

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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

Key messages

- Candidates need to ensure that they read a wide range of material from a diverse range of 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, 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 selected texts for this paper offered different genre, style and context. Candidates managed to access and, to differing degrees, engage with both texts. The rubric was generally understood, with only a few candidates omitting either a part of a question or a full question. However, as in previous years, 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'. Candidates should remember that they are being 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 demonstrated a lack of the language skills necessary for text analysis.

Question 1(a) is a directed response task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by language, style and structure to fit a specific form, purpose and audience – in this session the original text was a newspaper article. 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 email (150–200 words) to the editor of the given newspaper article. 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 be the candidates who demonstrated the most comprehensive linguistic analysis.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed on their ability to demonstrate understanding of a text in terms of meaning, context and audience with reference to characteristic features, and their ability to analyse 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; brief phrases such as 'the author uses positive words' and 'each section is detailed to give a better understanding' cannot be considered useful text analysis. Value judgements were also seen in relation to analysis, for example, 'the writer skilfully' or 'the writer has produced an impressive piece'. These unspecific value judgements are not supportive of analysis.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates were asked to read an extract from a newspaper article titled '**The big idea: is tourism bad for us?**' They were then required to write an email to the editor of the newspaper, giving reasons why the benefits of tourism outweigh the disadvantages.

The characteristic features and conventions of an 'email to the editor', were recognised by most candidates: the need for a formal register with an appropriately measured, indignant tone, and a clear, concise, compelling argument often rebutting the given material in the original article. Several candidates also employed the conventional headers of an email, including: 'To/From/Subject'. These formed a point of structural comparison in **Question 1b**.

Clear responses showed a clear purpose, outlining the reason for writing by repeating the wording in the rubric to set out 'why the benefits of tourism outweigh the disadvantages'. They employed first person to set out opinions. One or two effective responses also employed direct address and rhetorical questions to engage their audience throughout – such candidates adopted a balanced approach, recognising valid points in the article whilst countering them with their own views: 'unfortunately, tourism does come with its downside of pollution ... you say, 5 per cent of transport related emissions come from tourism ... so what about the other 95 per cent?' Some clear responses made reference to details from the article, though these were often limited: income from tourism and the benefits to local economies and the benefits of authentic experiences with regard to food and culture were usual. Such experiences, for some, could not be gained from 'the comfort of your home': 'you and I both know that Chinese food from down the high street is not like an authentic experience'.

Effective responses often made use of topic sentences to guide the reader through the benefits of tourism that were presented; these responses offered some effective use of repetition (including anaphora) and triadic constructions to succinctly develop ideas related to the benefits of tourism advocated by the candidate. In some of these stronger responses, a few of the points raised in the article were recognised as entailing a high degree of personal preference and inclination, i.e. that the proposition a place is *more hauntingly beautiful when you know it's disappearing* is misguided, or that the chief objective of travelling should not be *to chillax and populate our Instagrams*.

Occasionally, these stronger responses adopted the persona of a concerned reader who had been a tourist at some point, made effective use of an opening brief statement of purpose, and acknowledged the most obvious drawbacks of tourism such as the harmful impact on the environment and globalism reducing the sense of mystery of other countries. They adopted a serious tone to appeal to the editor's presumed willingness to receive reasonable counterarguments. Several responses suggested an unexpected but appropriate benefit arising from an 'ordinary' personal tourism experience such as supporting an animal shelter situated near to a popular tourist destination. One candidate argued that to devote one's time to creating

'Instagramable content' was a personal choice that nevertheless creates a valued, lasting record of a vacation; another argued that powerful memories are created in association with 'searching for and retrieving a treasured' item from another country. One of the very best responses replied as an offended tourism representative.

Weaker responses tended to use informal salutations such as 'Good day' or 'Good morning' that did not directly address the editor nor recognise their status. Benefits were mainly defined as economic, i.e. increased trade, employment for locals and occasionally 'cultural appreciation'. One candidate argued the benefits always 'belonged' to the tourists: 'a relaxing environment that reduces stress, a controlled environment without risks'; another candidate argued that globalism 'increases exposure to other countries' and so inspires people to visit them. Many weaker responses offered general opinions that were not drawn from the given text.

Some weaker responses showed some misunderstanding of the text. For example *Ecotourism* was not always understood, despite Greenland's *mile thick ice sheet melting fast* being mentioned in the previous paragraph; the concept of *hyperculture* as it applies to travel was not fully appreciated, despite the phrases *confront us with the other* and *the mind-expanding shock of the new* clearly delineating what has been lost when *there is no longer any real difference between indigenous and foreign, near and far*.

Furthermore, these weaker 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 lifted words or phrases from the given text, such as *growing phenomenon* and *grisly airport and in-flight experiences*, or they quoted large amounts of information and statistics from the given text without seamless integration nor justification.

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 does not have to be 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 topical 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 are related to audience and shape meaning. It is perfectly acceptable for candidates to consider each text in turn, however in order to achieve the comparative requirement of the question, there needs to be ongoing reference to both texts.

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

Clear responses compared the ways in which the conventions of an email and an article were adhered to in the respective texts. They compared the purpose of each text: primarily, to inform and, secondarily, to persuade in both instances. They also compared the way in which the singular audience of the email was addressed to the ways in which the broad audience of the article was addressed (its inclusive title, for instance). Candidates generally concluded that their email was opinion based whilst the article was opinion and evidence based, providing the latter with more credibility. Clear responses considered how each piece employed first person, with some noting that whilst they employed direct address to the editor, the article employed third person.

Points about structure were limited, largely comprising basic comparisons of paragraph numbers and lengths with reference made to the conventions of opening and closing an email. Some reference was made to long and short sentences. Some candidates noted that their emails only

contained information and questions relevant to the task whilst the article contained more supporting evidence. A few candidates noted that the article's title employs hypophora and the article itself is structured in response to the opening question.

Comparisons of language features were fairly limited. There was some comparison of emotive language and sarcasm: the metaphor of the *plaster over a gunshot wound* was cited. Candidates compared the ways in which both texts employed biased language: the tone of their email was positive whilst the tone of the article was negative. Some reference was made to the writer's use of supporting facts, statistics, quotes and references, whilst the email made use of 'personal reasoning'.

Stronger responses were successful in clearly analysing the directed response piece; they succinctly dealt with perfunctory comparisons such as audience – the article's audience being broader, possibly mainly directed at environmentalists and tourism industry officials, the email's audience being solely the editor, though also a professional – and conventions of form. These more successful responses devoted a larger proportion to comparison of language. Some candidates structured some of their comparisons in terms of the article's reliance on logos – i.e. statistics, with some consideration of their effect on the reader – and the email's on ethos i.e. use of emotionally-charged vocabulary and addressing the editor in the second person 'You'.

Weaker responses often dealt with the article in one section, then considered the email separately. As above, frequently there was no direct on-going comparison. One response identified *hyperculture* as a 'high frequency word' (where it is 'high level' thus low frequency); there was reference to paragraphs as 'stanzas'; there was much attention paid to the use of 'dashes' in the article without determining their purpose and/or effect; furthermore, there was a considerable focus on prevalence of statistics with very little attempt at discerning what any of them meant.

These weaker responses 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 an email or an article; some merely pointed out the variety of sentence types or length of paragraphs without any reference to effect.

Many candidates who adopted a direct comparison approach often stated that a feature that was present in one text was absent in the other. It is advisable to comment only on the features that are present in a text. Furthermore, candidates would be well advised to note that 'comparative' is the most discriminating skill in terms of the Reading paper, especially in terms of analysis – analysis that not only explains how a technique works generally, but also how specific effects are created.

Question 2

Candidates were asked to read an extract from a review of a novel. They were then required to analyse the text, focusing on form, structure and language.

Many responses demonstrated limited understanding of the review form and which features to identify. Clear responses commented on the purpose of the text, noting that the reviewer's purpose was to provide a preview of the latest novel by Maria Gainza by offering personal opinions about the 'negatives and positives' of this work. The reviewer's purpose was also to promote the work and to provide a recommendation. For one candidate, the reviewer's purpose was to 'inform readers of the quality and entertainment value of the book'. Candidates commented on the 'friendly', semi-formal register of the review to engage the reader (identified in the reviewer's use of contractions) and the reviewer's respectful tone when concluding the piece: *I did not find [this novel] as enthralling ... but this is still a novel with many beautiful, confounding moments*. Candidates commented on the conventional use of first person 'to include the personal beliefs and thoughts of the (reviewer) that may not be shared by others' and the reviewer's switch to third person when providing a summary of the book.

Clear and effective responses commented on a number of structural features. The 'anecdotal' and comparative introduction with its references to Maria Gainza's previous novel *Optic Nerve* and allusions to Springsteen and Dylan were noted as instances of credibility, endorsing the reviewer's opinion whilst encouraging readers who had not read Gainza's work 'to explore other works by her'. The 'detailed summary' (some candidates referred to chronological features here) of the novel's plot, which followed, served to highlight 'the complexity and uniqueness' of Gainza's latest work. The reviewer's inclusion of 'rhetorical questions' served to create 'intrigue' or 'curiosity', providing the reader with 'a mission' to discover 'the answers to the questions for themselves'. This was seen as an effective 'promotional tactic'. Typically, in

these responses, the final paragraph served to weigh up the 'negative and positive' opinions of the reviewer whilst, ultimately, concluding on a positive note.

In addition to negative and positive language, candidates commented on the descriptive and emotive language features of the text. Responses noted the reviewer's use of triadic structures in *sharp, modern and playful* to emphasise the positive 'characteristics that [the reader] should expect to find'. They noted the reviewer's repetition of the adverb *perhaps*, suggesting the possibility 'of different interpretations'. They also commented on the reviewer's use of negative qualifiers such as *truth-twisting tale* and *dirty secret*, which suggested a 'compelling' read. Finally, responses often included comments on the reviewer's employment of simile in the opening paragraph – *I felt like a door kicked open in my mind* – and how this suggested a 'eureka' or 'epiphanic moment'.

Stronger responses showed appreciation that the reviewer engages in an extended series of contrasts focused on Gainza's previous and new novels and how they made varying impressions on the reviewer. They commented that the sustained use of the first-person singular indicated the reviewer was determined to offer sincere opinions about Gainza and her novels whilst the third person was reserved for communicating aspects of characterisation, plot and themes. These responses were focused on the 'curiosity-invoking vocabulary' such as *tatty bohemians* and *kitsch*, which influence the reader – potentially targeting other writers and artists – to consider reading the novel under review. Various sentence types (simple, compound and complex) used by the reviewer were considered with purposeful analysis centred on the declarative statement *it's a layered narrative*, which enlightens the reader efficiently. They also found considerable value in the concluding triadic construction to describe Gainza as *sharp, modern and playful* to leave a lasting positive impression in the reader's mind, and interpreted *multiples the possibilities of fiction* as indicative of a demanding writer who is still learning her craft.

Weaker responses rarely identified the novelist (Maria Gainza) and tended to define the audience generally as 'older, 30s–60s'. They suggested the register to be uniformly formal due to diction like (candidate's example) *futile* and *obstacle*. These responses characterised the tone as 'exciting', identified the writer's purpose to be chiefly informative, 'bringing an important Latino-American writer to readers' attention', found dashes were mostly used to 'add-on information' and suggested that the series of questions, *How much has been fabricated by the narrator? Does authenticity really matter? And exactly whose life story is she really interested in: artist, forger or authenticator?* served the purpose of 'getting the reader to think'. Often, features identified included the alliteration in the subheading *truth-twisting tale*, but without commenting on the effect created.

Furthermore, lower and higher frequency lexis was often confused with higher and lower 'orders' of lexis and occasionally even 'register', where specific words were categorised as formal and informal and often referred to as tone. The wider the critical vocabulary of the candidates (and the accuracy of use), the more able they will be to describe the precise effects of how meaning is created.

These weaker responses often adopted a paragraph-by-paragraph approach, using the phrase 'in the ... paragraph (or 'section')' 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 the 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 limited analysis. These basic responses tended to summarise the content of the text, generally 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.

Although not overly prevalent this series, candidates would also be well advised to avoid dependence on too formulaic an approach to the analysis of Reading texts. 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 9093/12 Reading Paper 12</p>

Key messages

- Candidates need to ensure that they read a wide range of material from a diverse range of 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, 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 selected texts for this paper offered different genre, style and context. Candidates managed to access and, to differing degrees, engage with both texts. The rubric was generally understood, with only a few candidates omitting either a part of a question or a full question. However, as in previous years, 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'. Candidates should remember that they are being 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 demonstrated a lack of the language skills necessary for text analysis.

Question 1(a) is a directed response task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by language, style and structure to fit a specific form, purpose and audience – in this session the original text was the opening of a chapter from an autobiography. 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 a diary entry (150–200 words). 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 be the candidates who demonstrated the most comprehensive linguistic analysis.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed on their ability to demonstrate understanding of a text in terms of meaning, context and audience with reference to characteristic features, and their ability to analyse 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; brief phrases such as 'the author uses positive words' and 'each section is detailed to give a better understanding' cannot be considered useful text analysis. Value judgements were also seen in relation to analysis, for example, 'the writer skilfully' or 'the writer has produced an impressive piece'. These unspecific value judgements are not supportive of analysis.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates were asked to read the opening of a chapter from an autobiographical book. In response to the text, they were then required to write a diary entry from the point of view of the writer's uncle recording thoughts and feelings after an early-morning swim in Kenilworth with the writer of the autobiography.

This question required candidates to glean information about Uncle Laddie and his significance to the author, Roger Deakin, and then shape that material to be presented from Laddie's point of view in a diary entry. Several candidates had not read the rubric carefully before undertaking this task, in that their responses were not written from the point of view of Uncle Laddie and 'Roger' was sometimes misspelled. However, most candidates employed some conventions of diary writing.

Clear/effective responses usually began with a conventional salutation, 'Dear Diary', and many dated and signed their entries 'Laddie' or 'Later!' and 'Until tomorrow'. In respect of form, paragraphing was usually intact and topic sentences were utilised to good effect, especially to specify key elements of the morning's activities. Most employed first and third person and, generally, employed past tense to record and document the events of an early morning, taking Roger swimming at the *outdoor pool* in Kenilworth (sometimes with cousins in tow); register tended towards informality. Candidates also recorded their thoughts and feelings and referred to this in their comparative analyses. Most candidates adapted some details from the text: the *rain of pebbles*; the fact that Laddie had his own key to the outdoor pool; the fact that they had sneaked into the outdoor pool before the lifeguards arrived; the reference to the wooden gate and the colour of the pool; the fact that the water was very cold and, finally, the breakfast. Uncle Laddie's achievements were also incorporated together with his thoughts and feelings about Roger's future.

Effective/sophisticated responses drew inferences from the text. Thus, for one candidate, Laddie was grateful for the key 'bestowed upon me after becoming Kenilworth's very own hero'; for another, Laddie concluded his diary entry in a euphoric mood – 'so euphoric that it tears me apart even thinking about having to leave Kenilworth soon.'

Stronger responses included content that was very clear and accurate – in terms of the content of the extract – and succinctly conveyed. These responses acknowledged many of the details in paragraph four, either indirectly – for example, 'crack of dawn' since the swimming took place in the early morning, 'a bracing swim' (drawn from *icy water*), 'I feel proud to have fostered Roger's love of adventurous swimming' (drawn from *mystic tales of his exploits*) – or more directly, such as the reference to Laddie possessing a key to the outdoor pool. Much of the writing in these responses was highly allusive (in relation to the autobiographical qualities to the details presented), including phrases such as, 'a refreshing dip', 'always a delight to relive my glory days ... still gliding through the water like a young barracuda', 'I developed a severe cramp while free styling' (the latter successfully reflecting Laddie is out of practice and possibly much older than when he raced and

swam *far out to sea*), and 'I'm glad to see the sparkle of adventure in Roger's eyes' (which acknowledges Deakin's later ambition to emulate the exploits of the fictional Ned Merrill). These diary entries often included an element of humour, for example, 'Roger was positively drowning in boredom'.

In less successful responses, there was very little attention paid to the first paragraph where there are details relating to the theme of water and adult Roger's interest in swimming that might have more frequently been shaped towards development of Laddie's perception of young Roger; very rarely did responses show understanding that there are three periods of time addressed in the extract: 1996 and the moat at the author's *house in Suffolk*; the *earliest memory of serious swimming*; and a point likely in between the previous two – '*Years later...Diss in Norfolk*'. Thus, there were missed opportunities to shape Laddie's perceptions of his own past accomplishments in swimming in relation to Roger's fascination with it beyond his childhood. Such responses also drifted from the content of the given text.

Furthermore, these weaker responses often showed errors with use of grammar and incorrect tenses. Several of these responses lifted words or phrases from the given text, such as *rain of pebbles* and *first taste of unofficial swimming*, or they summarised large amounts of content from the autobiography.

