the shine in the eyes and drool in the tongue that people have at the mere thought of maybe being on television, of perhaps signing a few autographs and taking a few selfies, of thousands of people knowing who they are.’

Stronger responses were very clear in terms of purpose and audience. The style was clearly a speech, and the audience of peers was addressed at several points, not just at the start and end. One candidate posed the key question very simply to the audience and answered it briefly, for maximum audience involvement and to give the speaker a good opportunity to explore both sides of the argument: ‘So, is it a good thing or bad thing to be famous? The simple answer is: it applies both ways.’

In contrast, weaker responses tended to focus only on either the ‘good’ or ‘bad’ aspects of wanting to be famous. Ideas were not developed well with relevant examples. The over-use of the rhetorical question was more distracting than useful, for example one candidate wrote: ‘Do you think you should or should not be famous? Does it have drawbacks? Is there a new goal for me to achieve?’ Weaker responses sometimes included several exclamation marks or excessive capitalisation in attempts to stress a point. Arguments were underdeveloped, with some vague points, insufficient evidence, and lack of consideration of opinions. Persuasive language and rhetorical devices were not used effectively, resulting in a lack of engagement and interest. Tone and style were sometimes inappropriate to the task, displaying uncertainty, monotony, and disrespect for opposing views. Finally, conclusions were weak, with no recap of main points, unclear positions, and abrupt endings without thought-provoking statements or calls to action.

Other weaker responses were impeded by frequent errors, which meant that the writing was not clear. For example, one candidate wrote: ‘There are many teenagers out there, everywhere I beleive, that would love to be famous, just think of it being famous comes with alot of good advantages such as plivillaged to things such as, free stuff, money. prestigious power and love from people around you.’

Question 3 – Review

The editor of a food magazine has asked readers to give recommendations for cookery books for beginners. You decide to write a review of a cookery book you have used, which will be published in the magazine. Write between 600 and 900 words.

The review form was generally understood by most candidates, with evaluative lexis being used to some extent by most. The large majority were positive reviews of cookery books, often written by a famous chef. There were some overly negative reviews, which sometimes became rather monotonous. Many candidates were aware that magazine writing can be lively and, up to a point, colloquial in addressing readers.

Stronger responses typically employed several effective strategies. They began with an engaging introduction that captured attention and clearly stated the review’s purpose. For example, one candidate wrote: ‘The relatively unknown book “Tastes from Home” is a step-by-step cooking guide including most homemade meals, as well as a sprinkle of international delights, which suit any culinary novice nicely.’ They

established credibility and relatability by sharing personal experiences of using the cookery books. They provided detailed descriptions, highlighting key features, and provided an overview of recipes and techniques covered, while specific examples of helpful or impressive recipes improved the review. Humour and direct address to readers were particularly successfully used devices, as in this example: 'I found Sarah J. Cooper's book, creatively titled, "Burning the Chicken in the Kitchen", to be superb! You might assume this to be a book relating to witchcraft and have immediately imagined a bony pair of hands, stirring a large black cauldron with chicken feet sticking out from the vegetable stew but trust me, this book is so much more powerful than any sort of witchcraft you might have seen.'

Many stronger responses included headings for a clear structure. The writing was clear, concise, and engaging, maintaining the reader's interest. An encouraging and positive tone motivated beginners to try the recommended book. These reviews emphasized how the book build confidence in novice cooks. They concluded with a concise summary of main points, reiterated their recommendation, and encouraged readers to explore the book. For example: 'The cookery book also contains a specialised corner of recipes for baked items and drinks. This cookery book turned out to be a life changing book for me and "Hands Down" is one of the best cookbooks out there.'

Weaker reviews were often unconvincing, neglecting to detail the specifics of the book and suffering from obscurities at key moments in the text, such as in this example: 'It's incredibly detailed to its core and contains a dish range so vast it's bigger then the pacific ocean.' Some candidates started with fairly clear introductions that attempted to grab the attention of the reader and mainly stated the review's purpose. However, overly simplistic language resulted in a monotonous, unengaging tone. Many weaker responses consisted mainly of narration of the writer's experiences, detracting from the review form and usually lacking a strong awareness of audience. Many reviews were focused purely on the writer's experiences without attempting to genuinely contextualise these for readers or make them relatable, for example: 'By the help of this book I have won many interclass cooking competitions, and it has benefited me so much that now I could call myself an expert chef before even acquiring the cooking degree from my university.' Weaker responses sometimes tagged on a simple review comment at the end, such as 'I give it 4 stars', or wrote about a celebrity chef and what they have achieved, with little focus on the cookery book.

Question 4 – Descriptive piece

Write a descriptive piece about an orchestra. In your writing, focus on sound, colour and movement to help your reader imagine the scene. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Most candidates wrote descriptively quite consistently. Many candidates used a narrative frame in their responses to this question and this helped some candidates write more varied and interesting descriptive pieces. Many organised their description by following an orchestra's performance from beginning to end, usually starting with the hum of the audience, followed by the hushed auditorium as the lights dimmed, the curtains flinging or flying open, then the performance, which generally also included a singer or singers. A few weaker responses focussed more on description of the auditorium, curtains, stage and audience than the actual orchestra and their recital.

Stronger responses typically employed vivid imagery, using rich sensory details to create a visual scene. They described the specific sounds of different instruments, noting their tones, pitches, and rhythms, showing how these sounds were layered to form a complex auditory experience. Their visual descriptions were colourful, depicting the instruments, musicians, and stage lighting with vibrant language and using metaphors and similes to enhance imagery. For example, one candidate wrote: 'As I entered the auditorium, the mood shifted again; it felt as if there was only silence. Not a single utterance, only the tip tap of my shoes hitting the ground echoed the through the hall.' Additionally, they created an atmosphere that captured the emotional essence of the performance, describing the emotions evoked by the music and the audience's reactions: 'Her voice sounded like an angel sent from the depths of heaven. She sang like no one else before. The vibrato in her voice granted everyone in her midst a blessing that night.' They captured the movements of the musicians and the conductor's dynamic gestures, conveying the flow and progression of the music. The strongest pieces had an engaging structure with a captivating introduction, smooth transitions, and a powerful conclusion that left a lasting impression.

One successful approach used by candidates, possibly based on personal experience, was to have a character seeing an orchestra for the first time, describing not just the music but the character's feelings. This approach worked well as an imaginative response. In one example, a young girl grudgingly accompanied her parents to a performance only to be fascinated by what she saw and heard from the 'wedding-like dresses of the women dripping in gold' to the 'harpist as she strummed the large instrument, breathing life into its strings'. The girl was fascinated by 'the conductor with his stick as a secret code'. As the

'music rained down in an explosion of sound' so too did the girl's feelings 'thrash around so I was disorientated'.

Weaker descriptions contained minimal imagery, relying on somewhat vague language that did not vividly paint a clear picture for the reader. Instead of showing the scene through detailed descriptions, they tended to tell what was happening, missing opportunities to engage the reader's senses. For example, a candidate wrote: 'My mom had booked me and her tickets to see Avanti Lui, the conductor and his band'. Control of sense and sentence demarcation were the most common indicators of a lack of control seen in weaker responses. They often evidenced ambitious ideas, but were brought down by mistakes in grammar, especially tenses, incorrect word use and frequent minor sentences, such as in this example: 'The swishing whispers of Dior lips caressing the pearl collars of men with eagerness so palpating they gulp and guzzle alcohol that was corked, popped, shaken but not stirred, all begging to be guzzled by a lust drunk man. A night at the orchestra.'

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 9093/23 Writing</p>

Key messages

- Candidates should manage their time carefully, allocating an equal amount of time for each section of the paper. Quite often the time spent on **Section A** seemed to have left candidates insufficient time to meet the required word count in **Section B** or to satisfactorily complete the task.
- Candidates must understand the importance of writing in clear, properly punctuated English, with accurate sentence demarcation, to perform well in this exam. Punctuation is a vital and essential aid to communication, especially as a guide to the structure of sentences, so it is imperative that candidates know and understand the basics of sentence construction if they are to succeed on this paper.
- Clear expression in simple and compound sentences with less variety is preferable to expression that does not flow, in long, rambling sentences. Some candidates lost control of grammar when they attempted to write in long, complex sentences. One error that occurred regularly was that of separating sentences with commas rather than full stops; another common error was writing in sentence fragments. Clear and accurate sentence demarcation is crucial, followed by the accurate use of a wider range of punctuation.
- Candidates should be aware that relevant content in the correct form is a key aspect of the overall assessment of responses for Question 1(a) and Section B tasks. To ensure that candidates understand the key requirements of each question, it may be helpful to underline key words within the question which indicate the specified form, content, audience and purpose of the tasks chosen. For example, in **Question 1(a)** the key instructions are to write a *speech* and to *introduce both points of view* and *create a sense of interest* in the debate. In order to achieve the task these instructions must be followed.
- Candidates who have difficulty with tense selection should focus on writing in one tense, preferably either the present tense or the simple past.
- Candidates should be encouraged to proofread carefully, particularly for accurate sentence demarcation and for tense confusion/inconsistency. Such errors impede, sometimes seriously, the overall sense of fluency and cohesion.
- Candidates must be aware of the need for clear paragraphing in their responses, including paragraphing for direct speech. A secure focus on structure is crucial since it helps the reader to feel that the candidate is in control of their writing.
- Candidates should be exposed to a wide variety of different text types, as outlined in the syllabus, so that they become familiar with the conventions of a variety of writing forms and purposes. They should be taught key features of those text types, to enable them to replicate these in their own writing.

General comments

Many candidates self-penalised on the grounds of rubric infringement: some **Section B** responses were appreciably short of the minimum word limit and a few candidates did not answer **Question 1(b)** at all. Some candidates wrote well over 400 words for **Question 1(a)**, often at the expense of **Section B**, which was either short or of lower quality (possibly indicating that they had run out of time to check their work).

