

May 2013 subject reports

Arabic A: Language and Literature

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 16	17 - 29	30 - 46	47 - 61	62 - 73	74 - 84	85 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 16	17 - 28	29 - 45	46 - 61	62 - 73	74 - 85	86 - 100

Higher level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 24	25 - 30

General comments

It is of the utmost importance that teachers study the guide that accompanies this new course very carefully. The guide contains clear instructions which, in the case of some centres were not followed this year. It is stated, for example, on page 60 of the guide that there should be 'two guiding questions' which 'should not be numbered' and that one guiding question should focus on 'what is happening or being discussed in the text, and one question on the language used'.

Centres are also reminded that the Internal Assessments should be sent via IBIS. This session the majority of centres complied with this.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

In general the standard and recording quality of work submitted was good; however, there were some instances of poor sound quality. Centres are advised to check the quality of their recordings before uploading them.

Candidate performance against each criterion

For Criterion A, many candidates demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of the examination text but they also had a tendency to refer to the text as a whole. Page 61 of the Subject Guide states that 'during the commentary students must focus only on the text' and that they 'should not use this activity as an opportunity to discuss everything they know about the larger text'. In general, not enough reference was made to the excerpt itself and students did not quote or give enough examples to demonstrate their understanding of the text given. Some candidates talked at great length about the author or poet which was not relevant to the task.

For Criterion B, many candidates simply listed some of the stylistic devices or features evident in the text, but this is not enough. Centres and candidates must be aware that in order to gain good marks in this criterion, it is necessary to explain how these devices affect the excerpt or poem and the effect they have on the reader.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Both centres and candidates need to familiarise themselves with the assessment criteria for the Internal Assessment. Candidates need to make more reference to the text given and provide examples from it in their commentary. Candidates should be able to explain the effects of the literary features employed and the impact these have on the reader. Regular practise of the skills required and both self and peer assessment against the criterion would be of great help.

Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 24	25 - 30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The excerpts selected were generally of an appropriate length and were quite challenging in their nature. However some of the poetry choices were too long for the candidate to be able to comment on them in a coherent manner. Some of the guiding questions were too general and did not enable the candidate to focus on the text leaving them to discuss issues raised in the whole text.

Candidate performance against each criterion

In Criterion A: candidates must learn how to use examples from the excerpt given. As in HL, too much time was spent demonstrating understanding of the text as a whole and, in

some cases, narrating the events of the whole work. Some candidates talked at great length about the author or poet which was not relevant to the task.

In **Criterion B**: too many candidates simply mentioned the stylistic features used by the author; however in order to gain good marks in this criterion, it is a requirement to explain how these features affect meaning and their effect on the reader.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Both centres and candidates need to familiarise themselves with the assessment criteria for the Internal Assessment. Candidates need to make more reference to the text given and provide examples from it in their commentary. Candidates should be able to explain the effects of the literary features employed and the impact these have on the reader. Regular practise of the skills required and both self and peer assessment against the criterion would be of great help.

Further comments

Both candidates and centres need to familiarise themselves with the guide for the Language and Literature course and, in particular, the assessment criterion for each component.

There is no need to give a biography of the author or poet unless the character of the author or poet is reflected in the excerpt and affects it in some way.

Centres are reminded that 'candidates must not have advance knowledge of the extracts or guiding questions' (*B1b.7.3 Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme*). Some candidates seemed to have memorized sections of their work.

Higher level written tasks

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 11	12 - 18	19 - 23	24 - 28	29 - 33	34 - 40

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Unfortunately, task two was not completed successfully by some centres.

Task 2 is a critical response to one of the six prescribed questions given in the Language and Literature guide, some candidates in some centres were answering totally different questions and it is not clear where they came from. As a result, candidates overall marks suffered greatly. A real disappointment.

As mentioned previously, it is imperative that the Language and Literature guide is read thoroughly.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: is the area where candidates require the most training as candidates who are unable to write a rationale indicate that they are not thinking in the way they should. Most of the candidates mentioned that the task they presented was linked to part 3 or part 2 of the course, but gave no further information. They are required to explain how the task is linked to the aspects of the course being investigated. In simplified terms, the examiner should be able to read a clear explanation of the investigation before they begin to read the task itself. The rationale should also explain to the examiner the link between the type of text and topic chosen.

Language is another obvious problem. Candidates need to be taught about the different forms of register and style appropriate to different text types. The choice of text type and its suitability for the chosen task need more work and explanation.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Both centres and candidates need to familiarise themselves with the assessment criteria for the Written Assignment. Regular practise of the skills required, in addition to regular self and peer assessment against the assessment criterion, is advised.

More time and focus needs to be spent on the rationale.

Standard level written task

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Many of the tasks submitted were good, but unfortunately too many were not suitable as candidates did not conform to the conventions of the text type they had chosen, while others were unable to adopt the appropriate language.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: which if mastered should produce a good piece of work overall, was the biggest problem. Candidates weren't able to make good links to the aspect of the course being investigated and too many simply wrote that the task was linked to, for example, Part 2 of the course.

Candidates are required to explain in what way(s) the task is linked to the aspect of the course being investigated and a failure to do this will result in a loss of marks. Others treated the rationale as an introduction to the assignment and simply offered a background to the topic.