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 does not have to be 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 diary entry with the book extract, 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 topical 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 are related to audience and shape meaning. It is perfectly acceptable for candidates to consider each text in turn, however in order to achieve the comparative requirement of the question, there needs to be ongoing reference to both texts.

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

Candidates certainly appear to now appreciate that a topical approach best facilitates comparative analysis. Topics were usually organised according to the instruction 'analysing form, structure and language', almost invariably in the given order with the consequence that 'language' tended to be less well addressed.

In terms of form, candidates compared the ways in which the conventions of diary writing and the autobiographical chapter from Deakin's *Waterlog* were adhered to in the texts. Limited responses were unclear about the similarities between the two in recording the thoughts and feelings of the writers. Clear/effective responses usually dealt with this by addressing the 'fact' that their diary entry was written at the end of the day whilst Deakin's book was written later in life. This approach enabled candidates to consider structural features more effectively with candidates considering the chronology of their diary entry as opposed to the non-chronological structure of Deakin's extract. Candidates compared the audience of each text, commenting that the diary entry was written for 'private consumption' whilst the autobiographical extract was written for 'the public'. Register was also compared, with the diary entry being considered informal and the extract being considered modified formal: candidates referred to Deakin's colloquial use of 'Down Under' here. The purpose of each text was compared, with many candidates identifying that, unlike the extract with its various 'literary references' and extensive figurative language that 'romanticised Deakin's view of water as

an environmentalist', the diary entry had no entertainment value and was merely a record of Laddie's day. Some candidates misunderstood the purpose of the footnotes.

Points about structure were often limited. Many candidates simply enumerated the number of paragraphs in each piece and referred to the length and variety of sentences. Such responses generally noted the conventions of providing a salutation at the beginning of the diary entry and compared this to Deakin's use of a chapter title. They noted the date of their diary entries and compared this to Deakin's use of a time stamp, *the summer of 1996*. Clear/effective responses compared aspects of structure (as above), referring to how the events of a single day were sequenced in Laddie's diary whilst Deakin's extract was written over a longer time frame and that the focus changes from sequential events to specific and general observations about the past, present and future. Candidates were clear that both texts were suffused with each writer's thoughts and feelings which, in part, explained various changes in tense. Very few noted that part of the purpose of this chapter was to reveal how Deakin's plan to 'swim through Britain' was formulated through his many encounters with water.

In terms of language, clear and effective responses compared the higher frequency lexis of the diary entries with Deakin's lower frequency lexis (which was misunderstood in limited responses). In particular, they commented on Deakin's lexical field of religious language: *the reflected heavens; join him in spirit; our communion with water*. For several candidates, whilst their diary entries simply began with the time of day, Deakin's extract created a 'mystical' or 'otherworldly' connection with water as he 'immersed himself' in a moat to create a 'vivid', 'sensory' and/or 'impressionistic', 'frog's-eye view' of rain. For one candidate, Deakin's use of gerunds in *bouncing fountain, drowning birdsong, rising to meet* and *springing up* created 'temporal suspension' that evoked a 'mystical presence'. His reference to *phosphorescent plankton*, at the end of the extract, reinforced this feel. Where candidates had employed simile in their diary entries, they compared this to Deakin's use of simile in *like a tiger pacing its cage*. They compared their representations of Laddie as 'a risk taker' and 'a rule breaker' in sneaking into the outdoor pool with Deakin's implied sense of frustration in being contained by pools to spend a 'lifetime doing lengths'.

Typically, stronger responses included a highly organised series of comparisons that took account of: audience (for the autobiography: fans of Deakin, his film-making and causes, possibly readers with an interest in endurance swimming or unusual swimming challenges; for the diary entry: Laddie solely); purpose (for the autobiography: to illuminate an aspect of the author's life and preoccupations; for the diary entry: to refresh and augment memories); form (for the autobiography: the use of a simple title that corresponds to the opening section of the extract to develop the swimming theme, non-chronological arrangement of events that moves backwards in time then forwards, frequent complex sentences to facilitate descriptions; for the diary entry: chronological to outline the events of the morning's swim, shorter sentences that are either factual or reflective and convey a calm and joyful tone); references to triadic listing in the diary entry where used (for example, 'I loved his spirit, his enthusiasm and his energy'); alliteration in the extract (*bouncing ... bubble ... burst*); and comparison of declarative sentences in the extract (*Rain calms water, it freshens it, sinks all the floating pollen, dead bumblebees and other flotsam*).

Generally, limited responses were characterised by brevity; they focused more – occasionally entirely – on the autobiography 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 a diary or the autobiography extract/informative passage; some merely pointed out the variety of sentence types or length of paragraphs without any reference to effect. These weaker responses focused on a comparison of content and neglected language analysis.

Many candidates who adopted a direct comparison approach often stated that a feature that was present in one text was absent in the other. It is advisable to comment only on the features that are present in a text. Furthermore, candidates would be well advised to note that 'comparative' is the most discriminating skill in terms of the Reading paper, especially in terms of analysis – analysis that not only explains how a technique works generally, but also how specific effects are created.

Question 2

Candidates were asked to read an article about the invaluable contribution made by Nepali Sherpas to the mountain paths of Norway. They were then required to analyse the text, focusing on form, structure and language.

The text was generally well understood and was answered with obvious engagement by most candidates. There was a wide range of responses, with a significant number showing sophisticated understanding and analysis. There were very few short answers.

In respect of form, responses showed understanding of the conventions of an article. They commented on the title. For one, *Norway's soaring mountain staircases* embodied the theme of the article and the verbal adjective suggested both 'the magnitude' and the 'inevitable success' of the Nepalese Sherpas in building mountain trails. For another, the verbal adjective *soaring* was a pun, embodying 'the height, the growing popularity and the efficiency' of the staircases. The subheading or strapline invited curiosity as it 'identifies a lacuna' in general knowledge (*many people do not know*) whilst providing further context about the content of the article. Thus, the purpose of the text was partly to educate, but also to inform and entertain. Many responses included comments on a further purpose of the text: to promote and/or to persuade. The audience of the article was considered to be hikers, travellers, historians and geologists. The modified formal register of the article with its inclusion of 'apostrophising, imperative contractions' (*do not look down; do not fall off*) and low frequency adjectives (*escarpment* and *vertiginous*) was selected for comment. Responses also included comments on the changes in number and person and the ways in which the writer's incorporation of culture-specific language and an anecdotal, 'eye witness' account together with numerical data, facts, place names and expert opinion lent the article credibility.

Key points made about structure beyond enumerating the number of paragraphs and identifying sentence types included some analysis of the writer's single-sentence opening paragraph and the two following paragraphs to set the scene. The writer's use of vivid language was referred to with its references to sensory imagery, e.g. *made as if by a Norse God*. For many candidates, this lent the mountains 'a majestic', 'divine', 'mythical' or 'otherworldly' quality, reinforced by the writer's 'awe' in *gawped* and by the bystander's exclamatory *this view is incredible*. Furthermore, responses commented on the 'vulnerability' of the writer; the latter being suggested by the writer's 'fear' of falling from a *fragile* and *exposed extremity* ('that feels as if it could collapse at any moment') together with the personified, 'menacing' wind and the 'eerie' atmosphere of the locality (*we were strangely alone*). For some candidates, the opening three paragraphs formed a structural contrast to the rest of the article with the 'switch to third person', the 'matter-of-fact' tone and the inclusion of geographical, geological and historical detail. For a few, thematic and structural features were interwoven in the text: the 'idealistic description of the scenery' was juxtaposed with the 'realism of the factual detail'; the focus on the 'supernatural' views and powers of the Sherpas was juxtaposed with the 'ancient, natural wonders' of the mountains and stone; the potential dangers of the hiking experience were juxtaposed with the safety of Norway's *perfect* trails.

Noteworthy features of language that were discussed included the writer's conversion of the noun Instagram (*keen to Instagram*) to explain Norway's *dramatic spike in overseas travellers*. One response noted how this spike was reinforced by the writer's employment of synecdoche to create a powerful, visual image of Norway's hiking trails being scaled by *1.2 million boots*. There was also comment on the ways in which the writer referred to the Sherpas as *almost superhuman*. Their agility was suggested by the writer's description of them as *elite mountaineers* and *experts at working in difficult mountain conditions*. Their resilience was suggested by writer's view that their skills had *evolved to master working at altitude*. Their strength was suggested by their ability to manoeuvre *each one-tonne slab by hand*. For one candidate, the stairs themselves are 'the result of a monumental achievement', being *expertly engineered* and *crafted ... monuments*.

In particular, stronger responses noted the clarification of *narrows from a broad plateau to an exposed extremity leading to an obvious, yet vertiginous, viewpoint* is subtly accomplished by the English translation of Preikestolen – 'Pulpit Rock'. These responses were often characterised by greater clarity in the critical terminology employed in analysing form, structure and language.

Conversely, weaker responses often described stylistic choices 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'. Many of these insisted (incorrectly) that *a natural rock platform ... made as if by a Norse God* is a simile. It is important that candidates use precise terminology to access the higher levels. These weaker responses often made no more than a few disparate observations about textual features.

Furthermore, lower and higher frequency lexis was often confused with higher and lower 'orders' of lexis and occasionally even 'register', where specific words were categorised as formal and informal and often referred to as tone. The wider the critical vocabulary of the candidates (and the accuracy of use), the more able they will be to describe the precise effects of how meaning is created.

These weaker responses often adopted a paragraph-by-paragraph approach, using the phrase 'in the ... paragraph (or 'section')' 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 the 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 limited analysis. These basic responses tended to summarise the content of the text, generally 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.

Although not overly prevalent this series, candidates would also be well advised to avoid dependence on too formulaic an approach to the analysis of Reading texts. 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 9093/13 Reading Paper 13</p>

Key messages

- Candidates need to ensure that they read a wide range of material from a diverse range of 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, 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 selected texts for this paper offered different genre, style and context. Candidates managed to access and, to differing degrees, engage with both texts. The rubric was generally understood, with only a few candidates omitting either a part of a question or a full question. However, as in previous years, 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'. Candidates should remember that they are being 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 demonstrated a lack of the language skills necessary for text analysis.

Question 1(a) is a directed response task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by language, style and structure to fit a specific form, purpose and audience – in this session the original text was an extract from a book. 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 email to the author of a travel article (150 – 200 words). 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 be the candidates who demonstrated the most comprehensive linguistic analysis.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed on their ability to demonstrate understanding of a text in terms of meaning, context and audience with reference to characteristic features, and their ability to analyse 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; brief phrases such as 'the author uses positive words' and 'each section is detailed to give a better understanding' cannot be considered useful text analysis. Value judgements were also seen in relation to analysis, for example, 'the writer skilfully' or 'the writer has produced an impressive piece'. These unspecific value judgements are not supportive of analysis.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates were asked to read a travel article written by an inhabitant of Athens. They were then required to imagine that they had recently visited Athens as a tourist and disagreed with some of the views in the article. They were required to put their views in an email to the author, explaining their experience of the city.

Most candidates understood the fairly formal register required for this task, employing both a respectful salutation and an appropriate valediction. Many employed a subject line and the 'to' and 'from' headings associated with emails. They adopted a polite and confident tone, and successful responses began with phrases such as, 'Dear Mr. King, I appreciate your article on Athens but feel compelled to share my different perspective based on a recent visit'.

Most responses offered an introduction that had a clear sense of purpose, stating the writer's name and the reason for writing: to disagree with some of the views about Athens as outlined in the article by Alex King, offering counter arguments based on their hypothetical experiences. Some candidates organised their email in terms of subheadings selected from the text as points of disagreement, whilst others employed adverbial or numerical discourse markers to outline or itemise their points. Candidates were clear about the requirement to write from the point of view of a tourist who had just visited Athens. They provided their opinions in first person whilst employing direct address to engage with the views of the addressee, for example 'it was not anything like you described it.' They challenged King's depiction of Athens as being characterised by *concrete chaos*, arguing that they found the city's architecture charming and steeped in history. Others took issue with the limited representation of local cuisine, suggesting that the article overlooked Athens' vibrant street food scene or family-run tavernas in favour of niche locations like Feyrouz or Kottarouí. Many spoke of the 'cuisine' as 'bland' or that everything was the 'same' allowing the audience to understand their dissatisfaction and make very clear links to the given text. Additionally, many responses made reference to the variety and cost of accommodation and that it was not affordable for everyone, or showed their distaste for the recommended places.

Some responses highlighted King's praise for the *diverse and exciting* neighbourhood of Kypseli, countering that their experience there felt underwhelming due to poor infrastructure or lack of tourist-friendly amenities.

Effective responses adopted a balanced approach, considering both the positive experiences of their visit – for example, 'your description of the nightlife was spot on' – whilst weighing them against the negative ones. Some candidates concluded that the article had raised 'unwarranted expectations'; personal experience had merely resulted in 'disappointment'. They pointed out that whilst King focused on cultural and historical aspects, he failed to address practical concerns for tourists, such as navigating public transport or accessing key landmarks. They also mentioned how 'overcrowded' many of these areas were, making 'Mount Hymettus' and 'Kaisariani Forest' seem

unpleasant as they could not experience nature in the ‘tranquillity or peace’ that should accompany their experience in nature. Furthermore, the views from Mount Hymettus, might be *jaw-dropping* but the climb is difficult and there is ‘no disabled access.’

Weaker responses often offered a straightforward summary of the given text, frequently listing information presented in the extract without much apparent attempt to shape it to the requirements of the task, especially regarding form and register. Candidates should be mindful that it is necessary to identify content that best suits the purpose of the writing task and to carefully select throughout the extract.

Furthermore, some weaker responses showed errors with use of grammar and incorrect tenses, frequently as a result of being over ambitious with language choices. Several of these weaker responses lifted words or phrases from the given text (noted above), such as *feast on homemade specialities*, *free-spirited events* and *long decay after its well-heeled residents*, or they included large amounts of the given text in their response, 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 does not have to be 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 travel 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 topical 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 are related to audience and shape meaning. It is perfectly acceptable for candidates to consider each text in turn, however in order to achieve the comparative requirement of the question, there needs to be ongoing reference to both texts.

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

Candidates certainly appear to now appreciate that a topical approach best facilitates comparative analysis; topics were usually organised according to the instruction to analyse ‘form, structure and language’. The topics were almost invariably considered in this order, with the consequence that ‘language’ was less well addressed.

Clear and effective responses compared the ways in which the conventions of email writing (to a stranger) and travel writing (by a local) were adhered to in the texts. They compared the purpose of each text: to inform, explain and argue; to inform, entertain and recommend. They compared the register of each piece, noting the need for a degree of formality in the email compared to the modified formality of the article, albeit with its limited use of contractions, e.g. *It’s a great place to stay*. They considered how register was linked to the intended audience of each piece: the email to a single person (employing first and second person) and the article to a broad audience (employing first, second and third).

In respect of structure, the conventional features of an email (as above) were noted and compared to the ways in which the article employs a positive title (*some great things to do*) and topical subheadings that serve to organise and summarise the subsequent paragraphs of text. The ways in which both the email and the article provided opinions were compared. For most, however, the writer’s references to people and places and his incorporation of culture-specific language lent the article a greater sense of credibility than their own text. Detailed responses commented on the range of tenses used in the emails (shifting from present to past and back) and the, mostly, present tense aspect of the promotional article.

Comparisons of language use were, generally not well developed. Responses compared the largely negative tone/lexis of their emails, for example ‘old, dirty and poorly kept’ with the positive tone/lexis of Alex King’s text – *fascinating, beloved* and *free-spirited*. Whilst comparison in tone/lexis was noted, few discussed how phrases like *pure urban poetry and discovery* created a romanticised view of Athens that might not align with a tourist’s (their) more pragmatic perspective.

Stronger responses observed that King’s use of descriptive language, such as *jaw-dropping views* and *labyrinthine mansion-cum-workshop* painted Athens as a romantic and artistic city. They contrasted this with their own more straightforward and conversational tone, designed to directly engage King and share their experience. Some noted that whilst King used vivid imagery to evoke admiration for locations like Mount Hymettus, their email avoided such embellishments to focus on practical tourist experiences, such as the ease of finding transportation or affordable meals, adhering to the purpose of showing their dissatisfaction. Where figurative devices and rhetorical features were employed, such as simile, exclamatory mood and tricolon, these were compared with King’s use of metaphor, *You need special eyes* and declaratives.

Stronger responses also showed a clear distinction between their email to the author and its conventions and the conventions of the travel article; these candidates showed regard for 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.

Limited responses were often brief, focused more – occasionally entirely – on the travel article than on the 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 an email in response to a given text or an article/travel writing; some merely pointed out the use of headings, variety of sentence types or length of paragraphs without any reference to effect.

These weaker responses tended to focus on a comparison of content, neglecting language analysis. However, clear reference was made to characteristic features by candidates who compared the register, tone and language features of each piece and how these had been utilised for each specific audience.

Many candidates who adopted a direct comparison approach often stated that a feature that was present in one text was absent in the other. It is advisable to comment only on the features that are present in a text. Furthermore, candidates would be well advised to note that ‘comparative’ is the most discriminating skill in terms of the Reading paper, especially in terms of analysis – analysis that not only explains how a technique works generally, but also how specific effects are created.