In responses to **Question 1(a)**, stronger responses focused clearly on the question by making the purpose of the speech clear from the outset, engaged their peer group audience and introduced both sides of the debate utilising a clear structure and format. Weaker responses were unclear in terms of the purpose of the speech or to whom it was addressed, and tended to focus on only one side of the debate. Ideas were disorganised and often lacked any paragraphing.

The strongest responses to **Question 1(b)** maintained a close focus on linguistic and stylistic choices, with the relationship between these features being explained and explored successfully. They used relevant terminology consistently and confidently, using language precisely and appropriately. Weaker responses focused mostly, or entirely, on content and therefore only provided minimal analysis by indirectly outlining the structure of the piece.

Stronger responses on **Section B** generally had a strong sense of the appropriate form for the task (magazine article, review or story), a clear focus on the question and included appropriate stylistic conventions, as well as relevant content.

Weaker responses on **Section B** generally contained frequent errors or lacked focus on what the task required. For example, some responses to **Question 2** lacked the engagement expected in a school magazine article; some responses to **Question 3** were simple recounts of the content of the exercise class, with very little in the way of critique or personal opinion; and some **Question 4** responses lacked any sense of drama or suspense.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Shorter writing and reflective commentary

You are going to take part in a debate at school about whether a student going to university should choose a subject that they enjoy, or a subject that will lead to a good job. Your headteacher has asked you to open the debate by giving a short speech on the topic.

- (a) Write the text for your speech, using no more than 400 words. In your writing, introduce both points of view and create a sense of interest in the debate.**

Many candidates interpreted the question well, managing to structure their texts so that both sides of the debate were addressed. The conventions of a speech were understood by most candidates and most greeted their audience at the start of their speeches. As the task was to open the debate, some candidates set the scene by stating how this was an important moment in terms of everyone's future, therefore the issues would be presented fairly.

Stronger responses were succinct, focused and introduced both points of view. They offered a range of reasons for attending university for enjoyment and then countered this with reasons for studying more traditional work-centred courses such as business, medicine and law. They then came down firmly on one side or the other and invited the debaters to make their own arguments, for example: 'It has been proven by countless studies that people who follow their passions at university end up in jobs they enjoy, having higher levels of income and life satisfaction overall.' Many successful candidates used fictitious studies to support their points and also used statistics to add a sense of authenticity: 'Alternatively, following your passion while paying exorbitant fees for the privilege, upwards of \$30 000 a year according to the Harvard Fiscal Institute, seems nonsensical when you will be repaying those debts, with interest, for many years to come.'

Stronger responses consistently used inclusive pronouns as they presented a variety of ideas for consideration; phrases such as 'our debate' and 'it will help you decide' added a sense of reassurance to the audience facing a difficult decision. An upbeat mood was generated through the response to help to create a sense of interest in the audience. This was achieved by incorporating positive language of freedom to reflect an exciting choice for the candidate as shown through phrases such as 'our wildest dream is before us.' Rhetorical questions featured prominently as a way of inspiring candidates to 'think big', as one candidate put it. Many argued how parental pressure can result in a wrong decision. Candidates explored the ideas of job security and jobs with a 'guaranteed future' rather than a 'dream job with no stable income'. Some candidates promoted the idea of choosing a subject which had a definite career path such as medicine or the sciences. Forward thinking and security were presented and explored in stronger responses.

Weaker responses sometimes did not address that the speech was the opening to a debate or introduce each side of the argument. Often, they focused only on justification of one side of the debate, thereby producing a one-sided presentation. Also, the purpose of creating a sense of interest in the debate was neglected in most of the weaker responses. In weaker responses, candidates seemed to struggle to incorporate a range of ideas and many such responses were

therefore extremely short. Many weaker responses simply introduced the two ideas as questions without any development. Other weaker responses contained frequent errors of all kinds, as in this example: 'Well obviously they should choose the subject they enjoy otherwise the student would be dreadful about going to work and hate it. They would also love their job a lot more then others they would also show a lot more improvement doing a job they enjoy then one they hate.'

(b) Write a reflective commentary on your text, explaining how your linguistic choices contribute to fulfilling the task set.

One approach that worked well for many candidates was to use a Point, Evidence, Explanation format to analyse the form, structure and language of their responses to **Question 1(a)**. They named, one by one, the techniques used, giving precise evidence from their speeches and explaining the effect on the audience. However, some responses were limited in detail and failed to provide evidence from their **Question 1(a)** response in their commentaries.

Stronger responses began by displaying a clear understanding of the task's requirements, clearly analysing how decisions in form, structure, and language aligned with the task's objectives. These candidates substantiated their insights with detailed examples drawn directly from their writing, providing contextual explanations that highlighted each example's relevance to the overall piece. For example, one candidate wrote: 'The opening of my speech addressed my peers directly, giving a sense of camaraderie and also authenticity to what I was about to say. "Good morning, fellow inmates – we are soon to be released into the wilds of university life so perhaps now is a good time to acknowledge those of our esteemed teachers who are joining us for today's debate"' By including the staff in my greeting I made sure to appear respectful of the setting, while signalling to my audience that what I was about to say was really directed to them only.' Stronger responses skilfully connected writing choices to the intended audience, clarifying how writing strategies aimed to engage and resonate with readers effectively. In this example, the candidate has written about the use of punctuation: 'The use of exclamation marks connotes an expressive voice and shows that the speaker is communicating her enthusiasm directly to the audience, indicating her determination to study her passion at university.'

Weaker responses displayed a limited range of technical language and did not clearly explain the effect of using particular words and phrases. Often, they simply listed or summarized the content of the speech and made simplistic comments such as: 'I used exciting words to create anticipation.' These candidates often listed features they had used but did not explain how they helped to achieve the task. Some candidates said that they had used a metaphor and then, unnecessarily, went on to explain what a metaphor was. Weaker responses often labelled features but their comments lacked exemplification and were followed by very generic comments on effect, such as: 'I also used similes to make the audience know a particular feeling.' Some candidates referred to generic effects: 'I chose to keep a friendly and sort of understanding tone because my intention was not to stress or freak anyone out' but could not pinpoint linguistic methods that created the tone. There were also many examples of candidates merely paraphrasing their speeches or focusing solely on structure with little or nothing on language. Other responses were extremely short, sometimes under 100 words, and in some case the question was not even attempted.

Section B: Extended writing

Question 2 – Magazine article

In class, you have been discussing whether foreign travel will become less popular because people can find out everything about other countries using the internet. You decide to write an article on the topic, which will be published in your school magazine. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Most candidates wrote on a thoughtful range of ideas and usually included a passionate defence of real travel, with an interesting blend of anecdote and personal perspective; less successful candidates relied more on formulaic responses, wielding invented statistics, for example, to persuade the reader of the benefits of travel.

Stronger responses often included effective features of an article such as an eye-catching headline, informative or intriguing subtitles and an engaging opening, such as in this example: 'People adore new experiences: the thrill of ziplining through 100-foot tall trees, the odours of wondrous cuisines, the bustling markets filled with exotic mementos and trinkets.' Such successful responses showed evidence of planning, with a clear structure to the articles. The audience of peers was addressed throughout, with some candidates

referencing the discussion that had taken place in class and bringing up some of the points raised by other students. A humorous or faintly ironic tone was often employed with some success, as in this example: 'As students, we have grown up with this technology so we do not have the nostalgic memories of these dated machines that some of our teachers probably do.' Rhetorical questions were also used to introduce a point of view and then to develop on it by answering the question: 'Is there any reason to embark on some arduous foreign travelling adventure if we already possess the knowledge of what we will find when we get there?'

Many stronger responses mentioned, when explaining the advantages of actually visiting a foreign country, the idea of 'real life experiences', 'immersive exposure' and the interaction with people, food, smells or cultural experiences. The use of personal anecdotes also made for more convincing and authentic articles. More sophisticated arguments explored the subtleties of travel rather than just the sensory experience: 'It is about stepping out of our comfort zones, embracing the unknown and forging meaningful connections with people from different walks of life.'

Weaker responses tended to consist of very personal accounts of using the internet to look at happenings in other countries, or focused wholly on the writer's own experience of a foreign holiday, without really addressing the instruction to write a review. The purpose and audience were often unclear and structure was weak, leading to disorganized, rambling responses, such as in this example: 'My family go on foreign holidays a lot and we always like it because we stay in nice hotels and there is always a beach and all of us like surfing and you can not do that just using the internet.'

Question 3 – Review

You recently went to an exercise class that you have not been to before. You decide to write a review of the class, which you will post on your blog. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Most candidates seemed quite confident in using a style that would be fitting for a blog, although this sometimes detracted from the purpose of the writing, which was to review the exercise class. Most candidates adopted an appropriate level of informality with a friendly greeting. Some weaker responses were more recounts of gym-class experiences than objective evaluations of the activity as required in a review. In such responses, various exercise classes were listed, even so far as stating days of the week and times.

Stronger responses showed clear evidence of planning, with a clear structure, often featuring headings and sub-headings. The audience of peers was usually addressed, with some candidates referencing their imagined previous blogs or commenting on their interest in fitness or improving their lifestyle. They used an appropriate semi-formal tone and often used humour to add a sense of authenticity, as in this example: 'Despite my misgivings about the somewhat disheveled appearance of the outside of the building, I continued on to the reception area. There I was greeted by "Linda" (real name changed) who appeared already bored with her job even though it was only 8:15 in the morning! On asking for the location of the new exercise class, "Linda" looked me up and down and said, "Yes, you really need it". I was shocked and appalled and almost walked out there and then!'

The best reviews were evaluative and created through a confident authorial voice and persona. Many responses were either positive or negative but the best evaluated the positive and negative aspects before making a recommendation. Stronger responses evaluated the physical environment, the trainers, the equipment and the exercise routines offered. Some interesting responses gave insight to the exercise done in class as well as the side effect of the movement on the body at a later time: 'Instantly energized, my friend and I cycled to the beat of the music, slowing down and speeding up at the loud instructor's command. He expertly changed the tempos of the songs and our cycles, pushing us to pedal at speeds we'd never even tried before. The day after my time on the cycle, I was sorer than I've ever been in my life. I got to feel just how hard I worked and how many calories I burned from just one session.'