Language and the choice of language proved another problem in general. The fact that a candidate is a native speaker is not enough for them to score well in this criterion. Candidates are being assessed on the effectiveness and appropriateness of their chosen language, their style of writing and use of register. Candidates need more experience in this area.

The choice of text type can also be a problem and centres are reminded that a formal essay is not an appropriate text type.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Both centres and candidates need to familiarise themselves with the assessment criteria for the Written Assignment. Regular practise of the skills required, in addition to regular self and peer assessment against the assessment criterion, is advised.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 6	7 - 10	11 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 17	18 - 20

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Criterion A asks candidates to consider the possible audience and the purpose for which the texts were published, however, context and audience were rarely addressed.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Very few candidates chose the pair of texts containing an image, preferring instead to conduct their analysis of the written texts. Of those that did choose the pair containing an image, the essays demonstrated that candidates need to learn more about image analysis particularly with reference to audience and context.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

For criterion A: candidates are required to support their commentaries with well-chosen references to the texts. There was very little evidence of this. Candidates also need to show their understanding of the given texts by commenting on the type, purpose and audience. This is an area that needs significant development.

Difficulties were also encountered when commenting on adverts and images, particularly when commenting on the medium chosen and its effect on the language used.

For criterion D: candidates must understand that being a native speaker does not automatically mean that they will achieve high marks in this area. Candidates are required to use terminology which is relevant to the text type and to comment on the effect of the register and style of language employed on the reader.

Candidates should also be able to demonstrate that they understand the stylistic features of the given texts, like tone, technique and style. They need to comment on the effect of these stylistic features however, and not just list them. Listing them without analysing the effect on the reader or referring them to the context will never achieve high marks.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

In addition to the points mentioned above, centres and candidates should familiarize themselves with the Language and Literature guide and the assessment criteria for Paper 1.

Candidates require more experience of producing critical responses and evaluating aspects of context and meaning, using a variety of different text types. They also need to develop their critical understanding of the effect of a text on its reader.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 6	7 - 10	11 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 17	18 - 20

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

The candidates encountered difficulties in the majority of areas which was very concerning.

Particularly problematic were the skills of reading and analysis and the treatment of context, purpose and audience. Criterion A and B seemed the most difficult.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Much of the candidates' work was well organized with a good use of language. However, candidates are reminded that simply being a native speaker does not automatically qualify them for high marks in criterion D. Overall candidates performed better in criterion C and D.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

The majority of candidates chose to analyse the article. The few that chose the advert gave very shallow analyses that reflected a lack of understanding of the requirements of Paper 1 in the new course.

Candidates need to learn that it is not enough to simply state that there are stylistic features within a text or point out that the author uses them to affect the reader. In order to score well in criterion B, candidates need to explain the effects of such features on the reader.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates and centres are advised to study the Language and Literature guide thoroughly and particularly the assessment criteria for Paper 1.

Candidates should be exposed to a wide range of articles and adverts and trained to analyse in depth.

Regular practise of the skills required and both self and peer assessment against the criterion would be of great help.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 7	8 - 12	13 - 16	17 - 20	21 - 22	23 - 25

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

It seems that candidates are not clear about how the meaning of the works are shaped by the perceptions of the reader and how this can alter when reading a work in translation. Candidates have to realize that they are different readers and a different audience and that a

comparison with their own culture would produce very rich and authentic work. Unfortunately candidates struggled in this area.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Most of the candidates were more prepared for Paper 2 than Paper 1.

There is a need for candidates to show a greater understanding of the part 3 works studied and their context, not simply mentioning the year in which the work was published or the political event taking place during or just before publication. Candidates need to show how the social and political context affected the work and the way in which it was written.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

For criterion E, candidates need to demonstrate everything they have studied throughout the course and comment on the author's use of literary terms. They should comment on, for example, imagery, tone, metaphor, irony and narrative techniques and describe how these features affect meaning and the effect they have on the reader.

For criterion A, candidates are required to relate context to the works they have studied and show understanding of how this affects meaning. The response should demonstrate a critical analysis of the works studied and show understanding of the expectations of the question. Some candidates wrote good commentaries on the two works but failed to address the question asked.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates and centres are advised to study the Language and Literature guide thoroughly and particularly the assessment criteria for Paper 2. Candidates need to know on what bases they are evaluated.

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 7	8 - 11	12 - 16	17 - 20	21 - 23	24 - 25

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

It seems that candidates are not clear about how the meaning of the works are shaped by the perceptions of the reader and how this can alter when reading a work in translation. Candidates have to realize that they are different readers and a different audience and that a comparison with their own culture would produce very rich and authentic work. Unfortunately candidates struggled in this area.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Too many candidates simply narrated the events of the work and the surrounding context. What they failed to achieve was an analysis of the way in which the context affects meaning. This is crucial for criterion A.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

In order to achieve good marks in criterion E (language) candidates are required to use literary terminology and show the effect of the styles and techniques used on the reader. Being a native speaker alone does not automatically guarantee good marks in this criterion.

Candidates have a tendency to list the political events that were taking place during the writing of the work, for example, many cited that the work was published during or just after WWII however this does not constitute analysis. Candidates need to comment on the ways in which the historical and social context affects the meaning of the work.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates and centres are advised to study the Language and Literature guide thoroughly and particularly the assessment criteria for Paper 2. Candidates need to know on what bases they are evaluated.