Question 2

Candidates were asked to read an extract from a log written by round-the-world solo sailor, Ellen Macarthur, who was attempting to break the world record for sailing around the world. They were then required to analyse the text, focusing on form, structure and language.

The text was generally well understood and was answered with obvious engagement. There was a wide range of responses, with a significant number showing sophisticated understanding and analysis. There were very few short answers.

Candidates understood the conventions of the log form, with the strongest showing understanding that, given the context, it is a detailed record/chronological account of events, activities and actions used in navigation to track data, i.e. as a time stamp to provide an accurate record akin to a ship’s logbook, recording weather conditions and tracking progress and issues encountered.

In respect of form, responses offered comments on the title and date of the entry and the writer’s purpose: to record a significant weather event and the ‘routine’ activities in a day-in-the-life-of round-the-world sailor, Ellen Macarthur. Moreover, the log served to ‘track and chart’ Macarthur’s position and progress in her bid *to break the world record for sailing around the world both ‘geographically’ – 830 miles west of Tasmania – and ‘temporally’ – 1 day 19 hours ahead, it’s now lunch time*. Most commented on the personal nature of the text, with its employment of first-person singular and first-person plural, with the stronger responses paying

attention to the rubric and noting that Macarthur's use of first-person plural was a reference to the fact that she was sailing alone with her boat. These stronger responses offered comments on Macarthur's use of gerunds and present tense verbs to indicate that she was typing up thoughts/feelings/events in 'real time'. Her shifts to past tense served to capture her reflections and previous experiences and 'relate them to current circumstances'.

Some stronger responses noted that Macarthur's 'friendly tone' and elliptical, colloquial expressions *back in mo*, *hold on*, *Later on then* together with her 'fearful revelations', e.g. *my stomach's in my mouth*, suggested that she treated her log as an 'intimate friend'.

For structure, responses commented on the 'choppy' nature of Macarthur's log as she 'tackles' the 'rambunctious waves'. They noted the 'diary-like' qualities of the text but that much of the log is written in 'the moment'. This is exemplified in Macarthur's constant use of dashes, ellipsis and brackets to highlight her parenthetical interjections when she either records a train of thought and then explains it – *thank goodness for Arry, the air cooled generator (as I type this he's stopped for the third time... – or where she expands upon a point – gusts over 45 knots – or where she summarises some of the activities on her 'to do list' – then it was down below to tackle the now three hour charge*. For several candidates, such interjections exemplified the 'fast pace' of the text since the breaks and interruptions in the log signify the 'constant, immediate and urgent' demands to deal with her 'malfunctioning equipment'. The very best responses used accurate, precise terminology with reference to use of hyphen and en dash.

In respect of language, responses commented on the 'intense', 'dramatic' and 'ominous' circumstances of Ellen Macarthur's encounter with a *brewing* storm. Her 'palpable fear' when cursing (*the sea is pretty damn bad*) and her 'frustrations' (*another very hard slog*) when carrying out the crucial but 'dreary tasks she has before her' (repairing her generator, changing sails in *high winds*, *trying to keep other batteries up* and pumping *water out with the bilge pump*) are intermixed with her 'basic survival instincts' in trying, intermittently, to eat ('to preserve her energy levels') and to sleep ('to stave off exhaustion'). Macarthur's use of personification in relation to her boat (*a storm brewing to the west was going to hit us hard*) and her generator (*as I type this he's stopped for the third time*) suggested her passion and 'love and care': *We're in it together and Arry, the generator, requiring constant tending to*. Macarthur's use of metaphor in *just one more washing-machine cycle* suggested 'the nauseous and dizzying' motions of her boat. The choppy nature of her log to record her experiences, thoughts and feelings whilst 'battling unpredictable elemental forces' was, for several candidates, testament to her 'resilience'; some responses saw moments of (as one put it) 'forced light heartedness' with the use of *engineer back on duty!*. Furthermore, some noted Macarthur's 'discipline' in *there was a 2 hour list of tasks* and phrases that were testament to her credibility as an experienced sailor as the log is 'suffused' with 'a lexical field of nautical terms'.

Conversely, weaker responses were often descriptive, noting that some of the language used had 'positive connotations' or 'negative connotations', with little further elaboration or definition. They did not link specific language features in relation to audience or how meaning is shaped; for example, explaining how the fragmented sentences build a sense of urgency or how the technical language enhances the authenticity of the text. Some neglected to comment on the finer details of the text, such as the use of repetition, for example *generator stopped again* and its effect of emphasising the constant interruptions and mechanical failures, adding to the frustration and building of tension and suspense.

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 often showed a struggle to make more than a few disparate observations about textual features. Many of these responses overlooked how the text's use of time markers, for example *now lunch-time local*, and the detailed descriptions of physical tasks, such as pumping water out of the sail, contributed to a sense of the passage of time and the continuous demands of the journey.

In these weaker responses, lower and higher frequency lexis was often confused with higher and lower 'orders' of lexis and occasionally even 'register', where specific words were categorised as formal and informal and often referred to as tone. The wider the candidates' critical vocabulary (and the accuracy of use), the more able they will be to describe the precise effects of how meaning is created.

These weaker responses often adopted a paragraph-by-paragraph approach, using the phrase 'in the ... paragraph (or 'section')' 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 the 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.

There were few basic responses which offered very generalised comments. These responses identified some language features but offered limited analysis. These basic responses tended to summarise the content of the text, generally 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.

Although not overly prevalent this series, candidates would also be well advised to avoid dependence on too formulaic an approach to the analysis of Reading texts. 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 Paper 21</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 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, they should pay particular attention to key words 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 text for your **email to the editor** and to **give reasons to support your opinion**. In order to achieve the task (one of the Level 3 criteria on the mark scheme) these instructions must be followed.
- 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 less variety is preferable to expression that does not flow, in long, rambling sentences. Some candidates lose control of grammar when they attempt to write in long, complex sentences. One error that again 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 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 not be overambitious in their choice of less common lexis, unless the precise meaning of the selected word is properly understood.
- 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

A number of 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 failed to 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 impeded by errors (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 with an appropriately formal tone. These candidates gave a few clear reasons to support their opinion, often referring to quotations from the original imagined article. Weaker responses often lacked an appropriate tone and relied on anecdotal evidence.

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; (review, story or essay), 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 simply recounts of the content of the TV series, needing more in the way of critique or personal opinion; some responses to **Question 3** lacked a sense of drama or suspense; and some **Question 4** responses were repetitive and lacked variety and balance.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Shorter writing and reflective commentary

Question 1

You recently read a newspaper article which said that all zoos should be closed because they are bad for animals. 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, give reasons to support your opinion

Candidates generally engaged well with the question and many presented clear lines of argument. Many candidates wrote about how zoos save injured animals from the wild, preserve endangered species and contribute to the country's economy through employment and tourism. Most candidates recognised that there was a need to address the editor's assumed point of view, for example by engaging with the editor's 'outlandish claim' of zoos closing. However, the extent of that referencing was over emphasised in weaker responses, so much so that the candidate's own point of view never fully materialised. Form was an issue in many responses which lacked an appropriately formal tone for the audience (the editor of a newspaper).

Stronger responses demonstrated key conventions of formality and cited from the article to maintain focused arguments and developed ideas clearly, effectively adopting an appropriately formal register. A clear greeting and point of closure were evident across stronger responses, such as in this clear opening: 'I recently came across the article in your newspaper about closing zoos; as you clearly pointed out, the majority of animals in zoos have never and will never experience life beyond their habitat walls.' Many enthusiastic responses expressed genuine concern for the welfare of animals. These candidates organised their emails clearly in paragraphs, with each paragraph starting with a topic sentence, as in this example: 'Another benefit of zoos is that they are centres for learning. They are frequented by children learning about the different types of animals and provide them with positive experiences to absorb information about the world. Scientists also learn at zoos.'

Other stronger responses elaborated clearly on issues of concern, whilst also acknowledging how 'zoos provide a sanctuary for any potentially endangered species.' Stronger responses provided a range of supporting arguments in favour of zoos, such as animals being 'safe from predators' and how 'animals feel comfort and joy in interacting with humans. Many stronger responses demonstrated an ability to shape language for a desired effect. One very strong response closed with: 'They are not Orwellian hellscape, they are havens that provide a sanctuary to those in need.'

Often in weaker responses, candidates listed their reasons without explanation or exemplification. Frequently, candidates launched straight into their opinions without establishing any context for the email. They could not find an appropriate form of address, often starting with immature expressions like 'Dear Mr/Mrs Editor'. They showed little recognition of the email form or that they were responding to an article. Such responses sometimes demonstrated an ability to evoke a mood of agitation, for example in expressions of outrage at animal abuse as well as towards blaming zoos, but explored ideas in a limited manner. For example: 'Second of all, where is your evidence and where did you get your information from? You definitely did not get it from the zoo.'

Weaker responses were often repetitive and limited in scope. Many weaker emails were short, often under 200 words, and therefore lacking in development of ideas. Many weaker responses were in need of structure, often lacking in paragraph breaks. Other weaker emails displayed a lack of control of basic punctuation and grammar, which hindered, sometimes severely, clarity of communication. For example, one candidate wrote: 'Animals are beautiful creatures that roam around this earth, why should they be locked in confined spaces like a prisoner. Imagine the life of a tiger, not being able to run and use their instincts they were born with. Cooped up in a cage being agitated buy guests.'

- (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 the majority of 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 answers and explaining the effect on the audience. However, most responses were in need of detail and evidence from the **Question 1(a)** response.

Most of the few stronger responses approached this task in one of two ways, each of which proved to be successful: addressing form and structure, going through the content of the email 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 pathos, and discussed their usage confidently. They gave examples and attempted to analyse how stylistic choices related to audience and shaped meaning, for example: 'I used pathos based on certain instances such as the joy zoos create for children, in order to create my emotional appeal. The use of ethos-based arguments, such as referring to scientific studies, allowed for my argument's credibility to increase.'

The few stronger responses employed a reflective tone, which showed a thoughtful and analytical approach, for example: 'The extended metaphor of a prison was utilized effectively to explore my feelings on zoos and their impact on society. Using passive verbs like "chained up", "served their slop" and "incarcerated" helps the reader to empathise on a more human level'. Another stronger commentary provided some detailed analysis in, 'My second paragraph begins as a question. This accusatory tone conveys that I am passionate about the topic at hand. I address the editor directly, in a semi-formal tone that aligns with the amount of formality required in an email. My use of "captivity" and incapacitated' displays that I am educated on the topic, strengthening my argument.'

However, there were very few candidates who explained their linguistic choices and many weaker responses merely paraphrased the content of the **Question 1(a)** response. Some candidates, while demonstrating ability to identify linguistic features, purely listed what they had used without explanation and often without evidence. Candidates should not use linguistic terminology unless they are confident in the use of a specific term. For example, some candidates claimed to have employed metaphors but seemed to be unclear about what a metaphor is. In addition, some candidates claimed that they had employed certain devices like 'juxtaposition' and 'anaphora' when there was no such clear effect created in the response. Most candidates were able to reference the tone and level of formality but did not always provide a suitable reference. It is important to provide references/examples for analysis/comment. Other responses were extremely short, sometimes under 100 words, and in some case the question was not attempted.

Section B: Extended writing

Question 2 – Review

You have been watching a TV series about famous bridges. You decide to write a review of the series, which will be published in your school magazine. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Stronger responses addressed the genre conventions of a review, focusing on positives and negatives. They covered strategies used to deliver the show such as music, interviews, animations and re-enactments. They also recognised the show's quite narrow audience and created an effective tone that engaged the reader. The review style was clearly adhered to and some went beyond the format of just talking about how famous bridges were presented and saw further than the engineering: 'Occasionally the hosts will include art that has

been influenced by these views (from the bridges). Pieces made using recycled cups, acrylic paints or digital art are featured in their own segment.' Stronger responses sometimes made a good deal of the narrator's voice, being in one case described as 'constantly pleasurable' throughout the TV series.

Some weaker responses to this question were short, sometimes fewer than 400 words, with some candidates just writing a list of elements they liked or disliked. Other weaker responses included a recount of the series with short, limited comments on aspects like cinematography, logistics and trivia. Vague comments such as the narrator had 'profound knowledge' and 'the bridge was almighty' seemed to reflect candidates struggling to come up with enough subject matter to fulfil the minimum length requirement of the question. Frequent errors, poor organisation and weak expression impeded some responses.

Question 3 – Story

Write a story called *New World*, about a group of people who are the first to go and live on another planet. In your writing, create a sense of drama and suspense. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Responses depicted stories of people who were migrating to, or who were stranded on, unknown planets, along with alien encounters and nerve shredding rocket take-offs. A major problem for many candidates was creating a whole story; a significant number of responses did not provide a clear conclusion. Not all candidates were mindful of the wording of the phrase 'a group of people' in the question. Some responses focused solely on a single character having received an invitation to join an expedition, which never materialised as the focus was primarily on preparation and nothing more. Any attempt at creating drama and suspense was therefore limited.

Stronger stories were complete, with a well-defined ending. Such response incorporated a group of people without getting too involved in their back stories, and sustained a mood of drama and suspense throughout, with well-crafted endings, such as seen in this example: 'The familiar sunny skies that Aya had become acquainted with disappeared the moment she blinked, revealing an infinite sky of stars and flying asteroids of an asteroid belt. "You, my Starlette, are on another planet. Every person and building are just a hologram."' More imaginative responses included a failed launch prior to a dramatic count down caused by a faulty control button. Once the issue was sorted, the narrative proceeded with a dramatic account of the launch: 'ships thrusters at full throttle blasting the crew out of the earth's orbit.' The best responses fused narrative with effective atmosphere and description, as in this section of a candidate's story: 'As we removed our helmets, we were met by a light morning breeze. The first weak rays of purple light from this planet's sun, a gas giant ten times larger than our own, began to illuminate the expanse beneath our ship. A pungent, completely alien smell arose from the orange earth. We had arrived.' Stronger stories even included jargon for the new planets or relating to a dystopian world, such as 'cryosleep' and 'gravity mitigation'.

Weaker responses displayed a less confident control of grammar, with limited features of narrative writing. Such candidates often wrote about aliens, with little context provided as to the story's setting. Such responses did not maintain a satisfactory mood throughout. They were incomplete or had insecure story endings, such as: 'All I saw was pitch black. I pulled out a flashlight and began to look at the truck outside. Once I had opened the door, I shined the light along the line of the forest outside. A dark figure could be seen standing motionless. I tried to call out but felt a searing pain instead.' Other weaker candidates focused on over-long introductions to the 'expedition' or 'invitation' with family reactions, which did little to engage the reader. Weaker stories often included too much dialogue – very often incorrectly punctuated – and finished with unsatisfactory, cliff hanger endings.

Question 4 – Essay

Your class has just had a discussion about the pros and cons of teenagers getting work experience before they leave school. Your teacher has asked you to write an essay on the topic, giving your opinion. Write between 600 and 900 words.

This question provided a range of responses, some quite engaging and well-planned but some lacking organisation and demonstrating general ideas of acquiring work experience, therefore only achieving the task in an elementary fashion.

Stronger responses had a strong personal voice and featured more complex language. They were structured sensibly and included both pros and cons. Many cited the positives of work experience, including candidates gaining technical skills and preparation for future work, along with a chance to become 'economically independent.' Counter arguments included the pressure placed on young people at a time when they should be enjoying life and not engaging solely in their studies. Candidates who wrote stronger responses

developed their opinions clearly and used discourse markers to provide a clear and logical structure. They used rhetorical devices, such as in this example: 'How effectively do schools prepare students for adult life? They do not pay attention to real life skills.' Clear and more developed responses extend ideas with some detail, as shown in this example: 'There are a lot of jobs that look fun but in reality, there are certain skills that you need for the job, or there are a lot of hidden tasks and processes that need to be done which might not be what you want to do. Some jobs that have a lot of hidden work are police officers, firefighters and astronauts which are some of the most admired jobs by teenagers and children. All of these have great people and role models, but all have training stress, and challenges that some would not like.'

In weaker responses, it often seemed that candidates had found the formal format of essay writing hard to cope with and wrote as if writing a magazine article or delivering a speech, with direct address and rhetorical devices. They tended to repeat themselves and showed limited personal experience, as their anecdotes were unconvincing. Quite a lot of weak responses to this question were notably short of 600 words, so points lacked development. Other candidates wrote without clear control of language, such as in this section of one essay: 'When working a job it shows capabilities that are basic, but still very important to many jobs like actually having the responsibility of job, this could result in getting a job when somebody else is considered for a position.'