Weaker responses often consisted of unstructured personal accounts of a gym experience with little sense of audience or of review writing. They often listed the facilities in the gym, or the exercises undertaken in the class, without evaluating them: 'We started with simple stretches while talking to the group. Stretches like touching your toes, high knees, arm pulls, arm circles, butterflies etc.' Others focused on the cleanliness of the place without really expanding on why it was an advantage or how it added value to the experience overall: 'For any hygiene freaks this class is for you. Instructors heavily advise to clean off sweat off of equipment. And there are towels to use.'

Question 4 – Story

Write a story which begins with the following sentence: *After slowly opening my eyes, I realised that I did not recognise anything around me.* In your writing, create a sense of drama and suspense. Write between 600 and 900 words.

This produced many narratives of kidnap victims, hospital confinement and amnesia attacks, along with a range of imaginative responses such as protagonists waking up in fantastical surroundings like old castles or even on alien worlds. There was a clear story structure across most responses and most candidates attempted a range of descriptive language, with varying levels of success.

Stronger responses were well planned and structured with a wide range of descriptive language. The stories continued seamlessly from the opening line that was given in the prompt and created suspense and drama by focusing on what was happening in the present rather than trying to explain how the narrator had got there, for example: 'I began to try to remember how I had ended up here, but it was a lost cause. However much I searched in the blank recesses of my mind, I could recall nothing prior to waking up in this strange, wilderness.' Some candidates described the central character's sense of puzzlement and wonder as they faced strange surroundings. One candidate focused on the character's physical state as they 'tested to see if I could move my legs. My body felt on fire; my tongue was dry.'

Other stronger responses included convincing, well-crafted endings that successfully resolved the drama: 'I often wished that my experience in the asylum had indeed been a dream, but of course, I was to end up back there many times in my life, and every time I would wake to the same familiar dread of not knowing who or where I was. This was to be my life now and evermore.' Some exceptional candidates made use of a circular narrative structure which began and ended with the given opening. Sometimes stronger responses employed a range of tenses very successfully to create a believable narration while skipping confidently through time shifts.

Weaker responses moved away from the first line given in the prompt almost immediately, often changing to present tense in the very next line. There was often little sense of suspense or drama because the candidate did not appear to have planned the response so there was a lack of control in the structure and expression. Many candidates wrote about waking up in a hospital and then began a long recount of the hours, days or even weeks leading up to the accident or event that had landed them in the hospital. They included dialogue that was often contrived and usually incorrectly punctuated. Sometimes candidates described a long series of attempts to escape, which became tedious rather than creating suspense. The ending of the story presented particular problems and candidates often ended by stating that it had all been a dream or that they realized they were actually dead. The frequent description of kidnappings often ended in something of an anti-climax, such as in this ending: 'I asked the man if he would let me leave and suprisingly he did. After that I was free and I never seen him again.'

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 9093/31 Language Analysis</p>
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Key messages

In Paper 31, candidates are required to respond to two compulsory questions. The topic for **Question 1** in **Section A** is *Language change* and the topic for **Question 2** in **Section B** is *Child language acquisition*. Each of the two compulsory questions have 25 marks available, meaning that the question paper as a whole carries 50 marks.

The main requirement in both of the compulsory questions is for responses to present analytical findings drawn from the stimulus material. Ideas need to be evidenced throughout by data selected from the texts supplied. Furthermore, points raised are required to contain references to the relevant area of wider study of the topic.

General comments

In June 2024, some responses, especially in **Section B**, were more brief than in previous sessions, meaning that ideas often remained undeveloped. This was an indication that candidates had not always observed the examination duration and had not, therefore, given themselves equal time to respond to each of the questions. This should have been an important aspect of examination technique as each of the questions carried 25 marks, with overall total available marks of 50 for the whole paper.

Where responses were clear or effective, however, these were sustained equally in both sections with some providing insightful reference to a wide variety of theories and theorists. Control and clarity of expression was generally clear to effective with analysis progressing through a logical sequence of ideas or analytical frameworks. At times, there was some sophisticated use of technical terminology.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – Language change

This question requires candidates to refer to Texts A, B and C in their analysis of how the stimulus material exemplifies the various ways in which the English language has changed over time. Text A was an extract from evidence given and questions asked in a criminal court case in London in 1793; Text B was a word table which presented the top five collocates preceding 'figure' and 'pattern' from the British National Corpus (1980s–1993), and Text C was an *n*-gram graph for the items Oxford Street and Oxford-freet (1750–2019). Assessment Objectives 2 (Writing – 5 marks), 4 (Conceptualisation – 5 marks) and 5 (Data handling – 15 marks) were applied.

Writing

In many responses, there was clear paragraphing which was logically sequenced. Often, ideas moved through a series of linguistic frameworks which included graphology, lexis, grammar, etymology, orthography or syntax – any or all of which found to be a useful springboard. This organisational structure worked well and provided a linguistic rather than generalised stance, although spelling the word 'orthography' was often found to be problematic, leaving the response less convincing. Moreover, the framework graphology (format and layout of text) was often confused with orthography (spelling). Nonetheless, in effective or even sophisticated responses observance of linguistic frameworks and use of technical terminology presented analysis from a firm linguistic standpoint.

An appropriate register was usually maintained, although there were some lapses into colloquialism at times, especially in discourse markers such as, 'Next up'. There were also some instances of repetitious material for which no marks could be awarded.

A number of short responses were seen in June 2024, meaning that the work was limited by its own brevity. Where insufficient ideas were presented, analyses of the three texts remained undeveloped.

Conceptualisation

Most responses reflected to an extent on Text A's position on the timeline of language change. Most also made basic or limited reference to standardisation and technological or sociological influences such as Caxton's printing press, the great vowel shift (Jespersen), first dictionaries (Johnson) or the industrial revolution. Although these events, introductions or processes did indeed have bearing on the emergence of the English language into its contemporary form, candidates should ensure that any conceptual reference must be firmly tied to whatever evidence from the text has been chosen for analysis, and that the reference has direct relevance.

Often in June 2024, references to theoretical examples such as Cultural Transmission (Bandura et al), Systemic Functional Linguistics – including Lexical Gap (Halliday) – or Random Fluctuation (Hockett) were left incomplete or inaccurately cited. Aitchison's metaphors, for example Damp Spoon or Crumbling Castle, were also referenced although were not always relevantly applied. More widely known and more accurately applied were concepts such as borrowing, pejoration, amelioration, narrowing and broadening, especially in analyses of Text B.

Text C drew reference to Chen's S-Curve or Crystal's Tide metaphor, although some responses demonstrated only basic or limited understanding of why these theoretical approaches might be relevant to the data.

Data handling

As in previous examination sessions, weaker responses tended to take Texts A, B and C as completely separate entities instead of the three texts being used to form cohesive work. In basic or limited responses, consideration of Text C was often given only a final brief paragraph at the very end of the response.

The graphology of Text A was set into a columnar format which was appropriate to the form of the text, evidence of court proceedings. This format was often incorrectly stated to be obsolete, even though it is regularly seen in contemporary newspapers or magazines.

In lexical analysis, however, clear or effective responses made a thorough use of *figure* and *pattern* as seen in Text B, comparing these items with the way the interlocutors of Text A understood semantic interchangeability:

Q. Was it all one figure, or different figures ? WILLIAM ROTTEN: Two different patterns.

In limited responses, further lexical analysis used *linen draper* from Text A – and defined in the notes at the base of that text – to discuss how the profession had become obsolete. In such responses, there was often an incorrect surmise that the profession was 'nowadays' known as 'dress designer' or 'tailor' both of which are inaccurate. Overall, there was a tendency to attempt to translate from Text A into contemporary English. Candidates should be aware that such attempts cannot be considered as analysis in any depth.

More accurate lexical analysis was made of Text A's *prisoner* where it was said that due to changes through modern and contemporary legal systems, Sarah Williamson would now be referred to as 'the defendant' or 'the accused'.

Presentation of the medial – or long – S caused confusion at times, with limited responses describing it incorrectly as 'random'. Basic responses often demonstrated misunderstanding, misreading the medial s as grapheme f and incorrectly ascribing it to pronunciation differences resulting from the Great Vowel Shift.

Nonetheless, clear or effective responses made a careful selection of grammatical items from Text A which could be linked to those seen in Text C, including an exploration of compounding using the split form of *any thing*, and the hyphenated *Oxford-Street*. Such responses also used grammar and syntax frameworks to analyse phrases such as *had she a cloak on* and *Did you see the print, or did you not ?* This gave a greater depth to the work, as did consideration of the archaic punctuation in *Do you know this property to be your's* towards the ends of the text and which could easily have been missed by readers with a less keen analytical eye.

Section B

Question 2 – Child language acquisition

The stimulus material provided a transcription of a conversation between Samir (age 4 years) and his mother. Samir was in the bath. Candidates were required to analyse ways in which Samir and his mother were using language in the conversation. In their answer, candidates were further required to refer to specific details from the transcription, as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of child language acquisition.

Assessment Objectives 1 (Understanding – 5 marks), 4 (Conceptualisation – 15 marks) and 5 (Data handling – 5 marks) were applied.

Understanding

A wide range of characteristic features was evident in the transcription. These included timed pause and micropause, pitch variation to indicate interrogative utterance, emphatic stress, cooperative overlap, contraction, range of tenses and fulfilled adjacency pairs. Despite this range of features, many responses were brief and undeveloped.

As in previous examination sessions, basic or limited responses presented examples only of some of the features indicated in the transcription key. Deeper understanding of the transcription as a whole included exploration of Samir's lexical gain in *lukewarm* and the method by which he acquired this new word by splitting it into *luke* is *warm* together with the potential mnemonic supplied by his mother in *like your friend (.) your friend called luke (.) when he gets his jumper on*.

Clear or effective responses took this section of the transcription into further analysis, commenting on the shared sense of humour which indicated the very close tenor of the interlocutors, also demonstrated by the memories made between the two of them in Samir's *know the freezing water we had*.

Conceptualisation

Most candidates attempted to set Samir in the telegraphic or post-telegraphic stages of language acquisition, using his age as evidence. However, opinions varied at times with some basic or limited responses discounting age as a factor and instead selecting Samir's utterance, *bit hot* as evidence of him remaining in the holophrastic stage and therefore being 'behind in his language skills'.

However, responses which demonstrated deep and thorough reading of the transcription analysed utterances such as, *every time you put it on me it tickles* to justify their post-telegraphic diagnoses. In the case of *bit hot*, an accurate description could have been that the two-word utterance was purposefully made succinct because Samir, as an accomplished thinker and interlocutor, knew that the minor sentence was ample in the relaxed domestic circumstances.

There were many utterances in the transcription which provided evidence of Halliday's functions of language. Some of these were referenced in most responses, although there were basic or limited descriptions of 'Halliday's stages' which demonstrated a lower level of understanding of the approach. Clear or effective responses selected: *i want some water on my head* (Regulatory function); *but i don't mind it* (Personal function); *then it dries up* (Representational function), and *who told you that* (Heuristic function).

Effective responses explored the way in which Samir was being led into a Zone of Proximal Development by his More Knowledgeable Other, according to Vygotsky. Evidence selected included the way the mother led him through temperature synonyms – *it wasn't very warm (.) it wasn't cold water but (.) it wasn't very warm (.) was it* (1) *tepid* (1) *lukewarm* – along with her scaffolding technique which involved frequent questioning.

Bruner and the Language Acquisition Support System were frequently referenced in terms of the mother's questioning and patient explanations between lines 25 and 35 of the transcription. Comments on Bruner's LASS were often juxtaposed with those on Chomsky's LAD, although these tended to illustrate less of a thorough understanding.

Data handling

In June 2024 there were far fewer phonological analyses being presented. Although IPA was not included due to Samir's precise phonological performance, there were opportunities to analyse his competence in consonant cluster production (*tickles*) as well as pitch and volume variation used for specific effects.

Some basic responses demonstrated misunderstanding of the conventions of conversation analysis transcription, commenting that Samir's language acquisition was at a low level because he did not use punctuation. That was seen in a minority of responses only. A more frequent misunderstanding of the phrase, *my necks always* was apparent where candidates had mistaken Samir's contraction of 'my neck is' to *necks* for him misapplying pluralisation, even though the context was clear.

There was a variety of interpretations of Samir's, *its okay if i play and my hair gets wet*⁷. Limited responses described a virtuous error in *its okay*, although more accurately this utterance was described as transposition of the questioning 'is it' to the declarative 'it is' which was then neatly contracted to *its*.

Overall in June 2024, the relaxed and interactional nature of conversation was acknowledged by most candidates. Data handling was thorough in responses described as clear or effective. There was occasional insightful analysis of characteristic features which had been carefully selected and explored using a firm linguistic standpoint.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 9093/32 Language Analysis</p>
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Key messages

Paper 32 presents stimulus material in **Section A** – *Language change*, and **Section B** – *Child language acquisition*. Candidates are required to provide two sustained and cohesive analytical responses by making a careful selection of data from each of the texts provided, and to support their analysis with relevant knowledge and understanding from their wider study of the two language topics.

Each section of the question paper carries 25 marks, giving 50 marks overall. Assessment Objectives 2, 4 and 5 are applied in **Section A**, and in **Section B**, Assessment Objectives 1, 4 and 5 are applied.

General comments

In general, responses were sustained in both sections, indicating that candidates had observed the examination time and used examination technique appropriately. Clarity and control of expression was clear overall with a number of responses being effectively developed. At times, a sophisticated level of control was seen. Usually, ideas flowed through a logical sequence and were supported by mostly relevant theoretical examples.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

In June 2024, almost all candidates had observed the requirement to draw upon all three texts, A, B and C, referring to specific details from each as well as using ideas and examples from their wider study of language change. Text A was the beginning of a chapter from *Notes on Nursing – What it is and What it is Not* (1859). It was written by Florence Nightingale, who is considered to be the founder of modern nursing. Text B was a word table which presented five of the top nouns collocating with ‘excitement’ from the Google Books: British English corpus for the 1500s–1850s and for the 1990s–2000s, and Text C was an *n*-gram graph for the phrases to be awoken, to be waked, to be woke (1850–2019).

Writing

In general, responses used an appropriate register with only a few lapses into colloquialism. Relaxation of control was occasionally seen in colloquial discourse markers such as ‘First off’ or ‘Next up’. There was also some repetition at times, for which no marks could be awarded. Candidates should be aware that Assessment Objective 2 does not refer only to spelling, punctuation and grammar – in other words, clarity and control of expression. That AO also takes into account the relevance of the content and development of ideas.

Paragraphs were mainly well organised, often using a sequence of linguistic frameworks as an organisational tool. This included graphology, lexis, grammar, syntax or orthography, for example. It is not necessarily a requirement for candidates to organise their responses in such a way, but where this approach was taken a firm linguistic standpoint was maintained.

Conceptualisation

Most candidates positioned Text A into a relevant timeline of language change, often referring to sociological influences including war and the industrial revolution to indicate the text's historical setting.

Linguistic concepts such as borrowing (as seen in Text A's *sine qua non*) and broadening (in reference to Text B's *excitement*) were well-known. Theoretical examples, for example, Chen's S-Curve and Crystal's Tide metaphor were frequently used to support ideas on Text C. Text C often drew sociological commentary on the ways in which *to be woke* is used in some contemporary communities of practice.

Support in reference to Caxton's printing press, Jespersen's notion of the Great Vowel Shift or Johnson's first dictionary, although mainstays in the standardisation of the English language as it is now used, were not always relevant to Text A's publication date of 1859. More appropriate were discussions including Hockett's Cultural Transmission in reference to Nightingale's use of Roman numerals, her abbreviated *e.g* and multiple Latinate lexical items.

Data handling

Most responses began by analysing graphological aspects which included the title of Text A, including its capitalisation, centralisation and closed punctuation. Comparisons to contemporary layout techniques were drawn which, when kept succinct, were relevant to an extent.

Lexical analysis demonstrated confusion at times when the item *jar* was selected and frequently described as obsolete which was incorrect as it is still in use and polysemous. More precisely, the phrase *noise with jar* could be described as archaic syntactically but only in effective analysis was this whole phrase selected. A further lexical item which demonstrated confusion was *aye*, used by Nightingale for emphasis, but often perceived as obsolete or 'only used by pirates'. Candidates should be aware that if they are presented with lexis which is outside their own general use, then items can often more precisely be described as low frequency rather than obsolete.

Grammatical or syntactical analysis drew upon archaic forms such as *the putting up of scaffolding*, *irritability of brain* or *if it be of a familiar voice*. Developed analyses using either of those two frameworks explored the use of passive voice, tense variation and the change in use of the copular verb. Such analysis made cohesive use of Text C where alternate verb forms were also seen.

Levels of formality in Text A were commented on in most responses. Basic or limited work saw Text A as being formal, perhaps due to the instructional nature of Nightingale's writing, whereas some sophisticated work contrasted her often didactic formality with her creation of a synthetic personality, directly addressing her audience as *you*, and her informalisation with *aye*.

As in previous examination sessions, Texts B and C were barely commented upon in basic or limited responses. Clear analysis, however, selected the whole phrase, *a state of greater excitement*, from Text A to scrutinise how *excitement* had developed a broader meaning over time. Insightful responses demonstrated understanding of the contemporary polysemy of *excitement* as it retains a place in narrow scientific communities of practice (as in *exertion*) as well as being understood in a wider lexicon to mean 'adventure' or 'enthusiasm'.

Section B

Question 2

The stimulus material for **Question 2** was a transcription of a conversation held at a nursery school between Annie, Rohit, Rosie and Oscar (all age 3) and their teacher Miss Hope. The children were cutting out pictures and paper shapes and sticking them on a wall display in their classroom. Candidates were required to analyse ways in which the teacher and children were using language in this conversation. In their responses, candidates needed to refer to specific details from the transcription, as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of child language acquisition.

Understanding

The transcription contained a wide range of characteristic features that offered opportunities for analysis. These included timed pause and micropause, emphatic stress, cooperative overlap, contraction, elision, pitch variation, turn taking, fulfilment of adjacency pairs and some subject-verb disagreement.

Basic or limited responses selected a few characteristic features from the transcription key, whereas clear, effective or insightful responses demonstrated deep reading of the transcription before making a careful selection of features which were particularly relevant to the ways in which the interlocutors engaged in this interactional conversation.

Understanding was generally demonstrated by tackling the child-directed speech used by Miss Hope separately from the interactions from the children, although insightful work explored the extent to which the caretaker's influence was evident in the responses to her from the children.

Conceptualisation

Most candidates used the age of the children (3 years) to position them in the telegraphic or post-telegraphic stage, although basic or limited responses did not use any other material from the transcription to substantiate claims. Such responses also labelled Oscar as being 'behind with his language' and remaining in the holophrastic stage as he had only one utterance, even though this utterance contained a preposition, a pronoun and a verb: *up they come*.

There was reference to Piaget, although opinions varied (as did spelling) as to which of his four stages the children had reached. It would have been accurate to say that the children were in the preoperational stage, using evidence of their egocentric utterances which included Annie's *im going to do* among many other examples.

In her role as More Knowledgeable Other, according to Vygotsky, Miss Hope remained polite and encouraging, using *please* frequently as well as continuous questioning. Her questioning technique was often seen as scaffolding as part of a Brunerian Language Acquisition Support System where she was also seen to use expansion of instructions, for example in *use the glue up (2) theres a good boy (2) then thats it* \ *(.) thats everyone finished* \. In some considerations of Bruner, ideas were contrasted with reference to Chomsky's Language Acquisition Device, although evidence from the transcription was seldom selected to evidence this approach.