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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

Key messages

- Candidates should manage their time carefully, allocating an equal amount of time for each section of the paper. Occasionally, 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 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, they should pay particular attention to key words 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 text for the **opening of a biography** about **someone you admire** and to do two things: **focus on why you have chosen to write about this person**, and to **create a sense of interest** in them. In order to achieve the task (one of the Level 3 criteria on the mark scheme) these instructions must be followed.
- 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 lose control of grammar when they attempt to write in long, complex sentences. One error that again 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 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 not be overambitious in their choice of less common lexis, unless the precise meaning of the selected word is properly understood.
- 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

A number of 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 failed to 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 impeded by errors (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 engaging biography openings with an appropriate tone. Weaker responses often lacked a sense of being the *opening* to a biography and often merely related part of the chosen person's life.

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; (review, story or essay), 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 simply recounts of the jewellery course, with very little in the way of critique or personal opinion; some responses to **Question 3** lacked any sense of drama or suspense; while some **Question 4** responses were repetitive and lacked variety and balance.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Shorter writing and reflective commentary

Question 1

In class, you have been talking about role models. Your teacher has asked you to write the opening of a biography about someone you admire.

- (a) Write the text for your biography opening, using no more than 400 words. In your writing, focus on why you have chosen to write about this person, and create a sense of interest in them.

Role models included celebrities, activists, influencers, doctors, religious figures and fictional characters. Many candidates wrote about parents, grandparents or teachers and their life's journey, quite often from rags to riches. Those who wrote about family members, especially mothers and fathers, sometimes strayed more into autobiography, but they were also often too emotional and sentimental, which tended to limit the quality of expression. Some candidates wrote at length debating what a role model is, seemingly leaving little time to write about their chosen subject.

Candidates who wrote the most effective responses focused from the very start on the form of a biography. They included plenty of factual information, often chronologically, and used emotive language in a controlled manner, such as in this opening to a biography entitled 'Greta Thunberg – The Pigtailed Activist':

'How to begin? Thunberg's life is not yet complete, yet she has touched hearts across the world, inspired minds throughout countries. Though she was, you could say, just a stone in an avalanche, Thunberg infinitely increased the velocity of this rock fall – more and more seemingly insignificant stones joined the movement, increasing the momentum until the impact shook people worldwide.'

Stronger responses demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the conventions of biography, were written in third person, past tense and included factual details, anecdotes about early life and accomplishments, as well as engaging the audience's interest and desire to read on and discover more about the subject. Such candidates wrote in an appropriate style, chronologically detailing key moments in the person's life with a clear focus on why that person was of interest to them. In stronger responses, genre was effectively established in the opening paragraph. For example, one candidate wrote: 'Jermaine Lamar Cole, formerly known as J. Cole, is an American rapper, composer and producer, well-established by hit singles "No Role Modelz" and "Middle Child". Born 28th January 1985 in North Carolina, he went on to be amongst the greatest rappers of the 21st century.' These candidates created a believable authorial voice and ended the piece with hints of what was to come in the main biography. Stronger responses displayed genuine knowledge about the chosen person, for example: 'Her art comes through as a beautiful mixture of rich culture and strong identity, steering away from traditional dances or "Marghams", but diving into a new realm of dance exploration.'

Other higher-level responses ended the final paragraph in a way which matched the remit of writing the *opening* to a biography: 'However, his story does not end there.' Another such example ended with: 'How she managed to attain such life skills is further explored in the upcoming chapters.'

Weaker responses did not address the keyword 'opening' and told the whole life story, often employing long, uncontrolled paragraphs. They either left out any anchoring autobiographical details or did not accurately detail them; for example, one candidate wrote about Elon Musk using vague language: 'This brilliant child was born in South Africa around the 1980.' The same candidate lapsed into casual language, such as: 'See the thing is...' as a paragraph header. Many weaker biography openings were short, often under 200 words, and therefore lacked in development of ideas. Many weaker responses were lacking in structure, often without any paragraph breaks at all. Many of the least effective pieces were impeded, sometimes severely, by inaccurate language use, spelling and punctuation, as in this example: 'Kenneth Griffin is a person who change our life and increase it. I chose this person because he is my idol. He give us a hope, his life is a big example for people. Ken Griffin's biography must be in history.'

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

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, many responses were limited in detail and did not provide evidence from their **Question 1(a)**.

Most candidates who produced stronger responses approached this question in one of two ways, each of which proved to be successful: addressing form and structure by going through the content of the biography 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 analysed how the writer's stylistic choices related to audience and shaped meaning, using terminology to enhance their analysis, for example: 'The use of the adjective "luscious" describes the mountain to be full of shiny, green, beautiful trees and bushes. This also hints at the many creatures that live there which is a subtle foreshadowing of his encounter of a snake. Lastly the sibilance of the "s" sound, "stone solid" creates a rhythmic tone and engages the reader. It also emphasises how rough and tough Zuva's feet were, most likely due to the accumulation of trips on rocky land barefoot.' Other candidates analysed some of their choice of lexis in some detail, for example: 'I made use of emotive words "desperate", "alone" and "dirty" in an attempt to create a dark atmosphere. This was then contrasted with the image of strength, courage and hope formed by the words "saviour", "inspire" and "light".'

Weaker responses were often very short or very general, listing lots of features but needing more in terms of analysis of their effects. Incorrect terminology was also common. Some candidates demonstrated an ability to identify some basic language and structural features, but seemed to find analysis more difficult. Others made some valid points in their commentaries but did not give examples to back them up, such as in this example: 'This closeness is created by the use of colloquial language and a relaxed register, making the reader feel comfortable and more likely to believe what you're communicating.' Quite frequently candidates included quite obvious points, such as: 'The text is structured in paragraphs to divide it up clearly.'

In some weaker responses, candidates merely listed linguistic features they said they had used without any supporting evidence, for example: 'I used a simile, a metaphor and personification', and 'My biography used listing and sub-headings.' Often, there was little attempt to explain how a technique's use furthered the writer's purpose, other than making vague assertions about keeping the reader interested or to connect with the reader. Some candidates attempted to provide some analysis of their choices but did not manage to do so with clarity, such as in this example: 'The biography contains commas "Kylie Countrell is an actress, singer, dancer and a model." The purpose of this is so that the commas are used for listing. The effect of this is so that the reader's attention is diverted.'

There were also many examples of candidates merely paraphrasing their biography openings or focusing solely on structure, needing more in the way of language. Many weaker responses were filled with generalisations, such as in these two examples: 'I used the word "brightly" to create a clear picture in the reader's mind.'; 'I have used varied words to create an image in the reader's mind and to entertain them.' Other responses were extremely short, sometimes under 100 words, and in some cases the question was not attempted.

Section B: Extended writing

Question 2 – Review

Last month, you did a one-day jewellery-making course for beginners. You decide to write a review of this course, which will be published in your school magazine. Write between 600 and 900 words.

This was the second most popular question in **Section B**, with just under a quarter of candidates answering it.

Most who tackled this question wrote a review with an appropriate degree of informality for a school magazine and the review form was generally followed by most candidates, with some evaluative lexis being included. Some candidates talked about jewellery making in general, without directly linking to the one-day course; others spent too much time describing the facilities and trainer rather than the day's events.

Stronger responses established a sense of review writing from the outset; for example one candidate began their review like this: 'Right at the heart of Cedar's Square Mall lies a neat little shop called Glitz and Glam. It is studded with sparkly jewellery and glamour. The course is offered to beginners at the price of \$200 per person.' Many candidates made use of engaging titles and included sub-headings as an effective way of organising their responses. These strategies helped to provide coherence and cohesion and gave the writing a clear focus.

Stronger responses reviewed various aspects of the course, for example how the writer discovered the course, the venue, the price, the quality of the instruction, the process of production, the designs they created, friendships made on the day and the quality of the food, rather than simply describing the process of jewellery-making, or type of jewellery made. Convincing jargon and careful lexical choice were apparent in many answers. For example, one candidate wrote: 'I decided to match the coquette style of the bracelets I had created, which were inspired by the iconic 2007 Vivienne Westwood pearl collection, to create my gift box, which was pink, pastel and lined with lace.'

Stronger responses demonstrated a good understanding of both form and audience. They understood the need to provide constructive feedback, balancing the pros and the cons in a polite and friendly tone, whilst engaging the reader, such as in this example: 'We were welcomed at the entrance of the studio by a woman who had been in the business for over ten years, so it was clear we were in professional hands. She was polite and warm towards us, but, as we were soon to discover, also rather strict about the rules.' These reviews ended with recommendations and ratings.

Weaker responses were often either unrealistically extreme or contradicted themselves between the start and the end (going from an excellent experience to a terrible one, for example). Some responses tended to be mostly descriptive rather than evaluative. Often, weaker responses placed undue emphasis on parking, the appearance and idiosyncrasies of the instructor and criticising or praising other aspects of the course unrelated to the jewellery making process. A number of weaker responses began with somewhat irrelevant preambles involving surfing the internet, travelling to the venue and lengthy descriptions of lunch-break menus. Other weaker responses contained unconvincing claims, such as the value-for-money courses which sent participants home with diamond bracelets and necklaces, along with descriptions of badly run courses where instructors tortured or abused participants, or where participants were forced to work arduous shifts, or lost fingers operating machinery. Some weaker responses to this question were short, sometimes fewer than 400 words, with some just writing a list of elements they liked or disliked. Frequent errors, poor organisation and weak expression impeded some responses.

Question 3 – Story

Write a story which begins with the following sentence: *He slowly picked up the phone, and even before he heard the voice he knew exactly who it was.* In your writing, create a sense of drama and suspense. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Most candidates were able to provide some sense of drama and suspense – often by employing emotive language and/or withholding information. Areas for improvement included better narrative cohesion, plot development strategies and more successful creation of drama or suspense. Some candidates shifted the narrative perspective throughout their text and many cliff-hanger endings did not effectively conclude the narrative arc of the story.

Stronger stories provided believable characters and credible scenarios, with a sense of drama and suspense. These candidates were careful to avoid wildly unreal circumstances such as murder by unidentified animals. Many stronger stories were engaging from the outset. For example, this candidate opened their story with three short sentences following the prompt, creating an immediate sense of drama and suspense: 'He knew exactly who it was. Lily. He knew those raspy, breathless pants. She'd found him.' In one very well-crafted story a man was receiving phone calls from his dead partner. He kept on claiming that the woman was not who she said she was. It was only at the very end that he revealed all in a surprising twist: 'I knew it was not her because I killed her'.

Other candidates whose responses were successful used a variety of vocabulary and sentence structure to engage the audience, as in this example: "Are you there?" It was barked out like a sergeant in the forces assembles his men. But Desmond knew that this was a voice that had gained authority from clandestine operations – not the honour merited from being in the army. He raked his hands through his hazelnut brown, English hair, feeling the dampness of sweat on his scalp. He could not escape the thoughts that harassed him, hounding him by day and howling at him by night.'

Weaker responses were often quite dull, sometimes because of too much lengthy background detail and a failure to excite curiosity. Such stories often showed very little coherence and relied too much on dialogue, which then resulted in a large number of technical errors. Some of the weaker stories opened with the given sentence but promptly abandoned the idea of it. Some offered convoluted stories which became overly complicated, losing the thread of the plot. Other stories were quite basic in terms of expression or littered with errors; some included both, for example: 'He picked the call up and asked her what happened why you called me.'

Question 4 – Essay

In class, you have been discussing whether younger people care more or less about climate change than older people do. Your teacher has asked you to write an essay on the topic, giving your opinion. Write between 600 and 900 words.

The majority of candidates who answered this question offered a range of developed points, along with their own opinion on the topic. Most candidates used an appropriately formal or semi-formal register. Some candidates focused more on the general consequences of climate change and neglected to discuss in depth the generational conflict implied in the question.

Stronger responses tended to be written more guardedly, holding in balance both older and younger people's views and not making bold claims for the caring attitudes of either group, recognising that 'older people' and 'younger people' were not fixed terms. They acknowledged that any established systems for environmental protection that had already been set up were practically to the credit of older people at work. Stronger responses showed full awareness of the form of the writing from the outset, as in this opening to an essay: 'There is a general consensus amongst the youth that the elderly care far less about crucial issues in modern life, such as climate change. However, the elderly object to these accusations, and make compelling arguments in favour of the contrary. This essay will outline both perspectives.' Stronger essays were structured clearly in paragraphs, with each paragraph beginning with a topic sentence. They then concluded with clearly expressed opinions to sum up the writer's views, as in this example: 'So I do not think the idea of who cares more or less should even be a topic of discussion. I think we have to simply understand one another and realise we are all united by one common goal: to save our dying planet. The discussions and arguments of who actually cares more are irrelevant and are distracting us from our task at hand. We all care, for our own reasons, and what actually matters is that we do something about it.'

In weaker responses, candidates frequently seemed to struggle to provide a range of ideas. Such responses were often quite repetitive and, quite often, short. Many weaker responses relied on clichés such as older people being unable to use the internet. There was often some lack of formality in the register for an essay. Ideas were not always coherently linked and conjunctions were used very mechanically. Other weaker responses were marred, sometimes severely, by frequent errors of varying kinds. For example, one candidate opened their essay like this: 'The world is slowly dying and we are the ones to blame, well I say "we" but in the end my genartions contribution to it has been minor at best, the one to blame are older genartions though they still blatantly refused to belive in things like climet change.'

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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

Key messages

- Candidates should manage their time carefully, allocating an equal amount of time for each section of the paper. Occasionally, 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 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, they should pay particular attention to key words 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 text for a **blog about your experience of volunteering at an important international sporting event** and to do two things: **create a sense of enthusiasm** for the event, and **encourage others to volunteer**. In order to achieve the task (one of the Level 3 criteria on the mark scheme) these instructions must be followed.
- 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 lose control of grammar when they attempt to write in long, complex sentences. One error that again 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 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 not be overambitious in their choice of less common lexis, unless the precise meaning of the selected word is properly understood.
- 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

A number of 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 failed to 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 impeded by errors (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 engaging blog entries written in an appropriate tone. These candidates gave a lively, enthusiastic account of their experience and overtly encouraged others to volunteer. Weaker responses often lacked an appropriate tone of enthusiasm and merely related the writer's experience.

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; (descriptive piece, speech or review), 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 more narrative than descriptive; in some responses to **Question 2** the content was repetitive and lacked variety and balance; and some **Question 4** responses were simply recounts of a visit to the café, with very little in the way of critique or personal opinion.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Shorter writing and reflective commentary

You and your friends are currently volunteering at an important international sporting event that is taking place in your country. You have decided to write a blog about your experience.

- (a) Write the text for your blog entry, using no more than 400 words. In your writing, create a sense of enthusiasm for the event, and encourage others to volunteer at future events too.

Sporting events included athletics, football and tennis. Candidates provided details of the tasks involved and most understood the task and were able to use the language of blogging, effectively appealing to their intended audiences. Some candidates focused mostly on volunteering, not necessarily at a sporting event. It is essential that candidates read the tasks carefully.

Stronger responses focused effectively on the task from the outset, as in this example: 'Sports 24, New Zealand – an important international event in the sporting calendar. I would like to share my thrilling experience of being a volunteer for this prestigious occasion.' Stronger responses were written in an informal, conversational register, together with other structural and lexical features typical of blogs. For example, one candidate opened their blog very convincingly, with an account name, date and summary of blog content: 'kelly_is_cool_321 posted 21 mins ago (Just had the MOST fun of my life volunteering for @InternationalClimbingFederation)'

Many stronger responses were very inclusive and mindful of their blog's audience, as in this opening: 'Welcome back my people to another edition of Adam's Adventures!' Stronger responses adopted a friendly tone and a chatty or colloquial register, some employing an effective heading, such as: 'Summer of Sails! My experience of volunteering with sailing champions' and 'Have A Go!!' Others employed direct address and rhetorical questions to engage their audience. Stronger blog entries clearly referred to the benefits of volunteering in order to encourage others, such as to 'strengthen your teamwork and communication skills'. They employed hyperbole to exemplify enthusiasm, as in this example: 'It was an unforgettable and life-changing experience.'

In stronger entries, candidates clearly expressed their enthusiasm for both the event itself and for volunteering in general, for example in this extract: 'Quite frankly, it was pretty hectic! Balloons, confetti, banners, all in bright colours; pumped up music blasting through speakers; competitors and their families cheering at the top of their lungs – everything about the festival burst with energy. Even I could not help but cheer along as I organised the equipment.' Stronger blog entries also ended effectively, for example with this brief but emphatic note: 'Make a change. Volunteer!'

In weaker responses, candidates gave a less expansive recount of their own actions. Sometimes they were rather vague about the international sporting event itself, quite often neglecting to name it, as in this example: 'The atmosphere, people and the event itself is something no one should be missing.' Weaker responses were often repetitive and limited in scope. Many weaker blog entries were short, often under 200 words, and therefore lacked any development of ideas. Many candidates needed to pay more attention to structuring their response, often writing without any paragraph breaks. The least effective scripts were impeded, sometimes severely, by inaccurate language use, spelling and punctuation, despite sometimes having been written in an effective

tone. For example, one candidate wrote: 'Although I understand your concerns of volunteering, thinking that it will be tedious and boring, the reality is implausible and contradicted to your thoughts. I can still recall the moment I guided the sport stars into the studio, I am welcomed by a profound sense of acclamation.'