Clear responses made reference to Skinner when describing how Miss Hope used positive reinforcement to encourage the children's confidence, as seen in her *mm (.) its lovely (.) isnt it* \. There was effective development in discussion of how Miss Hope retained her politeness instead of using negative reinforcement to bring the activity to a close in her reminder to Rohit, *do you think you should put something on*.

The transcription offered many opportunities to support ideas with reference to Halliday's Functions of Language. These included Annie's representational *its a monkey*, her heuristic *are both of you not coming to the garden* \, Rosie's regulatory *look at my* and Miss Hope's informative *we'll go over after weve finished here*. Although basic or limited responses were sometimes able to identify at least one language function among the transcription, such responses often labelled the functions as 'stages', demonstrating incomplete understanding of the Hallidayan approach.

Overall in terms of conceptualisation, a narrow range of linguistic concepts, models and approaches were used as support, although these tended to be well-understood. At times, it was clear that evidence from the text was being used to support linguistic theory when the main aim should instead have been for the theory to demonstrate deeper understanding of the transcription.

Data handling

Some effective and even sophisticated analysis of data was seen, although some responses were limited by their own brevity. Most analysis was constructed from the children's utterances, even where commentary had been provided on the nature of Miss Hope's role and characteristic features had been spotted in her utterances.

There was much analysis of perceived 'mistakes' such as Rohit's subject-verb disagreement in his *the scissors is sitting* and Rosie's incomplete *look at my* which was overlapped with back channelling from Miss Hope. Rather than take this deficit approach, more fruitful would have been close scrutiny of Annie's *are both of you not coming to the garden* \ which indicated a sophisticated level of construction. Effective development in analysing Annie's utterances also explored her *look at my picture (.) of an animal* which she then extended with the adjectival phrase *funny animal* and then used the hyponym *monkey*.

A range of tenses and aspect were seen in the children's utterances, including Rosie's *im cutting*, Annie's *im going to do* (.) *this to it* and Miss Hope's reformulation, *mrs travers and aya1 are taking (1) have taken* which should have indicated levels of linguistic competence.

Phonological analysis was not seen except to inaccurately describe Oscar's /hʌp/ as a virtuous error. Although IPA phonemic symbols only appeared minimally in the transcription, opportunities to describe the linguistic performance of the children were frequent, including Annie's confident elision and reformulation in *now im gonna* (.) *im going to do*.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 9093/33 Language Analysis</p>
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Key messages

In Paper 33, candidates are required to respond to two compulsory questions. The topic for **Question 1** in **Section A** is *Language change* and the topic for **Question 2** in **Section B** is *Child language acquisition*. Each of the two compulsory questions have 25 marks available, meaning that the question paper as a whole carries 50 marks.

The main requirement in both of the compulsory questions is for responses to present analytical findings drawn from the stimulus material. Ideas need to be evidenced throughout by data selected from the texts supplied. Furthermore, points raised are required to contain references to the relevant area of wider study of the topic.

General comments

Although responses in June 2024 were often brief and therefore undeveloped commentary, some clear, effective and even sophisticated work was seen. Where responses were clear or effective these were sustained equally in both sections, with some providing insightful reference to a wide variety of theories and theorists. Sustained work in both sections demonstrated appropriate examination technique which enabled candidates to maximise opportunities for marks to be awarded.

Control and clarity of expression was generally clear to effective with analysis progressing through a logical sequence of ideas or analytical frameworks. At times, there was some sophisticated use of technical terminology. Where this was evident, a firm linguistic standpoint was maintained.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – Language change

This question requires candidates to read and analyse Texts A, B and C and then to analyse how Text A exemplifies the various ways in which the English language has changed over time. In their response, they are further required to refer to specific details from Texts A, B and C, as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of language change.

Text A was an extract from *An Account of the Duke's Bagnio¹ and of the Duke's mineral Bath and the new Spaw of mineral drinking waters*, written in 1683 by Samuel Howarth, an experimental scientist of the time; Text B was a word table which presented the top collocations following *the dictates of* from the Early English Books Online corpus (1670–1690) and the British National Corpus (1980–1993), and Text C was an *n*-gram graph for the adjectives *wearisom*, *wearisome* and *tiring* (1650–1950). Assessment Objectives 2 (Writing – 5 marks), 4 (Conceptualisation – 5 marks) and 5 (Data handling – 15 marks) were applied.

Writing

Many responses comprised clear paragraphing which was logically sequenced. Often, ideas moved through a series of linguistic frameworks which included graphology, lexis, grammar, etymology, orthography or syntax – any or all of which were found to be a useful springboard. This organisational structure, although not necessarily at requirement, worked well and provided a linguistic rather than generalised stance. However, the framework graphology (layout of text) was often confused with orthography (spelling).

Nonetheless, in clear or effective responses observance of linguistic frameworks and use of technical terminology made for solid linguistic analysis.

An appropriate register was usually maintained, although there were some lapses into colloquialism at times, especially in discourse markers such as 'next up'. There were also some instances of repetitious material for which no marks could be awarded, usually beginning with the phrase, 'As I stated earlier ...'.

Conceptualisation

Most responses opened with an attempt to position Text A on a timeline of changes which have influenced the English language. Some plausible influences included technological developments in printing which had begun in the 15th century and Jespersen's notion of the Great Vowel Shift. Both of these concepts aided standardisation, but candidates should bear in mind that evidence of GVS in a written text will always be limited, therefore it would be more fruitful to concentrate on concepts which are clearly visible in the stimulus material. They should also make a close observation of the date of production of any text provided: as Text A was produced in 1683, references to Johnson's first dictionary (1755) or the industrial revolution (between 1750 and 1900) were not always made relevant. Moreover, any conceptual reference must be firmly tied to whatever evidence from the text has been chosen for analysis, and the reference must have clear direct relevance.

More appropriate reference was made to theoretical examples such as Cultural Transmission (Bandura et al), Systemic Functional Linguistics – including Lexical Gap (Halliday) – or Random Fluctuation (Hockett), although these were left incomplete or inaccurately cited at times. More widely known and more accurately applied were concepts such as borrowing, pejoration, amelioration, narrowing and broadening, especially in analyses of Text B.

Text C drew reference to Chen's S-Curve or Crystal's Tide metaphor, although some responses demonstrated only basic or limited understanding of why these theoretical approaches might be relevant to the data. This text offered opportunities to analyse further the effects of standardisation on orthography with comparison of dates and the addition of the final e grapheme to *wearisome*.

Data handling

As in previous examination sessions, weaker responses tended to take Texts A, B and C as completely separate entities instead of the three texts being used to form cohesive work. In basic or limited responses, consideration of Texts B and C was often reduced to only two separate brief paragraphs at the very end of the response.

Nonetheless, Text A had provided many opportunities for analysis including the multiple instances of the medial – or long – S. Most candidates understood that this grapheme was used by convention in initial and medial, but not final, positions although some incorrectly described its appearance as 'random'.

Lexical analyses included the Italian borrowing *bagnio* and *diftemper*, both of which were included in the notes at the base of the text. Whilst discussions on cultural transmission due to travel opportunities at the time of production of Text A were plausible, the noun *diftemper* was often incorrectly described as obsolete: in fact it is a term used in contemporary veterinary medicine, therefore there is a pragmatic shift. Candidates should be aware that when a lexical item is presented in an archaic text, it not being part of their own general lexicon does not necessarily mean that it is obsolete.

Analysis of grammar and syntax focused on a variety of phrases, including the euphonic (now dysphonic) indefinite article in *an hungry Appetite*, the theta digraph used in place of grapheme s in *as hath been taken notice of*, and the apostrophe of ellipsis in *'Twould be tedious*.

Changes in orthography from 1683 were seen in *tel* and *wel* as well as changes in capitalisation (also seen as 'random' in some basic or limited responses) and generalised observations on the overall graphological aspect of organised indented paragraphs, and right margin justification which necessitated 'French' punctuation.

Section B

Question 2 – Child language acquisition

The stimulus material for this question was a transcription of a conversation between Katya, Gerhardt, Stefan and Vidya (all age 5) and their teacher at school. Candidates were required to analyse ways in which the teacher and children were using language in this conversation. In their responses, candidates were further required to refer to specific details from the transcription, as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of child language acquisition.

Understanding

The transcription provided many opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their understanding of features which were characteristic of the children's level of linguistic competence and the ways in which their teacher, in the role of caretaker, was using child-directed speech.

Characteristic features selected for analysis included the teacher's questioning technique, pitch variation, emphatic stress, varied use of pronoun, contraction, cooperative overlap, fulfilment of adjacency pairs, timed pause and micropause, volume variation, identification of colour, informal use of glottal stop, onomatopoeic representation, negation and varying use of tense and aspect.

Basic or limited responses sought only to refer to the transcription key provided to assist in locating a few of the features outlined above, whereas clear, effective or even sophisticated responses presented a careful selection of those which were more impactful in illustrating any analytical findings.

Conceptualisation

Most responses identified the children as having reached the post-telegraphic or continuing development stage of language acquisition. Basic or limited responses used only the children's ages (5 years) to form a judgement, whereas clear or effective responses used evidence from the transcription to confirm their diagnosis.

This led into development which assigned the children to the preoperational or concrete operational stages according to Piaget. Both of these were plausible but where evidence was included from the transcription to justify claims, a deeper level of understanding of the theoretical approach was maintained. Evidence of the preoperational stage could have been found in the very many instances of the singular first-person pronoun which runs throughout the course of the transcription.