- (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 answers and explaining the effect on the audience. Most responses would have been improved with greater detail and provision of evidence from the **Question 1(a)** response.

In most stronger responses, candidates approached this question in one of two ways, each of which proved to be successful: addressing form and structure by going through the email's content 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 analysed how the writer's stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning, using terminology to enhance their analysis, for example: 'Firstly I used listing to exemplify the intense atmosphere of the football matches: "Thousands of other fans, singing the chants, booing the ref, cheering the goals." I did this to create the overwhelming effect of the masses of people filling the stadium and the power of their unity. By using jargon in my blog, such as "soccer-head" and "ref, offside", I make it clear that I am involved in football culture and it helped my blog appear more authentic.'

Other stronger responses considered linguistic choice, purpose and audience in an integrated way. For example, one candidate wrote: 'To further fulfil the blog prompt, I frequently used colloquial lexis and hedges and utilized my punctuation to create a stylized tone. I used informal lexis like "quite frankly", creating the effect of casual spoken language with the audience. I used hedges like "pretty" before the adjective "hectic" which is also considered informal.'

Weaker responses were often very short or very general, listing lots of features without adequate analysis of their effects. Incorrect terminology was also common. Weaker responses sometimes identified some basic language and structural features but were limited in terms of analysis. Some weaker responses included some valid points but did not include examples to back them up, such as in this example: 'This closeness is created by the use of colloquial language and a relaxed register, making the reader feel comfortable and more likely to believe what you're communicating.' Quite frequently, candidates included fairly obvious points, such as: 'The text is structured into paragraphs to make it neat and easy to read.' Some candidates merely listed linguistic features they said they had used without any supporting evidence, for example: 'I used similes and hyperboles', 'My blog used a mixture of both first person and second person'. Often there was little attempt to explain how a technique's use furthered the writer's purpose, other than making vague assertions about keeping the reader interested or to connect with the reader.

There were also many examples of candidates merely paraphrasing their blog entries or focusing solely on structure with little or nothing on language. Many weaker responses were filled with generalisations, such as in these two examples: 'I have used the word "colorful" to create a picture in the reader's mind.'; 'I have used different literary devices to create an image in the reader's mind.' Other responses were extremely short, sometimes under 100 words, and in some cases the question was not attempted.

Section B: Extended writing

Question 2 – Descriptive Piece

Write a descriptive piece about a lake early in the morning. In your writing, focus on colour, light and movement to help your reader imagine the scene. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Many candidates responded well to this question and most candidates wrote descriptively quite consistently, although some took a narrative approach, which was not always helpful.

Stronger responses demonstrated an ability to engage the attention of the reader through effective choices of language, as well as establishing a calm and atmospheric early morning scene. A gradual move towards daylight was a feature of some evocative writing. Some stronger responses provided a contrast between the lake and its surroundings. In one response, the candidate described the early morning calm of the 'gentle lake' with an imminent changing weather pattern which 'turned the lake into a crashing wave.' Colours, light, movements and sounds were often described with subtlety and maturity, such as in this example: 'The burning cold air stung my nostrils and singed my red cheeks, each freezing gust of wind like a thousand tiny needles in my skin. With each step through the long dewy grass, my socks grew soggy but the lake grew closer.'

Many stronger responses employed vivid imagery, using rich sensory details to create a visual scene. Stronger responses were often thoughtful and engaging, with many candidates clearly adept at using sensory language and changing the focus by zooming in on specific details. There were some elegant examples of descriptive vocabulary which helped craft some memorable scenes, as in this example: 'Summit Lake itself is shaped in the form of a giant tear drop, with the tip of the tear pointing towards the cliff side. In the wee hours of the morning, when the world and the sun are fast asleep, waiting for the beginning of a new day, Summit Lake is asleep as well. Its water is pitch black with tiny white spots reflecting the canvas of bright stars in the night sky. In the absence of clouds, the Milky Way itself can be seen, reminding the lake of its miniscule place in the vastness of the cosmos.'

In weaker responses, candidates did try to focus on colour, light and movement but their language was sometimes ineffective or the responses contained frequent errors which affected clarity, for example: 'As the lake descended deeper and deeper into the vastness of water; the colours followed too.' Control of sense and sentence demarcation were the commonest indicators of a lack of control seen in weaker writing. These candidates often had ambitious ideas, but their pieces were brought down by mistakes in grammar, especially tenses, incorrect word use and frequent minor sentences, such as in this example: 'The world still asleep. Silence echo's through the banks rebouding off each other. The sun's rays vibrant mirage of hue's illuminates the water and the tree's that are as tall as skysrappers. The water as still as a human when a shark is approaching them.'

Question 3 – Speech

You are going to take part in a debate at school about the pros and cons of children keeping pets. 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 responses were in an appropriate speech form but not all candidates seemed to be aware that they were only opening the debate and paving the way for the rest of the discussion to follow.

Stronger responses established this distinction effectively, displaying evidence of considering both sides of the argument in a constructive manner, for example by adding personal examples thus building credibility. They also showed awareness of the school context and were organised clearly in paragraphs, utilising clear discursive markers, such as: 'On the one hand children can learn valuable concepts,' and, 'However, there are benefits of children keeping pets.'

Stronger responses weighed the pros against the cons in a balanced way. One candidate did this by utilising a tricolon for each side of the debate. Arguments in favour of children keeping pets, 'providing a sense of responsibility', 'for companionship' and how a pet can be a 'comforting friend' were weighed against the cons of a pet being 'costly', 'time consuming' and 'hard work'. Convincing and sustained arguments on each point were all supported by evidence and facts. The most effective responses paid close attention to the rubric, noting that the text constituted a precursory activity to a school debate. Thus, for one candidate, who had employed an initial, engaging hook, the closure of the text provided an opportunity for a compelling directive: 'Which will you side with? Let the debate begin.'

One quite thoughtful piece put forward the idea that, for busy working parents, a pet such as a dog or cat can provide a child with companionship, play opportunities, a confidant – and that the child can be encouraged to talk to the parents about what they have been doing with the pet over a meal. Another candidate took a philosophical slant: 'I know I would love to come home every day to a smile that never wears away, a tail that does not stop wagging, a beak that never stops chirping – and I believe that pets can make this possible.' Another candidate supported the pros of children keeping pets by providing evidence clearly aimed at fellow students: 'We might say this is true because we feel good when we hang out or play with our pets, but it is also true on a scientific level. Endorphins and dopamine are hormones that make the brain feel relaxed and happy. It has been proven in multiple studies that playing with your pet, can increase your happy hormones

anywhere from 10 – 35 per cent. For all the cat owners here, listening to or feeling your cat purring, can act as a therapeutic sound, calming the nerves and the mind. Your pet can also make you feel less lonely by providing quiet company, whether you're sleeping or studying.'

Weaker responses focused mainly on drawing attention to the advantages and disadvantages of raising pets, or discussed what it's like to have a pet and the joy of owning one without anchoring it in the rubric of the question. Other responses were short, sometimes with fewer than 400 words, while some weaker responses were impeded by frequent errors, which meant that the writing was not clear. For example, one candidate wrote: 'You will never know when the pet is feeling off mood and when you should not go ahead and touch it. Therfor always a safe maintain distance is needed which most children lack due to their lack of patience and them being full of energy and enthusiastic. In such sudden attacks children will be ceased with consternation and trepidation.'

Question 4 – Review

You recently went to a local café which is run by teenagers. You decide to post a review of the café on your blog. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Most responses showed engagement with the task, with candidates writing enthusiastic reviews, offering opinions on café décor, service, coffee and atmosphere. Most chose to write in an informal register suitable for a blog, and most aimed their review at fellow teenage readers. There was generally an awareness that this was a review and that there needed to be some balance expressed with a final verdict.

Stronger responses adopted a friendly tone for their blog and were clear about the need to provide a respectful, constructive critique of the pros and cons of a local café run by teenagers. They provided credible details on various aspects of the dining experience, such as the décor, music, customer service, location and accessibility as well as the range of items on the menu and where the ingredients were sourced from. Stronger responses also displayed a knowledge of beverages and cuisine, particularly emphasising the roles played by the teenage management team. One candidate produced a strong and convincing review of 'Haley & Co.'. There was a clear overview of the new venture featuring opening times and location. The reviewer provided details of the décor, reflecting the youthful staff, describing the 'chic' furniture and 'surprisingly comfortable' chairs. Positive language reflected the reviewer's enthusiasm with words such as 'divine', 'amazing' and an observation about: 'the commendable extra caution taken by the chef to accommodate my wife's nut allergy'. All aspects of the review demonstrated the candidate's full appreciation of the need to reflect positive teenage values.

Stronger reviews used an appropriate level of informality expected of a blog, such as in this opening: 'Hey lovely food lovers. Your favourite food content creator is here to serve you enjoyment.' They provided clear and concise evaluations, such as this one: 'As someone who travels with food at the forefront of my mind, I am picky with food. However, Youth Café surprisingly delivered top-quality meals from not only Australia, but meals rooted in other cultures. The highlight of this hidden gem definitely lies in its dish: Moroccan Tangine.' Another candidate wrote: 'These teenagers do not play around. They are certified baristas, so you know what type of quality you are getting. As soon as you enter, the café has a cozy modern design, with band posters from the 90's, which is ironic, because all of the baristas were born after the 00's. One of them is a coffee-art specialist, so what he makes is no doubt a picture-worthy shot. Who knew there was such a job as a "coffee art specialist!"'

Some weaker responses barely acknowledged the teen input and tended to just observe the cafe's workings rather than critique them. They contained quite detailed accounts of the visit to the café but only provided short, limited comments on aspects expected in detail in such a review, like staffing, service, layout and quality of food and drinks. Such responses lacked clear understanding of the conventions of this form and some presented opinions in terms of a rant. Other reviews were short, sometimes with fewer than 400 words, with some candidates just writing a list of elements they liked or disliked. Frequent errors, poor organisation and weak expression impeded some responses.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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

Key messages

9093 Paper 31 comprises two areas of study: *Language change* and *Child language acquisition*. As a result, the examination offers a question paper which presents candidates with a number of texts – the stimulus material for two compulsory questions. **Question 1** is presented in **Section A** and **Question 2** is found in **Section B**. Both compulsory questions carry 25 available marks, meaning that the question paper as a whole carries 50 marks.

In Paper 31, the main requirement in both of the compulsory questions is for responses to contain analytical findings drawn from the stimulus material. Ideas should be evidenced throughout by data selected from the texts supplied. Furthermore, analytical findings should be supported by references to wider study of the relevant area of the topic.

General comments

In November 2024, some responses tended to be brief, meaning that ideas often remained undeveloped or that only a minimal amount of ideas had been included. Some irrelevant material was presented, usually in terms of conceptualisation. Candidates should be aware that focus on the question in relation to the texts provided should be the main thrust of the analysis. Any comments on analytical findings should be supported by evidence from the text and then supported by relevant examples from wider study of the topic.

Those responses which were more clear or effective were sustained to an adequate length to demonstrate development of ideas. Such responses provided, at times, insightful references to a wide variety of relevant linguistic theories and theorists. Overall, control and clarity of expression was generally clear to effective with some accurate and precise use of technical terminology.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – *Language change*

The question requires candidates to refer to Texts A, B and C in their analysis of how they exemplified the various ways in which the English language has changed over time. This session, Text A presented contemporary English in a review of a mixtape recorded by the British singer Dylan. The review was published on the *New Musical Express* (NME) website in 2022 and was titled, *Dylan – ‘The Greatest Thing I’ll Never Learn’ review: a superstar is born*. Text B was a word table containing five of the top collocates following *sharp* from the Early English Books Online corpus (1470s–1690s) and the British National Corpus (1980s–1993) and Text C was an *n*-gram graph for *treat bad* and *treat badly* (American English 1800–2019).

Assessment Objectives 2 (Writing – 5 marks), 4 (Conceptualisation – 5 marks) and 5 (Data handling – 15 marks) were applied.

Writing – Assessment Objective 2

In general, responses were appropriately paragraphed into a logical sequence of ideas. There were some lapses into colloquialism at times, though appropriate register was usually maintained. Weaker responses tended to be limited by their own brevity and would have benefitted from development of ideas.

In November 2024, there was more evidence of candidates having organised their analyses into a sequence of linguistic frameworks such as graphology, orthography, lexis, grammar, syntax, pragmatics, etymology, semantics or morphology. At times, there was some confusion as to the differences between graphology and orthography. Although it is not a requirement to organise a response in this fashion, where this was done the analysis retained a linguistic standpoint which was not evident in more generalised work.

In effective or sophisticated responses, technical terminology was used with ease and accuracy whilst basic or limited responses used general descriptors to label data selected from the text.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

Weaker responses occasionally provided irrelevant material by describing the change over time in the English language from the Roman invasion of Britain onwards. Also, because of the date of publication of Text A, references to Caxton and the invention of the printing press and Jespersen's notion of the Great Vowel Shift were not generally plausible. Where used, they were not generally tied to examples from the stimulus material. However, those responses which supported the analysis of the contemporary English in Text A with reference to technological influence including the invention of the internet were far more fruitful and most responses cited Crystal's opinion on how the electronic mode is continuing to propel the development of the English language forward.

There was some plausibility in analyses of levels of formality where commentary indicated the *New Musical Express* had itself evolved over time from a printed newspaper containing popular music reviews that had been read by people who would now be an older generation and who would therefore appreciate a more formal and 'wordy' journalistic style.

Overall, responses made reference to some plausible examples of linguistic models and approaches. These included Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics and Lexical Gap models, Informalisation as described by Goodman, Cultural Transmission as identified by Bandura et al. and Hockett's notion of Random Fluctuation. These models and approaches were seemingly well known and at times were applied thoroughly, although references were not always relevantly applied with some confusion demonstrated between the meaning of random fluctuation and cultural transmission.

In discussion of Text B, the concepts of narrowing, broadening, amelioration and pejoration caused confusion at times and these labels were often misapplied in basic or limited responses.

Chen's S-Curve model, Crystal's Tide and Aitchison's Crumbling Castle metaphors were applied to an extent, as were American influences following the second world war. These were often mentioned in passing to support basic commentary on Text C, and therefore references remained incomplete or insubstantial, as were those to the concepts of prescriptivism and descriptivism.

Data handling – Assessment Objective 5

The forms used to present linguistic data, the word table in Text B and the *n*-gram in Text C were understood. There was some misreading of the contents of these texts at times.

Most candidates attempted some analysis of all three texts, which is a requirement as detailed in the question paper. The most frequent approach was to analyse the terms used in Texts B and C as they appeared in Text A, which provided some cohesion overall. Basic or limited responses tended to present analysis of the three texts separately and in the order in which they question paper. This latter approach tended to result in very little commentary on Text C even though the terms on the graph were clearly illustrated in Text A. Only in effective or sophisticated responses was analysis attempted of the deletion of the -ly inflection seen in the adverb *badly*.

Instead of demonstrating deep reading of Text A, some weaker responses took a deficit approach, commenting on features which were not present in any of the texts, including the long S, ct ligature or emphatic capitalisation of ordinary nouns. This approach led to some irrelevant material.

As in previous sessions, some confusion was demonstrated in basic responses where the nature of collocation had been mistaken for semantic shift. For example, such responses advised that between 1470 and 1690, *sharp* meant *pointed* or *sword* whereas the meaning of *sharp* is now *increase* or *decline*. Candidates should be reminded to carry out a deep reading of all the stimulus material before beginning to write.

In terms of the graphological aspects of Text A, most responses referred to the inclusion of the red hyperlinks, clarity of paragraphing and titling conventions. Clear responses selected the writer's inclusion of low-frequency lexis such as *juxtaposes* and *differentiate* which had been seen as a distinct contrast to the colloquial terms or subject specific music lexis seen in Text A. Other lexical analysis included commentary on the number of compounds created for descriptive power, for example, *neon-pink*, *near-rapturous*, and the use of *snarl* and *power* to emphasise *big feelings* and *sharp lyrics*.

Question 2 – Child language acquisition

The question required candidates to read and analyse a transcription of a conversation between Maria (age 2 years 6 months) and her mother. The context provided described the interlocutors unpacking Maria's toys from a toy box. Candidates were further required to support their analyses with 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 – Assessment Objective 1

Clear understanding of the interactive nature of the conversation and the ways in which each of the interlocutors used language for specific purposes was demonstrated in most responses. Basic or limited responses tended not to move beyond spotting features, however, mainly in the utterances of Maria. Although the presence of some features may be implied by the transcription key provided and feature-spotting can be credited to a limited extent, candidates are reminded that responses should demonstrate understanding of how and why features are used by the interlocutors according to age and stages of acquisition or responsibilities in caretaking support, which were evidenced in November 2024 by the role of the mother.

Basic responses selected data taken from Maria's utterances only and did not make any reference to features displayed in the language used by the mother. A further basic and unfruitful approach was to provide a chronological description of what was being said line by line in the transcription.