The teacher was seen to act as a Brunerian Language Acquisition Support System, evident in the way she used interrogatives, scaffolding Gerhardt with *is your brother going to invite some of his friends?* and to encourage Stefan into wider participation in the conversation with *do you ride in the park (.) on your bikes stefan?*. In this latter utterance she also used micropause to separate clauses to ease understanding on the child's part. Further scaffolding is seen as the teacher attempts to bring the children into a Zone of Proximal Development, as advised by Vygotsky, during their debate on the colours of their bicycles.

Although the teacher offers patient encouragement, there is an instance of negative reinforcement, as outlined by Skinner, as she contradicts Katya with *no (1) thats not what i said*, possibly in an effort to make the children think more accurately regarding the concept of time. However, there are multiple instances of positive reinforcement, for example in *of course gerhardt*.

A number of Functions of Language according to Halliday were evident in the transcription, including Katya's representational *well anas coming to my party*, Gerhardt's personal *i hope the schools not ended*, and his imaginative *vroom vroom*. These were generally described accurately, although basic or limited responses cited 'Halliday's stages' which demonstrated loss of precision.

Data handling

Basic or limited responses tended to take a deficit approach, outlining perceived 'mistakes' which included the use of glottal stop, often described as 'nonsense sounds'. More accurately, it is likely that due to the relaxed nature of the conversation, the children were confident in using informalised pronunciation, which is a measure of advanced performance skills, especially where there was an instant reformulation, almost a code switch whilst observing the teacher's presence, in *got a red bike*.

Other than the glottal stopping, full phonological competence was seen in all children. Evidence for this was in Stefan's pronunciation in *an orange and yellow bike* which included a full range of phonemic performance.

Pronoun use also demonstrated a full range, including *my, your, i*, and the contracted *im, shes and she'll*. A variety of tenses and aspect were used fluently by the children, including a knowledge of the concept of time passing in *i hope the schools not ended (.) before then*. Gerhardt was also able to offer a simplistic understanding of comparisons of size and age, commenting on the suitability of other children invited to his party: *she'll be (.) too small (.) because im getting some bigger boys to come too*.

In the June 2024 examination session, in **Question 2**, responses identified characteristic features reasonably fully, and a number of theoretical concepts, models and approaches were referenced. However, there were fewer selections from the transcription used to evidence the analysis. Although, in **Question 2**, more weight in terms of marks is provided in Assessment Objective 4 than Assessment Objectives 1 and 5, candidates should be aware that demonstration of understanding and handling of data should be supported by reference to conceptualisation and not the other way round. Often, in this session, selections of data were limited, even where there was effective reference to characteristic features and full descriptions of relevant linguistic theories.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 9093/41 Language Topics</p>
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Key messages

In June 2024, candidates were presented with engaging stimulus material from which they were required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of two language topics. The question paper was set into two sections, each containing one compulsory question. Each question carried 25 marks, with 50 marks being available for the question paper as a whole.

The topic for **Section A, Question 1** was *English in the world*. In **Section B, Question 2**, the topic was *Language and the self*. Assessment Objectives 1 (Understanding – 10 marks), 2 (Writing – 5 marks) and 4 (Conceptualisation – 10 marks) were applied to both questions.

General comments

The main requirement in Paper 41 is for candidates to provide sustained, discursive essays in response to the focus of the question. At times, there was evidence that analysis of the stimulus text had been undertaken. This is not required in Paper 41 and any response containing such material ran the risk of becoming irrelevant.

Some responses were rather brief, particularly in **Section B**. This meant that ideas remained undeveloped. However, in Section A, some effective and even sophisticated work was seen at times. Clear to effective responses retained focus on the ideas presented in the stimulus material and the specific frame of the question. Such essays provided relevant support drawn from wider study and demonstrated clarity and control of expression throughout.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – *English in the world*

In June 2024, **Question 1** required candidates to read the text provided, titled *Konglish is not your bepu: South Korea fights corruption of its language*. The text was an extract from an article published in the British newspaper, The Times, in 2021. The question asked candidates to discuss what they felt were the most important issues raised in the text relating to *influences on the changing use of English in the world*. They were further required to refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of English in the world.

Understanding

The engaging text offered a wide range of points from which candidates were able to select in order to demonstrate their understanding. These included: how Konglish, and perhaps other hybrid languages might be *incomprehensible* or *baffling* to some native speakers and listeners; how the number of hybrid forms of English are increasing around the world; the ways in which South Korea takes *pride in its national language* and whether this might be evident in other cultures; the effect of borrowing and loanwords creating development of the English language in its contemporary form; whether the process of *Korean words are entering other languages* might be *an inevitable part of the growth and development*, and the potential *grave threat* to the South Korean language perceived by government officials.

Clear or more effective responses made a careful selection from these and other examples, relating them directly to the specific focus of the question and thinking creatively around these *influences on the changing use of English in the world*. Limited responses worked briefly through each of the points in the order in which they appeared in the text; basic work was seen when only paraphrase of the stimulus material was provided.

Some misunderstanding was demonstrated at times regarding *Hangul* which is not, in fact, the South Korean language as spoken, it is the characters and script in which the language is written, as noted at the base of the text – *Hangul script: the modern official writing system for the Korean language*.

Further misunderstanding was presented in weaker responses which stated that the reason for the presence of American soldiers in South Korea had been a British invasion of that country. Candidates are advised to ensure that all of the text is read thoroughly before beginning to write their response as it may contain information which is outside their own general knowledge.

Writing

In general, responses were set into a logical sequence of ideas and were clearly paragraphed. Register was largely maintained with occasional slips into colloquialism. As in previous examination sessions, some responses incorporated journalistic rhetorical questioning on points being made. This led to some loss of appropriate register. Focus was also lost when their own questions remained unanswered by the candidate. Repetition was also evident at times, for which no marks could be made available. This was particularly evident in concluding paragraphs which merely restated the points having been made.

Clear or effective introductions provided immediate focus on the text and gave a brief overview of the points which were to follow. On the other hand, limited introductions provided either a history of the emergence of English into its current form, or an extended overview of the topic, *English in the world*. Neither of these two approaches to crafting writing were particularly fruitful, as both ran the risk of irrelevant material being presented for which no marks could be awarded. Candidates are reminded that Assessment Objective 2 not only covers aspects of writing such as spelling, punctuation and grammar but also relevance of content and development of ideas.

The most effective demonstration of controlled writing was seen in responses where a sequence of relevant points had been carefully selected, discussed in a developed but succinct manner, and then supported by appropriate theoretical examples. In some limited responses, such long quotes had been replicated from the stimulus material that they formed the main body of the essay. Conversely, there were responses which made almost no reference to the text whatsoever, relying on presentation of largely unrelated ideas on the wider overall topic.

Clear or effective responses demonstrated fluent, accurate and precise use of technical terminology which assured a firm linguistic standpoint, whereas basic or limited essays were written in a generalised manner.

Conceptualisation

Introductions to limited work often included material which illustrated the history of the British Empire, colonisation in general, the concept of lingua franca, or provided statistical evidence of the expansion of English around the world which was not always precise. At times, these introductions were very long and had clearly taken up much of the examination time, only to have limited relevance to the question frame and the stimulus material. There were also many misquoted lines from Crystal which were unattached to any points made in the text provided.

Most responses offered opinions on the concept of language imperialism, at times citing Phillipson, or how English could be termed 'a killer language', although Pakir was rarely referenced. Most responses also referenced Kachru with opinions varying on whether South Korea might be positioned in the outer or expanding circle of that model. Effective responses, however, outlined how Kachru's original model would have placed South Korea in the expanding circle, but that now due to hybridisation and international favour of the South Korean popular culture, South Korea could plausibly sit in the outer circle.

Other hybrid forms were well-known. These included Hinglish, Chinglish and Singlish. Development was provided with discussion of the latter with demonstration of knowledge of the Speak Good English and the more recent Save Our Singlish campaigns in Singapore. Some effective discussions involved the influence of government policy on language restriction, including that in France.

Taking the point made in the text that the Oxford English Dictionary had incorporated 26 *Korean words*, clear reference was frequently made to examples of lexis appearing in English dictionaries which were taken from other languages such as Bermudian and Nigerian. Parallels were also often drawn to the ways in which the English language and other languages might influence each other, with Icelandic often being cited.

Overall, a clear but not always detailed variety of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches was discussed. These included reference to Diamond's steamroller, Schneider's dynamic model, McCrum's default position, Widdowson's spread and distribution, Tree and Wave models, Modiano's circles and the channels described by Galloway and Rose.

Section B

Question 2 – Language and the self

In **Section B**, the question required candidates to read the stimulus material which was an extract from an article published on the *Psychology Today* website in 2021, titled 'The Power of a "We"'. They were further required to discuss what they felt were the most important issues raised in the text relating to *the ways in which language can shape and reflect how individuals think about themselves and others*. They were also asked to refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of Language and the self.

Understanding

The text raised a number of points from which candidates were expected to make a careful selection and to develop a sustained discursive essay, including the subtitle, *Choosing the right pronoun can be the ultimate power move*.

Points from the text included: how research suggests that *those who took on leadership roles used fewer first-person singular words... and more plural words* than those in subordinate roles; how and why using 'we' *seems to carry with it a sense of collective experience and a correlation with leadership* and why leaders and politicians do so, especially when it is stated that there has been *a clear increase in second person plural pronoun usage across presidential State of the Union addresses*; consideration of research which suggests that *we prefer leaders whose linguistic behaviour indicates that they see themselves as 'one of us' and socially identify as part of a collective*, and how *our pronoun patterns reveal a lot about how we express power and social status*.

The text also offered opportunities to discuss how gender identity is being defined by new pronouns and whether areas other than leadership and politics, for example advertising, might assume altered pronoun use. Basic or limited responses tended to focus on only on gender identity rather than discuss the main points raised in the text although clear, effective and even insightful responses discussed how pronoun use and other linguistic devices can provide favourable results in political campaigns, leadership battles or purely arriving at a firm understanding in a community of linguistic practice.