Clearer or more effective responses analysed, in terms of both interlocutors, competence in turn-taking, minimal yet cooperative overlap, fulfilled adjacency pairs, levels of politeness and a wide range of prosodic features including rising and falling intonation, raised volume, and emphatic stress.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

In November 2024, a broad range of theoretical models and approaches was used to support ideas. However, these were often only mentioned briefly and in some basic or limited responses were not applied to the analysis but were added into the work quite separately. Candidates are reminded that references to linguistic concepts, models or approaches should be used judiciously to support analytical points being made.

As in previous sessions, candidates used the age of the child to position her at a particular stage of acquisition at the very beginning of the analysis. In terms of Piaget, where responses claimed that Maria remained in the sensorimotor stage, this was inaccurate, particularly in light of her utterance, *yes that horsey can eat something as well*. Further inaccuracy was displayed when assigning Maria to the holophrastic stage. A far more useful approach would have been to select examples of her utterances and then to make a close examination of the selected data which would more accurately have revealed language demonstrating acquisition in the later telegraphic or early post-telegraphic stages.

Frequently seen were references to one or more of Halliday's seven functions. Data from the transcription revealed use of the regulatory function in Maria's *play with these*. The interactional function was evident throughout the transcription as Maria and her mother progressed through their joint activities and the imaginative function was clear in the way that Maria introduced *mister bunny* to the tea party. Candidates should be reminded that these are functions of language according to Halliday and not stages of acquisition.

The mother was identified in most responses as Maria's Language Acquisition Support System according to Bruner. Such discussion led to logically developed reference to Vygotsky's notions of the More Knowledgeable Other and Zone of Proximal Development to some extent. Chomsky's Language Acquisition Device was also cited as a contrast to Bruner's LASS relevantly, although such commentary was often brief and demonstrated some misunderstanding of Chomsky's approach.

At times, it seemed that candidates had begun their response with the intention to cite all those theorists that they knew rather than applying their understanding of conceptualisation to the data presented in the transcription. However, in responses where candidates had been more selective there was plausible reference to Bellugi in terms of negation and pluralisation, as seen in many of Maria's utterances, or to Aitchison's labelling and packaging model.

Data handling – Assessment Objective 5

The conventions of transcription for conversation analysis were well understood by almost all candidates. There was some confusion in interpretation of the utterances presented in phonemic representation. Candidates should be reminded that the IPA chart appended to the question paper is to be used as a further source of data to be used to assist and increase the depth of their analysis.

In November 2024, close analysis was not frequently seen even though responses had described a wide range of characteristic features – often without providing the example as evidence, however. Assessment Objectives 1 and 5 are closely tied, therefore the most effective approach is one where characteristic features are identified, followed by a selection from the transcription, and then by close scrutiny of how and why the interlocutors might present these features.

Nonetheless, in this session a greater depth of phonological analysis was seen in responses which detailed deletion (/les/) approximation (/wezæt/) and substitution (/ra:spri:z/). Insightful responses included the ways in which, despite these examples of emerging competence, Maria had already acquired full pronunciation of *biscuit*, using voiced and unvoiced plosive phonemes together with emphatic stress in the initial position syllable. Phonological analysis was generally clear, although there was some imprecision in labelling place and manner of articulation.

Overall, responses could have been improved by a greater selection of data for analysis and by deeper reading of the transcription. Instead of describing what Maria had not yet achieved in the acquisition of language, it would have been more fruitful to organise the response into a framework of competencies, such as use of pluralisation, negation and prosody for example.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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

Key messages

The component 9093/32 outlines a course of study of two language topics, *Language change* and *Child language acquisition*. Thus, the examination presents a question paper comprising two compulsory questions: **Question 1** appears in **Section A**, *Language change* and **Question 2** appears in **Section B**, *Child language acquisition*. Each of the two compulsory questions has 25 marks available, meaning that the question paper as a whole carries 50 marks.

In Paper 32, the main requirement in both of the compulsory questions is for responses to contain analytical findings drawn from the stimulus material. Ideas should be evidenced throughout by data selected from the texts supplied. Furthermore, analytical points raised should contain references to the relevant area of wider study of the topic.

General comments

In November 2024, responses were mostly sustained – more so in **Question 1** than **Question 2** – meaning that levels of development were clear to effective overall. At times, however, irrelevant material was presented; candidates should be aware that focus on the question alongside the stimulus material should form the main body of the analysis.

Some detailed or even insightful references to a wide variety of theories and theorists were made at times. In basic or limited responses these were left incomplete or were not tied to the discussion in hand.

Control and clarity of expression was generally clear to effective, with some sophisticated use of technical terminology.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – *Language change*

The question in **Section A** requires candidates to refer to Texts A, B and C in their analysis of how they exemplified the various ways in which the English language has changed over time. In November 2024, Text A was an extract from *THE GREAT FROST. Cold doings in London. A Dialogue*, written in 1608. Contextual information provided on the question paper detailed that *it was so cold in London that the River Thames had frozen solid*. Text B was a word table which demonstrated five of the top collocates preceding *doings* from the Early English Books Online corpus (1560–1690) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (1990–2019), and Text C was an n-gram graph for the spellings *drawes* and *draws* (1600–1700). As well as providing analysis of all three texts, candidates are required to support their work with ideas and examples from their wider study of the language topic.

Assessment Objectives 2 (Writing – 5 marks), 4 (Conceptualisation – 5 marks) and 5 (Data handling – 15 marks) were applied.

Writing

At times, although a mostly logical sequencing of ideas was evident, paragraph separation was not always used, even where a considerable amount of detailing had been included in a response. This approach led to a rather dense structure and some loss of clarity of expression. An appropriate register was usually maintained, although there were some lapses into colloquialism or generalisation in weaker responses.

Those responses which moved through a series of linguistic frameworks – such as graphology, orthography, lexis, grammar, syntax, pragmatics, etymology, semantics or morphology – retained a firm linguistic standpoint. This approach was seen more frequently in November 2024, although it is not a requirement to refer to all of these frameworks, nor is it a requirement to structure the response in such a way. However, it can often be a more fruitful approach than analysis of each text in turn, in the order in which they appear in the question paper, which tends not to achieve cohesion.

Clear or effective structural organisation was also demonstrated where introductions to responses succinctly set Text A on a timeline of historical influences understood to have caused change. However, basic or limited responses occasionally included irrelevant material by describing the change over time in the English language from the Roman invasion of Britain to contemporary technological influence such as the invention of the internet. These latter references were particularly out of place in discussion of a text published in 1608. Fewer examples of this type of approach were seen in November 2024 than in previous sessions, however, and conclusions were generally succinct and pertinent.

Technical terminology was used fluently, accurately and with precision in effective or sophisticated responses, whilst basic or limited responses used only general descriptors to label data selected from the text.

Conceptualisation

Linguistic models and approaches which made for plausible references included influences affecting the process of standardisation over time, for example advancements in printing technology since Caxton, Jespersen's notion of the Great Vowel Shift, Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics and Lexical Gap models, Cultural Transmission as expressed by Bandura et al., and Hockett's Random Fluctuation. These models and approaches were seemingly well-known and at times were applied thoroughly. Some confusion was seen between the meaning of cultural transmission and random fluctuation.

Chen's S-Curve model, Crystal's Tide and Aitchison's Crumbling Castle metaphors were applied to an extent, although these were often merely mentioned in passing to support commentary on Text C, therefore references remained incomplete or not substantially tied to the data, as were those to the concepts of prescriptivism and descriptivism. However, a number of responses included an historical approach to C, in attempting to chart historical connections such as war to the peaks and troughs in the graph.

Overall, conceptualisation could have been more clearly focussed on the pathway to standardisation, given Text A's publication date of 1608. The concepts of narrowing, broadening, amelioration and pejoration caused confusion at times and these labels were often misapplied in discussion of Text B in basic or limited responses.

Data handling

In November 2024, there was a general trend in not drawing on the data provided in Text A as much as that in Texts B and C. However, some close analyses were seen in terms of graphological aspects which were of particular interest in Text A, as were features of lexis, grammar, syntax, morphology, semantics and pragmatics.

Text A was rich in archaic forms and terms and most responses included detail on some of these examples. However, many responses argued that the change in the use of graphemes u and v, the use of the long s, inclusion of the double ll in certain words and the double r in *farre* were all changes resulting from a change in pronunciation linked generally to the Great Vowel Shift which seemed to point towards a general misunderstanding of the distinction between changes connected to pronunciation and changes relating to writing, printing and orthography.

Many responses referred to the level of formality identified in the discourse between the *Citizen* and the *Country-man* and the comparison with more modern writing having become more informal and concise. Goodman's notion of Informalisation was used to an extent in some discussion of this feature. A number of

developed responses appropriately selected the terms of address used in the text, *Father* and *Sir* to illustrate their ideas on this concept.

Analysis of terms seen in Text A, for example in *Quéene*, usually referred to French influence. Some discussion was thorough, although basic or limited responses tended to label the acute accent inaccurately as an apostrophe. Further misunderstanding was demonstrated in analysis of Text B where basic responses did not grasp the concept of collocation and analysed the contents of the table as synonyms. Candidates are reminded to make a deep reading of all of the stimulus material before proceeding with their analysis.

Question 2 – Child language acquisition

In **Section B, Question 2** required candidates to read and analyse a transcription of a conversation between Joshua (age 5 years) and his mother Nadia. Contextual information provided in the question paper advised that the interlocutors were looking out of their window at a breakdown truck which was moving a car belonging to one of their neighbours.

Candidates were further required to refer to specific details from the transcription, and 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

Clear understanding of the interactive nature of the conversation and the ways in which each of the interlocutors used language for specific purposes was demonstrated in most responses. In basic or limited responses, however, candidates tended to spot features rather than to analyse them, mainly in Joshua's utterances. Although the presence of some features may be implied by the transcription key provided and feature-spotting can be credited to a limited extent, candidates should be reminded that they need to demonstrate understanding of how and why features are used by the interlocutors according to age and stages of acquisition or responsibilities in caretaking support as evidenced in November 2024 by the role of the mother.

Clear responses selected data taken from both the child's and the mother's utterances. Effective responses took a similar approach but developed ideas with commentary on how and why these features were characteristic. A basic and unfruitful approach was to provide a chronological description of what was being said line by line in the transcription.

Most responses analysed at least some of the following characteristic features in Joshua's utterances: competence in turn-taking, fulfilled adjacency pairs, variety of pronoun use, false start and repair, negation, identification of colour, emerging competence in tense, prosodic features including rising and falling intonation, raised and lowered volume and emphasis.

Conceptualisation

In November 2024, a reasonably wide range of theoretical models and approaches was used to support ideas. At times, however, these were only mentioned briefly and in some basic or limited responses were not applied to the analysis but were added into the work quite separately. For example, there was some considerable reference to Genie which was not tied to any data in the transcription and which ran the risk of becoming irrelevant material.

Most candidates identified Joshua as having arrived at the post-telegraphic stage of acquisition as his age was stated as 5 years. However, limited responses described Joshua as remaining in the telegraphic stage, using his first few incomplete utterances as evidence.

More accurate and precise positioning of Joshua into a stage of language acquisition could have been gained through exploration of his utterance, *it looked like sylvias car*, which includes singular pronoun, past tense, comparison and possession, which would not be produced and transmitted in the telegraphic stage.

A number of Hallidayan functions were identified in analyses of Joshua's utterances, for example: the representational function in *she has a red car like that*, his regulatory *COME IN THE CAR*, and the imaginative function in *im pretending*. Candidates are reminded that these are functions of language according to Halliday and not stages of acquisition.

Joshua's age was usually used to identify which of Piaget's cognitive development stages he had reached, although there was some confusion in basic or limited responses over which stage was most appropriate – the formal operational stage was assigned at times, which was inaccurate. Clear or effective responses considered Joshua's emergence from the preoperational to the concrete operational stage.

Chomsky's Language Acquisition Device was frequently referenced, although not always thoroughly, using Joshua's false starts and repairs as evidence of the existence of Universal Grammar. Basic or limited responses merely described such instances as 'mistakes' whereas clearer work demonstrated understanding of the concept of virtuous error.

Nadia's use of child-directed speech was discussed by most candidates in terms of her scaffolding according to Bruner and Vygotsky. In her role as More Knowledgeable Other, her attempts to bring Joshua into a Zone of Proximal Development as described by Vygotsky, in prompting her son into deciding whether the *red car* might belong to *Sylvia* or *Mrs Battersby*, were discussed. Firm conclusions were seldom reached, demonstrating surface knowledge of this particular concept.

Data handling

In November 2024, there was a good deal of reliance on describing theoretical models and approaches, meaning that a lower level of analysis was attempted overall. To an extent, such an approach is appropriate because the weighting of marks in AO4 is considerably heavier than in AO5. However, depth of analysis is required if marks are to be gained in AO5. Furthermore, although a range of characteristic features had been identified as required by AO1, candidates should be reminded that identification of any characteristic features must be evidenced by selections from the transcription, and that citations of theoretical models and approaches are to be used as support for ideas.

Thus, overall, responses could have been improved by a greater selection of data for analysis and by deeper reading of the transcription. Instead of describing what Joshua had not yet achieved in the acquisition of language – mostly evident in his incomplete utterances at the beginning of the transcription – it could have been more fruitful to organise the response into a framework of competencies, such as use of tense or prosody for example.

Nonetheless, in November 2024, there was more evidence of phonological analysis than had been seen in previous examination sessions. Attempts to analyse Joshua's emerging phonological competence included exploration of approximation in /bæzbi/, elision in *gonna*, volume control and pitch variation for specific purposes, production of sound mimicking a siren and informal use and later correction of the glottal stop in /mæʔə/. Some confusion was demonstrated in the identification of phonemes in terms of place and manner of articulation, although there was some accurate detailing in effective or even sophisticated analysis. Candidates are reminded that the IPA chart appended to the question paper contains data provided to assist deeper analysis of evidence from the transcription.

All candidates demonstrated clear understanding of the conventions of Conversation Analysis transcription, indicating more thorough examination preparation than had been seen in previous sessions.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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

Key messages

9093 Paper 33 comprises two areas of study: *Language change* and *Child language acquisition*. As a result, the examination offers a question paper which presents candidates with a number of texts – the stimulus material for two compulsory questions. **Question 1** is presented in **Section A** and **Question 2** is found in **Section B**. Both compulsory questions carry 25 available marks, meaning that the question paper as a whole carries 50 marks.

In Paper 33, the main requirement in both of the compulsory questions is for responses to contain analytical findings drawn from the stimulus material. Ideas should be evidenced throughout by data selected from the texts supplied. Furthermore, analytical findings should be supported by references to wider study of the relevant area of the topic.

General comments

In November 2024, some responses tended to be brief, meaning that ideas often remained undeveloped or that only a minimal amount of ideas had been included. Some irrelevant material was presented, usually in terms of conceptualisation. Candidates should be aware that focus on the question in relation to the texts provided should be the main thrust of the analysis. Any comments on analytical findings should be supported by evidence from the text and then supported by relevant examples from wider study of the topic.

Those responses which were more clear or effective were sustained to an adequate length to demonstrate development of ideas. Such responses provided, at times, insightful references to a wide variety of relevant linguistic theories and theorists. Overall, control and clarity of expression was generally clear to effective with some accurate and precise use of technical terminology.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – *Language change*

The question requires candidates to refer to Texts A, B and C in their analysis of how they exemplified the various ways in which the English language has changed over time. This session, Text A presented contemporary English in a review of a mixtape recorded by the British singer Dylan. The review was published on the *New Musical Express* (NME) website in 2022 and was titled, *Dylan – ‘The Greatest Thing I’ll Never Learn’ review: a superstar is born*. Text B was a word table containing five of the top collocates following *sharp* from the Early English Books Online corpus (1470s–1690s) and the British National Corpus (1980s–1993) and Text C was an *n*-gram graph for *treat bad* and *treat badly* (American English 1800–2019).

Assessment Objectives 2 (Writing – 5 marks), 4 (Conceptualisation – 5 marks) and 5 (Data handling – 15 marks) were applied.

Writing – Assessment Objective 2

In general, responses were appropriately paragraphed into a logical sequence of ideas. There were some lapses into colloquialism at times, though appropriate register was usually maintained. Weaker responses tended to be limited by their own brevity and would have benefitted from development of ideas.

In November 2024, there was more evidence of candidates having organised their analyses into a sequence of linguistic frameworks such as graphology, orthography, lexis, grammar, syntax, pragmatics, etymology, semantics or morphology. At times, there was some confusion as to the differences between graphology and orthography. Although it is not a requirement to organise a response in this fashion, where this was done the analysis retained a linguistic standpoint which was not evident in more generalised work.

In effective or sophisticated responses, technical terminology was used with ease and accuracy whilst basic or limited responses used general descriptors to label data selected from the text.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

Weaker responses occasionally provided irrelevant material by describing the change over time in the English language from the Roman invasion of Britain onwards. Also, because of the date of publication of Text A, references to Caxton and the invention of the printing press and Jespersen's notion of the Great Vowel Shift were not generally plausible. Where used, they were not generally tied to examples from the stimulus material. However, those responses which supported the analysis of the contemporary English in Text A with reference to technological influence including the invention of the internet were far more fruitful and most responses cited Crystal's opinion on how the electronic mode is continuing to propel the development of the English language forward.

There was some plausibility in analyses of levels of formality where commentary indicated the *New Musical Express* had itself evolved over time from a printed newspaper containing popular music reviews that had been read by people who would now be an older generation and who would therefore appreciate a more formal and 'wordy' journalistic style.

Overall, responses made reference to some plausible examples of linguistic models and approaches. These included Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics and Lexical Gap models, Informalisation as described by Goodman, Cultural Transmission as identified by Bandura et al. and Hockett's notion of Random Fluctuation. These models and approaches were seemingly well known and at times were applied thoroughly, although references were not always relevantly applied with some confusion demonstrated between the meaning of random fluctuation and cultural transmission.

In discussion of Text B, the concepts of narrowing, broadening, amelioration and pejoration caused confusion at times and these labels were often misapplied in basic or limited responses.

Chen's S-Curve model, Crystal's Tide and Aitchison's Crumbling Castle metaphors were applied to an extent, as were American influences following the second world war. These were often mentioned in passing to support basic commentary on Text C, and therefore references remained incomplete or insubstantial, as were those to the concepts of prescriptivism and descriptivism.

Data handling – Assessment Objective 5

The forms used to present linguistic data, the word table in Text B and the *n*-gram in Text C were understood. There was some misreading of the contents of these texts at times.

Most candidates attempted some analysis of all three texts, which is a requirement as detailed in the question paper. The most frequent approach was to analyse the terms used in Texts B and C as they appeared in Text A, which provided some cohesion overall. Basic or limited responses tended to present analysis of the three texts separately and in the order in which they question paper. This latter approach tended to result in very little commentary on Text C even though the terms on the graph were clearly illustrated in Text A. Only in effective or sophisticated responses was analysis attempted of the deletion of the -ly inflection seen in the adverb *badly*.

Instead of demonstrating deep reading of Text A, some weaker responses took a deficit approach, commenting on features which were not present in any of the texts, including the long S, ct ligature or emphatic capitalisation of ordinary nouns. This approach led to some irrelevant material.

As in previous sessions, some confusion was demonstrated in basic responses where the nature of collocation had been mistaken for semantic shift. For example, such responses advised that between 1470 and 1690, *sharp* meant *pointed* or *sword* whereas the meaning of *sharp* is now *increase* or *decline*. Candidates should be reminded to carry out a deep reading of all the stimulus material before beginning to write.

In terms of the graphological aspects of Text A, most responses referred to the inclusion of the red hyperlinks, clarity of paragraphing and titling conventions. Clear responses selected the writer's inclusion of low-frequency lexis such as *juxtaposes* and *differentiate* which had been seen as a distinct contrast to the colloquial terms or subject specific music lexis seen in Text A. Other lexical analysis included commentary on the number of compounds created for descriptive power, for example, *neon-pink*, *near-rapturous*, and the use of *snarl* and *power* to emphasise *big feelings* and *sharp lyrics*.

Question 2 – Child language acquisition

The question required candidates to read and analyse a transcription of a conversation between Maria (age 2 years 6 months) and her mother. The context provided described the interlocutors unpacking Maria's toys from a toy box. Candidates were further required to support their analyses with 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 – Assessment Objective 1

Clear understanding of the interactive nature of the conversation and the ways in which each of the interlocutors used language for specific purposes was demonstrated in most responses. Basic or limited responses tended not to move beyond spotting features, however, mainly in the utterances of Maria. Although the presence of some features may be implied by the transcription key provided and feature-spotting can be credited to a limited extent, candidates are reminded that responses should demonstrate understanding of how and why features are used by the interlocutors according to age and stages of acquisition or responsibilities in caretaking support, which were evidenced in November 2024 by the role of the mother.

Basic responses selected data taken from Maria's utterances only and did not make any reference to features displayed in the language used by the mother. A further basic and unfruitful approach was to provide a chronological description of what was being said line by line in the transcription.

Clearer or more effective responses analysed, in terms of both interlocutors, competence in turn-taking, minimal yet cooperative overlap, fulfilled adjacency pairs, levels of politeness and a wide range of prosodic features including rising and falling intonation, raised volume, and emphatic stress.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

In November 2024, a broad range of theoretical models and approaches was used to support ideas. However, these were often only mentioned briefly and in some basic or limited responses were not applied to the analysis but were added into the work quite separately. Candidates are reminded that references to linguistic concepts, models or approaches should be used judiciously to support analytical points being made.

As in previous sessions, candidates used the age of the child to position her at a particular stage of acquisition at the very beginning of the analysis. In terms of Piaget, where responses claimed that Maria remained in the sensorimotor stage, this was inaccurate, particularly in light of her utterance, *yes that horsey can eat something as well*. Further inaccuracy was displayed when assigning Maria to the holophrastic stage. A far more useful approach would have been to select examples of her utterances and then to make a close examination of the selected data which would more accurately have revealed language demonstrating acquisition in the later telegraphic or early post-telegraphic stages.

Frequently seen were references to one or more of Halliday's seven functions. Data from the transcription revealed use of the regulatory function in Maria's *play with these*. The interactional function was evident throughout the transcription as Maria and her mother progressed through their joint activities and the imaginative function was clear in the way that Maria introduced *mister bunny* to the tea party. Candidates should be reminded that these are functions of language according to Halliday and not stages of acquisition.

The mother was identified in most responses as Maria's Language Acquisition Support System according to Bruner. Such discussion led to logically developed reference to Vygotsky's notions of the More Knowledgeable Other and Zone of Proximal Development to some extent. Chomsky's Language Acquisition Device was also cited as a contrast to Bruner's LASS relevantly, although such commentary was often brief and demonstrated some misunderstanding of Chomsky's approach.

At times, it seemed that candidates had begun their response with the intention to cite all those theorists that they knew rather than applying their understanding of conceptualisation to the data presented in the transcription. However, in responses where candidates had been more selective there was plausible reference to Bellugi in terms of negation and pluralisation, as seen in many of Maria's utterances, or to Aitchison's labelling and packaging model.

Data handling – Assessment Objective 5

The conventions of transcription for conversation analysis were well understood by almost all candidates. There was some confusion in interpretation of the utterances presented in phonemic representation. Candidates should be reminded that the IPA chart appended to the question paper is to be used as a further source of data to be used to assist and increase the depth of their analysis.

In November 2024, close analysis was not frequently seen even though responses had described a wide range of characteristic features – often without providing the example as evidence, however. Assessment Objectives 1 and 5 are closely tied, therefore the most effective approach is one where characteristic features are identified, followed by a selection from the transcription, and then by close scrutiny of how and why the interlocutors might present these features.

Nonetheless, in this session a greater depth of phonological analysis was seen in responses which detailed deletion (/les/) approximation (/wezæt/) and substitution (/ra:spri:z/). Insightful responses included the ways in which, despite these examples of emerging competence, Maria had already acquired full pronunciation of *biscuit*, using voiced and unvoiced plosive phonemes together with emphatic stress in the initial position syllable. Phonological analysis was generally clear, although there was some imprecision in labelling place and manner of articulation.

Overall, responses could have been improved by a greater selection of data for analysis and by deeper reading of the transcription. Instead of describing what Maria had not yet achieved in the acquisition of language, it would have been more fruitful to organise the response into a framework of competencies, such as use of pluralisation, negation and prosody for example.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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

Key messages

The examination for syllabus 9093/41 presents candidates with engaging texts which comprise the stimulus material for two compulsory questions. The questions are set into **Sections A** and **B**. The topic for **Question 1** in **Section A** is *English in the world* and the topic for **Question 2** in **Section B** is *Language and the self*. Each of the two compulsory questions offers up to 25 marks, meaning that the question paper, as a whole, carries 50 marks. The examination has a duration of 2 hours and 15 minutes; dictionaries are not permitted.

The main requirement in both of the compulsory questions is that responses should discuss specific points drawn from the stimulus material. Ideas should be evidenced throughout with a careful selection from the texts provided. A further requirement is that points raised should contain references to knowledge and understanding of linguistic issues, models and approaches gained from candidates' wider study of the topic focus.

Marks are awarded using Assessment Objectives 1 (Understanding – 10 marks), 2 (Writing – 5 marks) and 4 (Conceptualisation – 10 marks). Candidates are reminded that they should observe the weighting of available marks under each assessment objective so that any points raised are evidenced with succinct quotes from the text and then supported by reference to relevant linguistic issues, methods, models or approaches. Taking such an approach to discursive writing will maximise the potential achievement against the assessment objectives operating for this paper.

Candidates are further reminded of the discursive nature of the responses required. Although analysis of the ideas presented in the stimulus material is required, any analysis of the language used by the text producers will result in irrelevant material.

General comments

In November 2024, most responses were sustained to an appropriate level, more so those to **Question 1** than those to **Question 2**. However, some basic or limited responses had relied on lengthy quotes from the text as a method of extending the overall amount of writing produced. This approach of replicating a large proportion of the texts presented had clearly taken up valuable examination time which would have been better spent on deep reading of the question paper to be able to select the most important ideas presented.

At times, some irrelevant material was presented in basic or limited work, particularly when long explanations of certain linguistic theories had been provided – even where these specific theories were plausible references at first. Some sophisticated work was seen, however, where responses were accurate and precise in their conceptual referencing.

Control and clarity of expression was generally clear with a degree of fluency, accuracy and precision in the use of technical terminology, resulting in maintenance of a linguistic standpoint.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – *English in the world*

Candidates were required to read the text provided, which was an extract from an article published in 2022 on *Rest of World*, a website which focuses on global issues relating to technology and to discuss what they felt were the most important issues raised relating to *the changing use of English in an international context*. They were further required to refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of the topic, English in the world.

Understanding – Assessment Objective 1

Overall understanding of the stimulus material was demonstrated in all responses as candidates usually presented their ideas on an appropriate number of points raised. These included discussion of the concepts of a world language, English as a global language, and English as a lingua franca, indicating that the current position of the English language in the world was widely understood.

Other points which were selected for discussion included the way the text had described that in India 65% of high school final candidates *come from non-English medium schools* and that higher education in the country is currently *almost entirely English based*. Development was seen in responses which discussed the *surge in 'mother tongue' education* in India and the possibility that *English-only higher education* might promote a *language-class separation*.

Further points from the text which were explored led to consideration of the opinion from the United Nation's Independent Expert on Minority Issues that *quality public education should be conducted in regional languages* with development seen in responses which discussed the possibility of *dissonance* between what is required globally and the current trend in *local language technical education*, indicating that there could be a disadvantage to India if mother-tongue education rather than tuition in English was maintained.

Basic or limited responses used only a minimum of the points above and did not demonstrate a full exploration of ideas. However, those responses seen as clear, effective or even sophisticated provided a sustained discursive essay, including full commentary on the writer's arguments which, at times, were developed by thoughtful counterarguments.

Writing – Assessment Objective 2

Sequencing of ideas into a logical organisational framework was generally sound. However, basic or limited responses were brief which demonstrated lack of development. Otherwise, basic or limited responses which were more sustained included ideas which were not directly related to the specific frame of the question: *the changing use of English in an international context*. Development in clear or effective discussions retained focus on this specific frame and provided succinct examples of how the English language had changed over time. Sophisticated responses provided creative thought on how the position of English may continue to change in the future.

Control and clarity of expression was generally clear. In some basic or limited responses there was a slip into colloquialism, whereas clear or effective responses maintained an appropriate register throughout.

Effective or sophisticated responses demonstrated an ease in accurate use of technical terminology, indicating that the candidate had retained a linguistic standpoint throughout.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

With a deeper reading of the stimulus material, responses demonstrated knowledge and understanding gained from wider study of the language topic. In basic responses, opportunities to do so were not taken up. In limited responses, long explanations of Kachru's Circles of English model were provided although India's position as a country normally classified in the outer circle was frequently described in error, either as an inner or expanding circle country. However, effective responses extended discussion by explaining thoughts on how Kachru's model may now be outdated due to the growth of international trade, media and education in the contemporary world, and why McArthur's Wheel might now be a more reliable source for classification.

Hybridisation was discussed in responses which acknowledged Hinglish as the main variety of English in northern India. A plausible comparison was frequently drawn with Singlish, including the contrasting government intervention. There was also discussion in basic or limited responses on colonisation although this led at times to overly long historical accounts with some irrelevant details. Where comments on colonisation were kept more brief, however, they were usually supported relevantly by reference to Phillipson's notion of Imperialism.

Clear or effective responses also introduced a range of linguistic theories and theorists which included Graddol, Crystal, Diamond, Widdowson's notions of *Spread and Distribution*, Schneider's dynamic model, Pakir's English as a killer language and the UNESCO model of the pathway to language death.

Question 2 – Language and the self

Candidates were required to read the text presented which was an extract from an article published in 2021 in the British newspaper *The Guardian*. 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 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 – Assessment Objective 1

The stimulus material was found to be engaging and accessible. Basic or limited responses tended to explore those points which were made by the author towards the beginning of the text provided, whereas clear, effective or even insightful responses were developed by careful consideration of the text as a whole.

All responses understood the main thrust of the article, which was that a ban on using certain words and phrases in the classroom had been imposed in a school in London. The contrasting views from teachers, saying that *this guides candidates to use language that fits more formal situations* and those from linguists, who were quoted as saying that the ban was *crude and shortsighted ... a disservice and discredit to young people* drew some lively commentary. Such commentary was seen particularly in developed responses which considered how the imposition of the ban *may have negative effects on identity and confidence* which include how the learners in the London school could *feel they have to reject the cultural aspects of their own language*. Such development demonstrated a clear focus on the question frame in terms of how *language can reflect personal and social identity*.

Writing – Assessment Objective 2

At times, responses to **Question 2** were brief and, therefore, remained undeveloped. Some limited responses demonstrated a chronological paraphrase of the points raised in the article paragraph by paragraph and, therefore, did not present discursive work. Other limited responses tended to rely on overly long quotes taken from the text; in basic responses there was evidence of material having been lifted directly from the source.

Nonetheless in responses which were clear or effective, logical sequencing through paragraphs was evident. Clarity and control of expression was demonstrated by maintenance of an appropriate register, accurate and precise labelling using technical terminology and presentation of thoughtful arguments and counter-arguments.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

The prescriptivist approach implied by the actions of the London school was discussed by most candidates and was usually contrasted with the notion seen in the stimulus material that everyone *should celebrate the different ways language is being used*. Weaker responses tended only to use the labels 'prescriptivism' and 'descriptivism' without a full reference which could have compared, for example, the views of Honey and Crystal.

Also frequently referenced was the concept of codeswitching, including some plausible personal examples being offered. The concept of slang, often inaccurately described in the plural as 'slangs' was explored to an extent in most responses, quoting the article's view that slang is *at the forefront of linguistic innovation*, with some examples from wider study of how it can be *wonderfully creative*. Developed responses made further reference, combining the concepts of codeswitching and slang, to examples of cryptolects, explaining how these had emerged out of necessity at times to protect the personal and social identities of specific discourse communities.

Less useful references, given the question frame, were to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis although some ideas on linguistic relativity and determinism were made plausible at times. Similarly, the Boas-Jakobson Principle or Fodor's Language of Thought model were not always made relevant to the focus of personal and social identity. More useful were citations of Giles' Communication Accommodation Theory in terms of convergence (with the wishes of the London school) and divergence (a possible outcome of the ban where candidates may not conform with the ban). References to Grice and the maxims of conversation were somewhat out of place and frequently misunderstood or misquoted.

In clear or effective responses, Tajfel and Turner's in-group and out-group concepts were discussed in relation to social identity and compared, at times, to Kramarae's ideas on the muted group which was seen in this case to be the candidate body of the London school. Goffman's views on face were tentatively discussed although his approach was generally not well-detailed.

Overall, a wide range of models and approaches tended to be introduced but were not always accurately described or relevant to the discussion in hand. Candidates should take care to read the question paper thoroughly to ensure that any linguistic theories intended to be referenced are fully relevant to the topic focus.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/42
Language Topics Paper 42

Key messages

The examination for syllabus 9093/42 presents candidates with engaging texts which comprise the stimulus material for two compulsory questions. The questions are set into **Sections A** and **B**. The topic for **Question 1** in **Section A** is *English in the world* and the topic for **Question 2** in **Section B** is *Language and the self*. Each of the two compulsory questions offers up to 25 marks, meaning that the question paper, as a whole carries 50 marks. The examination has a duration of 2 hours and 15 minutes; dictionaries are not permitted.