Writing

Although responses to **Question 2** tended to be more brief than those to **Question 1**, clear or effective development was seen in those responses which maintained an appropriate register and which were organised into a logical sequence of paragraphs.

Some repetitious material was seen in limited responses, usually headed with the statement, 'As said earlier ...' Some material also ran the risk of becoming irrelevant where discussion strayed from the question frame of individuals thinking about themselves and each other.

Low frequency lexis and accurate technical terminology was used in effective responses and at times there was a sophisticated level of clarity and control of direction. Where this was evident, there was an elevated register and enhancement of the linguistic point of view. However, tone was lost in some limited responses where colloquial discourse markers such as 'First up ...' or 'Nextly' preceded the idea being discussed.

Conceptualisation

Most responses drew upon wider study of language and thought, citing the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis with varying degrees of accuracy and relevance. This was often juxtaposed with the Boas-Jakobson principle. In limited responses, language determinism, relativity, or reflectionism were given brief mention.

Other theoretical models which were cited but not always made relevant to the discussion were Labov's Department Store study, a number of Aitchison's metaphors including her Crumbling Castle, Skinner's Behaviourism, Fodor's Language of Thought and Innatism including Chomsky or Plato. Candidates are reminded that any linguistic issues, methods, concepts or approaches which are cited must be relevant to any points made. In some limited responses, almost all of the discussion presented theoretical examples and very few references to the stimulus material. As such, candidates are further reminded that it is the theoretical examples which should be used to support any ideas gained from the text, and not the other way round.

However, in clear or effective responses, conceptualisation was presented by drawing parallels with points from the stimulus material and historic or contemporary political slogans, mainly making plausible reference to major international slogans which had included plural pronoun use. These included Trump's 'We will build a wall', Kennedy's 'We can do better' and Reagan's 'Let's make America great again'. Also cited was the 'There is no I in team' used popularly in team-building exercises.

Although the stimulus material provided the opportunity to discuss pronoun choice in relation to gender identity, basic or limited responses focused only on that idea, presenting material which explained a list of genderlect theories. These explanations illustrated differences found to be present in male- and female-generated spoken language and were thus not tied to how, in the contemporary world, gender fluidity or identity might be expressed by self-referring pronouns.

Overall, in June 2024, conceptualisation was described as basic, limited or clear mainly because the theoretical examples were not firmly rooted in relevance to the discussion in hand.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/42
Language Topic

Key messages

In June 2024, candidates were presented with engaging stimulus material from which they were required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of two language topics. The question paper was set into two sections, each containing one compulsory question. Each question carried 25 marks, with 50 marks being available for the question paper as a whole.

The topic for **Section A, Question 1** was *English in the world*. In **Section B, Question 2**, the topic was *Language and the self*. Assessment Objectives 1 (Understanding – 10 marks), 2 (Writing – 5 marks) and 4 (Conceptualisation – 10 marks) were applied to both questions.

General comments

The main requirement in Paper 42 is for candidates to provide sustained, discursive essays in response to the focus of the question. At times, there was evidence that analysis of the stimulus had been undertaken. This is not required in Paper 42 and any response comprising such material ran the risk of becoming irrelevant.

Some responses were rather brief, particularly in **Section B**. This meant that ideas remained undeveloped. There was a good deal of evidence of candidates not being careful enough in their selection of points raised in the texts and presenting everything that they had learnt about the two language topics. This led to loss of focus and a lack of development of any main, relevant points.

Nonetheless, some effective and even sophisticated work was seen at times, mainly in **Section A**. Clear to effective responses retained focus on the ideas presented in the stimulus material and the specific frame of the question. Such essays provided relevant support drawn from wider study and demonstrated clarity and control of expression throughout.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – *English in the world*

The stimulus material for **Question 1** comprised two texts which candidates were required to read. Text A was an extract from an article in the American newspaper *The Wall Street Journal* titled *The Downside of English's Dominance* and published in 2021. Text B was an extract from an article in the Zimbabwean newspaper *The Herald* titled *English language education loses appeal in China* and published in 2022.

Candidates were required to discuss what they felt were the most important issues raised in the texts relating to *the changing use of English in an international context*. They were further required to refer to specific details from the texts as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of English in the world.

Understanding

The texts presented a number of points which candidates could select for discussion. These included: how and why, despite the hegemony of English for many years, *Only a quarter of the world's population is minimally competent in English* with the result that *Monolingual English-speakers can't effectively communicate with three-quarters of the world*; how *Relying solely on English inevitably limits the world's*

collective knowledge base and the *risk* of monolingual nations *becoming politically and culturally isolated*; ways in which *English language education has suffered a heavy blow* and whether a pattern of this phenomenon might develop elsewhere in the world; the perceived prestige of English in China becoming lower and how and why, in China, some companies may be seen as *the least preferred*.

Most candidates selected at least some of these points, although there was a tendency to focus on one text or the other rather than allow ideas to flow as one cohesive whole, comparing, for example, the education situation in Denmark or the Netherlands as described in Text A to the attitudes to English described in Text B.

Basic or limited responses referred to the texts only minimally, choosing instead to present knowledge and understanding of their wider study of English in the world. Candidates are reminded that even where this knowledge and understanding of the language topic is demonstrated as extensive, focus on the stimulus material should underpin the question frame – in this case *the changing use of English in an international context* - and not the other way round.

Writing

On the whole, responses were clearly organised, although some set the work into two discrete sections, one of which discussed Text A and one of which discussed Text B. This approach was not necessarily fruitful as there was no cohesion in the overall essay meaning that each separate discussion was limited. Comparisons and contrasts of ideas seen in the partner texts were much more clear, effective or insightful and provided a more developed response where an overall *international context* was considered.

Clear or effective introductions provided immediate focus on the text and gave a brief overview of the points which were to follow. On the other hand, limited introductions provided either a history of the emergence of English into its current form, or an extended overview of the topic, *English in the world*. Neither of these two approaches to crafting writing were particularly fruitful, as both ran the risk of irrelevant material being presented, for which no marks were able to be awarded. Candidates are reminded that Assessment Objective 2 not only covers aspects of writing such as spelling, punctuation and grammar but also relevance of content and development of ideas.

Tone and register were generally maintained with some lapses into colloquialism at times. These were usually indicated with discourse markers such as 'First up' or 'Nextly'. Some loss of control was also evident in responses which were overly long, indicating a loss of direction in the writing: extending a response into a continuation booklet does not necessarily mean that the essay has remained focused and relevant. On the contrary, it is more likely that the writing is not succinct, that the essay may have become repetitious or that some of the material presented is not relevant.

Conceptualisation

A wide range of linguistic issues, methods, concepts and approaches were referenced in response to **Question 1**, most of which were accurately cited.

The most frequent model referenced was Kachru's Circles of English with responses considering the position of the Netherlands, Denmark and China in the model. Candidates are reminded that it is not necessary to supply a diagram of the model. Basic or limited responses provided a full explanation of which countries Kachru had originally placed in either the inner, outer or expanding circles although opinions varied, as did spelling of the theorist's name.

Crystal was also frequently referenced although this was often by way of introducing an inaccurate quote from one of his books which was not tied to the discussion in hand. Other inaccuracies were seen when statistical evidence of the expansion of English was supplied.

Overall, a clear but not always detailed variety of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches was discussed. These included reference to Diamond's steamroller, Pakir's notion of a 'killer language', Schneider's dynamic model, McCrum's default position, Widdowson's spread and distribution, Tree and Wave models, Modiano's circles and the channels described by Galloway and Rose. The most effective, or even insightful, responses took care to reference only those theoretical examples with direct relevance to the point being made rather than present a succession of names of theorists whose work was either outside the scope of the stimulus material or was only minimally appropriate to the discussion.

Section B

Question 2 – Language and the self

The stimulus material presented in **Question 2** was an extract from an article published in 2019 on PBS.com, the website of an American public broadcaster, titled *How secret languages thrive behind bars*. Candidates were required to read the text and discuss what they felt were the most important issues raised in the text relating to *the ways in which language can shape and reflect personal and social identity*. They were further required to refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of Language and the self.

Understanding

The text provided opportunities for discussion of number of points which included: the concept of *secret languages* and how and why these cryptolects may come into being; the ways in which *people reinforce each other's language* in prison or other social settings where cryptolects are used; how and why *Language is created for many reasons within prison*, such as secrecy and consideration of the author's notion that *prison is one of the few places today that language is actually being created*; similarities which may exist between prison and street slang; issues which may arise because of the exclusivity of anti-languages or cryptolects, and codification for specific purposes.

Most candidates engaged with the purposes of forming a secret language in prison, including – according to the text – *to fool the guards* and without it, being in prison could often become *a matter of life or death*.

Development of ideas took the form of a variety of examples of prison language and contemporary slang taken from the text, although there was some loss of focus in some responses which described the transient nature of slang and examples of colloquial lexical items currently used in their own social setting or the wider development of hip-hop in popular culture.

Writing

Most responses were crafted into a clear organisational structure with ideas flowing through a logical sequence of paragraphs. Introductions were generally succinct, giving a clear overview of ideas which were to be discussed or a succinct precis of the stimulus material. However, conclusions tended only to repeat points already stated rather than end by reaffirming a strong point of view.

Tone and register were generally maintained throughout, even though some responses to **Question 2** were rather brief and limited, therefore, by their own brevity. In effective or sophisticated responses, technical terminology was used fluently, positioning the essay on a firm linguistic standpoint.

Conceptualisation

Many responses discussed the overall linguistic concept of cryptolect and were able to offer reference to their wider study. Secret languages which were known included Thieves' Cant, Polari, Cockney Rhyming Slang and Pig Latin. Although very few specific examples were provided, the relationship between social groups who used these cryptolects and the wider public were commented on to an extent which, in turn, provided opportunities to discuss Milroy's Social Network theory, and the relative values of strong ties and weak ties, especially in a prison setting.