The main requirement in both of the compulsory questions is that responses should discuss specific points drawn from the stimulus material. Ideas should be evidenced throughout with a careful selection from the texts provided. A further requirement is that points raised should contain references to knowledge and understanding of linguistic issues, models and approaches gained from candidates' wider study of the topic focus.

Marks are awarded using Assessment Objectives 1 (Understanding – 10 marks), 2 (Writing – 5 marks) and 4 (Conceptualisation – 10 marks). Candidates are reminded that they should observe the weighting of available marks under each assessment objective so that any points raised are evidenced with succinct quotes from the text and then supported by reference to relevant linguistic issues, methods, models or approaches. Taking such an approach to discursive writing will maximise the potential achievement against the assessment objectives operating for this paper.

Candidates are further reminded of the discursive nature of the responses required. Although analysis of the ideas presented in the stimulus material is required, any analysis of the language used by the text producers will result in irrelevant material.

General comments

In November 2024, there was evidence of critical engagement with the stimulus material which demonstrated thorough reading prior to commencement of writing and, therefore, often clear or detailed understanding. In general, responses were sustained, meaning that levels of development were often clear or effective overall with sophisticated work seen at times. However, some irrelevant material was presented in basic or limited work; candidates should be aware that focus on the question should be central to any discussion.

At times, insightful reference to a wide variety of theories and theorists was seen, although there was also evidence of incomplete referencing or citation of theories and theorists which was not tied directly to the discussion in hand.

Control and clarity of expression was generally clear to effective with some sophisticated use of technical terminology indicating an assured linguistic standpoint.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – *English in the world*

Candidates were required to read the text provided which was an extract from an article published on *The Conversation* website in 2021. Candidates were required discuss what they felt were the most important

issues raised in the text relating to *the present and future status 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 – Assessment Objective 1

In November 2024, clear, detailed or insightful understanding of the stimulus material was demonstrated in those responses which presented critical engagement with a range of the points that it contained. Most candidates indicated that there could be potential benefits of having a common language in science, taking the ideas from the text regarding the ways in which the English language has dominated international science. However, clear understanding was presented in discussions which considered how the dominance of English has led, according to the article, to *important scientific knowledge in other languages ... going untapped*. The writer's notion that *more effort is needed to transcend language barriers in science* facilitated some effective discussion on the future status of English, in line with the frame of the question.

Developed responses saw the issue that *More than one-third of scientific documents on biodiversity conservation are published in languages other than English* as being an urgent need for remedy, with some plausible ideas being discussed as to how such a remedy might be achieved. The potential benefits to international science of translation programmes were widely discussed, as were the drawbacks. Developed responses also drew attention to the phenomenon of artificial intelligence which was seen by some as being of great value and to others as detrimental to the work of international scientists.

Although basic or limited responses selected only a minimum of the points above and described them in a rather brief manner overall, the level of engagement with the stimulus material was clear with many responses demonstrating understanding of how *Most English-language evidence on what works in conservation relates to Europe and North America* thus disadvantaging the wider global community.

Writing – Assessment Objective 2

A number of responses were brief which demonstrated lack of development. Otherwise, basic or limited responses which were more sustained included ideas which were not directly related to the specific frame of the question: *the present and future status of English in the world*. Development in clear or effective discussions retained focus on this specific frame and provided succinct examples of how the English language had changed over time. Sophisticated responses provided creative thought on how the position of English may continue to change in the future.

Control and clarity of expression was generally clear. In some basic or limited responses there was a slip into colloquialism, whereas clear or effective responses maintained an appropriate register throughout.

Effective or sophisticated responses demonstrated an ease in accurate use of technical terminology, indicating that the candidate had retained a linguistic standpoint throughout.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

The stimulus material offered engagement with linguistic issues which, on deep reading, could have provided candidates with opportunities to demonstrate the extent of their knowledge and understanding gained from wider study of the language topic. In basic responses, these opportunities were not taken up. However, acknowledging the text's advice to those in *wider disciplines to reassess the untapped potential of non-English science* led to some developed discussion of global study of disciplines other than science including politics, philosophy and economics in which the English language is currently the dominant medium in which to transmit knowledge.

Basic or limited responses tended to refer to issues which were not clearly detailed in the stimulus material, in order to address Assessment Objective 4. This approach was not generally fruitful and included some extended reference to colonisation although some plausible citation of Phillipson's notion of Imperialism was seen. English was often described as 'a killer language' in weaker responses without this term being attributed to Pakir.

Clear or effective responses addressed the frame of the question by comparing Kachru's Circles of English with the Wheel model put forward by McArthur, detailing how and why McArthur's approach may be a more reliable source for wider study at the present time. Other references to wider study of the language topic included those to Graddol, Crystal, Diamond and UNESCO's model of the pathway to language death. Some insightful responses explored the concept of linguicism, described by Skutnabb-Kangas, which was

effectively cited to underscore how English, while facilitating international collaboration, can marginalize non-English language research, limiting opportunities to access scientific knowledge.

Question 2

Candidates were required to read the text presented which was an extract from an article published on the website of *Human Resources Online* in 2022. 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* and 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 – Assessment Objective 1

The stimulus material presented a number of specific points, each of which provided candidates with a springboard for discussion. These included how an *increasingly diverse workforce demands change from old norms*. This point often drew detailed thoughts in effective responses on what may have represented *old norms* in earlier times.

Examples of non-inclusive language were provided by many candidates when exploring the author's idea that workplaces *struggle with ingrained language which is no longer inclusive*. Most candidate quoted Twitter as the article had detailed the view that inclusive language is *essential for creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and included*.

Limited discussion was presented in responses which focused purely on Twitter's examples of non-inclusive language *such as 'blacklist' and 'sanity check'* without an exploration of the ways in which Twitter had taken steps toward remedying what was felt to be exclusivity. However, critical engagement was demonstrated in those responses which outlined ideas to counterbalance such exclusivity.

Further critical engagement was seen in those responses which discussed whether changes in the language used in the workplace could be deemed as unnecessary, although quoting the phrase from the article, *words matter*, led to most conclusions that, in the contemporary world, changes to language which comprised *derogatory slurs and harmful terms* should no longer be *passed off as 'jokes'* are a vital step forward.

Writing – Assessment Objective 2

At times, responses to **Question 2** were brief and, therefore, remained undeveloped. Some limited responses demonstrated a chronological paraphrase of the points raised in the article paragraph by paragraph and, therefore, did not present discursive work. Other limited responses tended to rely on overly long quotes taken from the text; in basic responses there was evidence of material having been lifted directly from the source.

Nonetheless, in responses which were clear or effective, logical sequencing through paragraphs was evident. Clarity and control of expression was demonstrated by maintenance of an appropriate register, accurate and precise labelling using technical terminology and presentation of thoughtful arguments and counter-arguments.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

Overall, a wide range of models and approaches was introduced to support ideas. These were not always thoroughly discussed, nor were they always precise or accurate. Candidates are reminded to read the question thoroughly to ensure that any linguistic models or approaches intended to be referenced are fully relevant to the topic focus.

Clear discussion was observed in responses which quoted the author's advice that some language has *the potential to reinforce unconscious gender biases or ableism*. In many responses, reference was made to Pinker's Euphemism Treadmill and the ways in which ableism had become more and more recognised in many communities of practice. Gender bias was also frequently considered, although ideas on that topic were not always thoroughly discussed. The new terms 'firefighter' or 'police officer' were often quoted as terms to replace those which had been thought to display gender bias. Such referencing demonstrated wider study to an extent. However, effective responses detailed Cameron's notions in a deeper examination of genderlect.

Relevant reference was also made to Kramarae's Muted Group Theory, Goffman's Face and Face Threatening Acts, Giles' Communication Accommodation Theory, and Tajfel and Turner's concept of the in-group and out-group. Less appropriate – and less well-understood – were citations of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, the Boas-Jakobson Principle or Fodor's Language of Thought as they were not tied securely to the discussion in hand or the specific area of the language topic. A similar pattern was seen in citation of Labov's New York Department Store study, and Grice's Maxim's of Conversation where misunderstanding and irrelevant material tended to be seen.

Attempts were made to reference Behaviourism which were plausible to an extent, although basic or limited responses tended to outline how Skinner's positive or negative reinforcement techniques were applied to children's learning, therefore such references were somewhat outside the scope of the stimulus material for this question and would, perhaps, have been positioned more comfortably in a response to **Question 2** of Paper 9093/32.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/43
Language Topics Paper 43

Key messages

The examination for syllabus 9093/43 presents candidates with engaging texts which comprise the stimulus material for two compulsory questions. The questions are set into **Sections A** and **B**. The topic for **Question 1** in **Section A** is *English in the world* and the topic for **Question 2** in **Section B** is *Language and the self*. Each of the two compulsory questions offers up to 25 marks, meaning that the question paper, as a whole, carries 50 marks. The examination has a duration of 2 hours and 15 minutes; dictionaries are not permitted.

The main requirement in both of the compulsory questions is that responses should discuss specific points drawn from the stimulus material. Ideas should be evidenced throughout with a careful selection from the texts provided. A further requirement is that points raised should contain references to knowledge and understanding of linguistic issues, models and approaches gained from candidates' wider study of the topic focus.

Marks are awarded using Assessment Objectives 1 (Understanding – 10 marks), 2 (Writing – 5 marks) and 4 (Conceptualisation – 10 marks). Candidates are reminded that they should observe the weighting of available marks under each assessment objective so that any points raised are evidenced with succinct quotes from the text and then supported by reference to relevant linguistic issues, methods, models or approaches. Taking such an approach to discursive writing will maximise the potential achievement against the assessment objectives operating for this paper.

Candidates are further reminded of the discursive nature of the responses required. Although analysis of the ideas presented in the stimulus material is required, any analysis of the language used by the text producers will result in irrelevant material.

General comments

In November 2024, most responses were sustained to an appropriate level, more so those to **Question 1** than those to **Question 2**. However, some basic or limited responses had relied on lengthy quotes from the text as a method of extending the overall amount of writing produced. This approach of replicating a large proportion of the texts presented had clearly taken up valuable examination time which would have been better spent on deep reading of the question paper to be able to select the most important ideas presented.

At times, some irrelevant material was presented in basic or limited work, particularly when long explanations of certain linguistic theories had been provided – even where these specific theories were plausible references at first. Some sophisticated work was seen, however, where responses were accurate and precise in their conceptual referencing.

Control and clarity of expression was generally clear with a degree of fluency, accuracy and precision in the use of technical terminology, resulting in maintenance of a linguistic standpoint.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – *English in the world*

Candidates were required to read the text provided, which was an extract from an article published in 2022 on *Rest of World*, a website which focuses on global issues relating to technology and to discuss what they felt were the most important issues raised relating to *the changing use of English in an international context*. They were further required to refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of the topic, English in the world.

Understanding – Assessment Objective 1

Overall understanding of the stimulus material was demonstrated in all responses as candidates usually presented their ideas on an appropriate number of points raised. These included discussion of the concepts of a world language, English as a global language, and English as a lingua franca, indicating that the current position of the English language in the world was widely understood.

Other points which were selected for discussion included the way the text had described that in India 65% of high school final candidates *come from non-English medium schools* and that higher education in the country is currently *almost entirely English based*. Development was seen in responses which discussed the *surge in 'mother tongue' education* in India and the possibility that *English-only higher education* might promote a *language-class separation*.

Further points from the text which were explored led to consideration of the opinion from the United Nation's Independent Expert on Minority Issues that *quality public education should be conducted in regional languages* with development seen in responses which discussed the possibility of *dissonance* between what is required globally and the current trend in *local language technical education*, indicating that there could be a disadvantage to India if mother-tongue education rather than tuition in English was maintained.

Basic or limited responses used only a minimum of the points above and did not demonstrate a full exploration of ideas. However, those responses seen as clear, effective or even sophisticated provided a sustained discursive essay, including full commentary on the writer's arguments which, at times, were developed by thoughtful counterarguments.

Writing – Assessment Objective 2

Sequencing of ideas into a logical organisational framework was generally sound. However, basic or limited responses were brief which demonstrated lack of development. Otherwise, basic or limited responses which were more sustained included ideas which were not directly related to the specific frame of the question: *the changing use of English in an international context*. Development in clear or effective discussions retained focus on this specific frame and provided succinct examples of how the English language had changed over time. Sophisticated responses provided creative thought on how the position of English may continue to change in the future.

Control and clarity of expression was generally clear. In some basic or limited responses there was a slip into colloquialism, whereas clear or effective responses maintained an appropriate register throughout.

Effective or sophisticated responses demonstrated an ease in accurate use of technical terminology, indicating that the candidate had retained a linguistic standpoint throughout.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

With a deeper reading of the stimulus material, responses demonstrated knowledge and understanding gained from wider study of the language topic. In basic responses, opportunities to do so were not taken up. In limited responses, long explanations of Kachru's Circles of English model were provided although India's position as a country normally classified in the outer circle was frequently described in error, either as an inner or expanding circle country. However, effective responses extended discussion by explaining thoughts on how Kachru's model may now be outdated due to the growth of international trade, media and education in the contemporary world, and why McArthur's Wheel might now be a more reliable source for classification.

Hybridisation was discussed in responses which acknowledged Hinglish as the main variety of English in northern India. A plausible comparison was frequently drawn with Singlish, including the contrasting government intervention. There was also discussion in basic or limited responses on colonisation although this led at times to overly long historical accounts with some irrelevant details. Where comments on colonisation were kept more brief, however, they were usually supported relevantly by reference to Phillipson's notion of Imperialism.

Clear or effective responses also introduced a range of linguistic theories and theorists which included Graddol, Crystal, Diamond, Widdowson's notions of *Spread and Distribution*, Schneider's dynamic model, Pakir's English as a killer language and the UNESCO model of the pathway to language death.

Question 2 – Language and the self

Candidates were required to read the text presented which was an extract from an article published in 2021 in the British newspaper *The Guardian*. 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 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 – Assessment Objective 1

The stimulus material was found to be engaging and accessible. Basic or limited responses tended to explore those points which were made by the author towards the beginning of the text provided, whereas clear, effective or even insightful responses were developed by careful consideration of the text as a whole.

All responses understood the main thrust of the article, which was that a ban on using certain words and phrases in the classroom had been imposed in a school in London. The contrasting views from teachers, saying that *this guides candidates to use language that fits more formal situations* and those from linguists, who were quoted as saying that the ban was *crude and shortsighted ... a disservice and discredit to young people* drew some lively commentary. Such commentary was seen particularly in developed responses which considered how the imposition of the ban *may have negative effects on identity and confidence* which include how the learners in the London school could *feel they have to reject the cultural aspects of their own language*. Such development demonstrated a clear focus on the question frame in terms of how *language can reflect personal and social identity*.

Writing – Assessment Objective 2

At times, responses to **Question 2** were brief and, therefore, remained undeveloped. Some limited responses demonstrated a chronological paraphrase of the points raised in the article paragraph by paragraph and, therefore, did not present discursive work. Other limited responses tended to rely on overly long quotes taken from the text; in basic responses there was evidence of material having been lifted directly from the source.

Nonetheless in responses which were clear or effective, logical sequencing through paragraphs was evident. Clarity and control of expression was demonstrated by maintenance of an appropriate register, accurate and precise labelling using technical terminology and presentation of thoughtful arguments and counter-arguments.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

The prescriptivist approach implied by the actions of the London school was discussed by most candidates and was usually contrasted with the notion seen in the stimulus material that everyone *should celebrate the different ways language is being used*. Weaker responses tended only to use the labels 'prescriptivism' and 'descriptivism' without a full reference which could have compared, for example, the views of Honey and Crystal.

Also frequently referenced was the concept of codeswitching, including some plausible personal examples being offered. The concept of slang, often inaccurately described in the plural as 'slangs' was explored to an extent in most responses, quoting the article's view that slang is *at the forefront of linguistic innovation*, with some examples from wider study of how it can be *wonderfully creative*. Developed responses made further reference, combining the concepts of codeswitching and slang, to examples of cryptolects, explaining how these had emerged out of necessity at times to protect the personal and social identities of specific discourse communities.

Less useful references, given the question frame, were to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis although some ideas on linguistic relativity and determinism were made plausible at times. Similarly, the Boas-Jakobson Principle or Fodor's Language of Thought model were not always made relevant to the focus of personal and social identity. More useful were citations of Giles' Communication Accommodation Theory in terms of convergence (with the wishes of the London school) and divergence (a possible outcome of the ban where candidates may not conform with the ban). References to Grice and the maxims of conversation were somewhat out of place and frequently misunderstood or misquoted.

In clear or effective responses, Tajfel and Turner's in-group and out-group concepts were discussed in relation to social identity and compared, at times, to Kramarae's ideas on the muted group which was seen in this case to be the candidate body of the London school. Goffman's views on face were tentatively discussed although his approach was generally not well-detailed.

Overall, a wide range of models and approaches tended to be introduced but were not always accurately described or relevant to the discussion in hand. Candidates should take care to read the question paper thoroughly to ensure that any linguistic theories intended to be referenced are fully relevant to the topic focus.