Further conceptual examples were provided in reference to Tajfel's notion of in-groups and out-groups, Kramarae's Muted Groups or Eckert's Jocks and Burnouts. At times, however, there was loss of focus on the question frame which asked specifically for discussion of personal and social identity. Limited responses chose instead to discuss language and thought, referencing the Hopi tribal way of thinking of time, space and orientation as according to Sapir and Whorf.

Although some discussion of genderlect could have been made relevant to points regarding personal and social identity, in some basic or limited responses there were long explanations of a number of genderlect theories resulting in material which was not relevant to the main ideas contained in the stimulus material.

In some very long responses, presentation of conceptualisation dominated the response throughout. Rather than carefully selecting and applying the most appropriate theoretical examples to points being made, at times there were successions of paragraphs which only discussed linguistic theory, making no mention of how or why they supported ideas from the text. Candidates are reminded that in Paper 42, focus on the

stimulus material, the question frame and reference to conceptualisation should remain intertwined throughout a sustained but firmly directed response in order to maximise marks being awarded.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 9093/43 Language Topics</p>
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Key messages

In June 2024, candidates were presented with engaging stimulus material from which they were required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of two language topics. The question paper was set into two sections, each containing one compulsory question. Each question carried 25 marks, with 50 marks being available for the question paper as a whole.

The topic for **Section A, Question 1** was *English in the world*. In **Section B, Question 2**, the topic was *Language and the self*. Assessment Objectives 1 (Understanding – 10 marks), 2 (Writing – 5 marks) and 4 (Conceptualisation – 10 marks) were applied to both questions.

General comments

In June 2024, some basic or limited responses to Paper 43 were rather brief, particularly in **Section B**. This meant that ideas remained undeveloped. However, in **Section A**, some effective and even sophisticated work was seen at times. Clear to effective responses retained focus on the ideas presented in the stimulus material and the specific frame of the question. Such essays provided relevant support drawn from wider study and demonstrated clarity and control of expression throughout.

There was some evidence that candidates had used very long quotes from the stimulus material, at times to such an extent that essays comprised only minimal development of candidates' own ideas. On the other hand, some responses made minimal reference to the stimulus material and provided material demonstrating all that they had learnt on the wider language topic. Candidates are reminded that the most fruitful approach to crafting responses to Paper 43 is to make a careful selection of ideas from the text, to develop them and to use support for each by making reference to relevant areas of wider study of the language topics in each section of the question paper.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – English in the world

In June 2024, **Question 1** required candidates to read the text provided which was an extract from an article posted on the BBC website in 2018 titled *Dutch language besieged by English at university*. Candidates were then asked to discuss what they felt were the most important issues raised in the text relating to *the causes and effects of the expansion of English around the world*. They were further required to refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of English in the world.

Understanding

The stimulus material raised a number of points from which candidates could make a selection for discussion. These included the notion of English as a global language, or lingua franca, and how that might facilitate competing internationally; any benefits of learning and using English if such practice can ease students into the global market; how, conversely, there might be dangers of *creeping Anglicisation* and of its resultant *imbalanced bilingualism*; any difficulties facing the Dutch language and whether *Dutch will deteriorate and the vitality of the language will disappear*, especially in higher education in the Netherlands if *virtually no courses are taught in Dutch* in spite of a university ethos of wishing for *diversity, different*

perspectives; the concept of *linguicide* and how potentially we may *end up with a much more homogeneous world*.

Clear or more effective responses made a careful selection from these and other examples, relating them directly to the specific focus of the question, thinking creatively around *the causes and effects of the expansion of English around the world*. Limited responses worked briefly through some of the points in the order in which they appeared in the text; basic work was seen when only paraphrase of the stimulus material was provided. At times, only minimal understanding was demonstrated when responses made almost no mention of the text provided.

Writing

In general, responses which were sustained were set into a logical sequence of ideas and were clearly paragraphed. Register was largely maintained with occasional slips into colloquialism. As in previous examination sessions, some responses incorporated journalistic questioning on points being made. This led to some loss of tone. Focus was also lost when their own questions remained unanswered by the candidate. At times, repetitious material was included, which was not creditable. This was particularly evident in concluding paragraphs which merely restated the points made instead of reaffirming a strong standpoint.

Clear or effective introductions provided immediate focus on the text and gave a brief overview of the points which were to follow. On the other hand, limited introductions provided either a history of the emergence of English into its current form, or an extended overview of the topic, *English in the world*. Neither of these two approaches to crafting writing were particularly fruitful, as both ran the risk of irrelevant material being presented. Candidates are reminded that Assessment Objective 2 not only covers aspects of writing such as spelling, punctuation and grammar but also relevance of content and development of ideas.

Clear or effective responses demonstrated fluent, accurate and precise use of technical terminology which assured a firm linguistic standpoint, whereas basic or limited essays were written in a generalised manner.

Conceptualisation

In June 2024, a range of linguistic issues, methods, concepts and approaches were referenced in support of points being made. These frequently briefly mentioned Pakir's description of English as a 'killer language', Crystal's 'snowball effect' and Diamond's 'steamroller' metaphor.

Fuller reference was made to linguistic imperialism, citing Phillipson. Moreover, full descriptions of Kachru's Circles of English model were provided with most candidates demonstrating assured understanding of where the Netherlands, and therefore the Dutch language, would sit according to Kachru's first presentation of the model. Effective responses outlined how, in the contemporary world, a number of countries might be seen to shift from their original position in either the outer or expanding circles due to the ways in which English has been seen to expand through the world.

Developed consideration of the effects of *expansion of English in the world* took the form of discussion on how scholars who were native speakers of other languages found difficulty in publishing scientific papers due to their low level of proficiency in English, and how therefore learning in English at university could be beneficial. Various examples were provided from wider study, including the ways in which the work of Chinese scholars had not been recognised for that reason.

A number of responses took the point from the stimulus material that some Dutch people see their native language as their identity and included theoretical examples such as the concepts of nativism and innatism which, when not handled efficiently, would have been better placed in responses to **Section B** of Paper 43, or – in the case of innatism – to **Section B** of Paper 33.

The concept of *linguicide* was also widely discussed although with varying degrees of accurate development. In clear or effective responses, there was reference to the UNESCO stages of language death with some plausible local examples being provided.

Overall, a clear but not always detailed variety of theoretical examples was produced. Those which were particularly effectively cited were Schneider's dynamic model, McCrum's default position, Widdowson's spread and distribution, Tree and Wave models, Modiano's circles and the channels described by Galloway and Rose.

Section B

Question 2 – Language and the self

The stimulus material for **Question 2** was an article published in 2019 in a British newspaper titled ‘*Self-partnered*’ *Emma Watson is right: we need more ways to be single*. Candidates were required to discuss what they felt were the most important issues raised in the text relating to the ways in which *language can shape and reflect personal and social identity*. They were further required to refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of Language and the self.

Understanding

Although some responses to **Question 2** were rather brief, it was evident that candidates had engaged with points raised in text which included the exploration of Watson’s term *self-partnered* – meaning that there might be *nuanced language to better tell our story* in terms of descriptions of relationship status; the extent to which by *finding new words to describe our lives, we can find new ways to live*; how or why *being alone has been stigmatised by the language of it*; consideration of whether *being able to accurately frame our current experiences is part of being human*; how or why language shapes identity with the *small boxes we place ourselves into when describing something ... integral to who we are* if our lexicon is *preloaded with expectations*.

There was also consideration of relative usefulness of the new terms *conscious uncoupling*, *committed non-committal* and *sapiosexual*, and the author’s notion of language used to describe relationships as being *met with mockery*. Some effective responses took issue with the author’s perceived need to produce neologistic compounds to describe what is in effect one’s legal, rather than romantic, status.

Writing

The stylistic nature of the stimulus material was taken in some responses as an opportunity to analyse the writing, rather than the ideas, of the text provided, taking as an example: *We need more words, people!* Candidates are reminded that such analysis is not required in Paper 43 and is therefore not creditable.

Low frequency lexis and accurate technical terminology was used in effective responses and, at times, there was a sophisticated level of clarity and control of direction. Where this was evident, there was also an elevated register and enhancement of the linguistic point of view. However, tone was lost in some limited responses where colloquial discourse markers such as ‘First up . . .’ or ‘Nextly . . .’ preceded the idea being discussed.

Overall, where responses were sustained with firm focus on the question frame, essays were organised into a logical sequence of well-developed yet succinctly written points.

Conceptualisation

As the stimulus materials had offered the notion that *any deviation from the limited language we have around relationships is met with mockery*, responses frequently introduced the concepts of linguistic prescriptivism and descriptivism. Usually, theorists were not attached to these concepts, although references could have been made more complete by citing Honey or Crystal respectively, for example.

Although the question frame specifically required ideas concerning how *language can shape and reflect personal and social identity*, many responses introduced the concept of language and thought, linking the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, linguistic determinism, relativism or reflectionism. These were generally made relevant to the discussion in hand in clear or effective responses, although limited responses demonstrated only surface understanding of these concepts.

Where *self-partnered* people were seen to be in a minority and having insufficient language to describe themselves in terms of relationship status, reference was made to Kramarae’s Muted Group or the Milroys’ Belfast Study in order to discuss discrete communities of linguistic practice. Further fruitful reference was made to Tajfel and Turner’s in-groups and out-groups. Less solidly relevant was citation of Bernstein’s restricted or elaborated codes. This latter theoretical was generally only understood at surface level and, where cited, did not provide adequate support to the argument in hand.

At times, responses touched only minimally on the ideas contained in the stimulus material and proceeded instead to provide a list of briefly explained theoretical examples. These included Labov’s Department Store

study, a number of Aitchison's metaphors including her Crumbling Castle, Skinner's Behaviourism, Fodor's Language of Thought and Innatism including Chomsky or Plato. Candidates are reminded that any linguistic issues, methods, concepts or approaches which are cited must be relevant to any points made. As such, candidates are further reminded that it is the theoretical examples which should be used to support any ideas gained from the text, and not the other way round.