

May 2014 subject reports

## Dutch A Language and Literature

Overall grade boundaries

### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 12	13 - 25	26 - 40	41 - 54	55 - 68	69 - 82	83 - 100

### Standard level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 10	11 - 25	26 - 41	42 - 56	57 - 67	68 - 82	83 - 100

Higher level internal assessment

### Component grade boundaries

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

Standard level internal assessment

### Component grade boundaries

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

The range and suitability of the work submitted

- The performance was good, in terms of the texts chosen, the guiding questions and the discussions.
- All schools but one uploaded their samples on time. No tapes/CDs have been

received anymore.

- For the first time in years all recordings were of good quality; background noise (breaks and ringing bells) are always there, but did not interrupt the conversations or the quality of the sample recordings.
- All schools but one loaded up their documents properly.
- Almost all Forms had been filled out properly.

1. In one case the teacher was mistaken in uploading the comments of the further oral activity and the comments of the individual oral activity.

2. In another case the teacher wrote on the Form 1/L&LIA SL 3 titles of studied literary works instead of 2 titles.

3. Boxes have to be ticked.

4. The total grade is the grade of the further oral activity plus the individual oral activity divided by two. A half point is not acknowledged, in that case for example a 22.5 becomes 23 points.

- Almost all teachers added detailed comments that are very useful for the moderator.
- There was a very good range of literary works submitted, more varied than ever before; almost all schools worked on a huge variety of extracts. Candidates of the same school had been presented different passages of the same novel instead of the same extracts. Only in 3 cases the teacher had the same extracts of the same literary work for 2 candidates.
- Almost all texts were of the proper length. Just in a couple of cases the extract was somewhat too short to analyze properly in 15 min.
- All the texts but two had numbered lines.
- Not all the schools presented the candidates a medieval text, only a translation. There is a discrepancy between schools in doing so.
- Most schools had good to excellent guiding questions.
- Almost all teachers had a question related to style or literary features.
- In one case the follow-up questions were too general and did not bring the student back to the particular extract.
- In one case the follow-up questions were at a very high academic level.
- Not all the commentaries were of a proper length; the shortest was 5.50 minutes; the longest was 17.20 minutes.

- All schools but one respected the time allotted for the orals.
- There were no students who gave very long presentations like in the past. Students who exceeded the time were interrupted in a most friendly way by their teacher.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

**Criterion A:** the level of the knowledge and understanding of a text or extract was high, many students were very well prepared and coped relatively well to very well. However, in some cases, students focused too much on the work as a whole and the follow up conversations did not concentrate enough on the analysis of the extract itself.

**Criterion B:** not all the candidates mentioned literary features; even when the teacher gave some hints, some students still had difficulties identifying and interpreting them. The most difficult part was the second question of Criterion B: To what extent does the commentary show understanding of the effects of literary features? Mentioning literary features is one thing, but understanding and explaining their effects on the reader is another. Quite a few students struggled with this aspect.

**Criterion C:** there was a discrepancy in the commentaries concerning the organization.

- Some students followed a fixed scheme, they were clearly trained to introduce their analysis explicitly, mentioning what they wanted to discuss; they kept to their points during the presentation: introduction, the main points, and conclusion.
- Many stayed close to the text, line after line, and referred to the text to support their ideas.
- A few students followed the "jumping"-scheme: I see in line 20 the main-theme, in line 6 and in line 45 the main-theme comes back.

**Criterion D:** the language was by far the best element of the orals. All students coped with the language in a very good way. An accent doesn't influence the mark, nor does stuttering; word choice does and wrong grammar.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Language A: language and literature guide, First examinations 2013

- It is recommended to train the students in giving a commentary of about 10 minutes. Train them with a clock or watch.
- Approximately five minutes should be allocated for discussion between the teacher and the candidate (page 61).
- Please, let the student finish his sentence when time is up (during the commentary as well as during the discussion).

- The text for commentary should not exceed 40 lines. It must be rich in detail to allow for a thorough examination that can be assessed using the criteria (page 59). An extract of 15 lines is too short.
- Please number the lines of the extract.
- In the case of poetry, teachers should choose a single complete poem or a substantial extract from a long poem. The poem chosen should be of comparable difficulty to those selected from works of other genres (page 59).
- It is recommended to give the students guiding questions about the extract, not about the novel (page 60).
- Teachers should aim to set one guiding question on what is happening or being discussed in the extract, and one question on the language used (page 60).
- During the commentary students must focus only on the extract (page 61).
- Students should not use the commentary as an opportunity to discuss everything they know about the larger (con)text. They are encouraged to integrate responses to the guiding questions into the commentary (page 61).
- Teachers should not use their time as an opportunity to expose their knowledge of literature. The aim of the oral is: what does the student know? The teacher should have an inquiring role.
- Placing the extract in the overall work can be done in the first 2, not 5 or more, minutes of the oral.
- If the text is an extract from a novel, the relationship to the whole text or other works by the author should only be mentioned when relevant (page 61).
- The teacher should allow students to analyze the text *without interruption*, but if the candidate needs positive encouragement, the teacher should briefly intervene, just to help them a little bit to continue the commentary (page 61).
- It is not necessary for the student to read the guiding questions out loud: the teacher knows their own questions, the student has prepared them and the examiner has a copy.
- The candidate should only mention his name, candidate number and school.
- The discussion should not be another short commentary and/or repetition of what has been said during the commentary of the student.
- If a school opts to analyze medieval literature, it is recommended to study the modern version together with the original medieval one in order to be able to better analyze stylistic features.

- There should be an explanation about style or use of language in the commentary and/or in the discussion.
- If the student doesn't mention stylistic features such as alliteration, metaphor, pleonasm etc., the teacher could ask about them.
- The mentioning of the literary features alone is not enough; the student should also give an explanation of the effects of the literary features (Criterion B, page 64).
- Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to communicate in a sustained and organized manner. The commentary should not be a series of unconnected points concerning the text (page 61). Train the candidates to organize their commentary more. Some students mentioned it very clearly: "I will give a commentary on the text in front of me.

"Firstly, I will give an introduction.

Secondly, the guiding questions/the middle part/the theme/the protagonist/etc. etc.

Thirdly, I will discuss the stylistic features.

Finally, I will give my conclusion".

By formulating a clear end of the commentary there won't be an unpleasant silence with the teacher waiting for more information from the student, and the candidate waiting for the questions from the teacher.

## Higher level written assignment

### Component grade boundaries

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

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

#### Written task 1:

Overall written tasks 1 were of better quality than written tasks 2. An important element for this discrepancy is that candidates choose their own text type for written task 1 and that generally candidates struggled more with the conventions and structure of a formal essay than they did with text types which they were more familiar with.

The majority of the written tasks 1 were good to very good with some excellent ones. Only few candidates submitted a poor written task 1.

Positive observations: The average candidate's language skills (grammar and syntax, word order, spelling, etc) were considerably better than last year's candidates. Overall, this had a positive effect, particularly in criterion D. Using correct punctuation, however, does remain a problem for a rather large number of candidates. In addition, candidates paid more attention to their rationale and most of them provided detailed information about the content, context, text type etc. This made it easier for the examiner to assess the tasks. Thirdly, like every year, the excellent tasks combined knowledge of the topic and the chosen text type and included an element of originality, especially when combining the topic and text type. Good candidates showed a good knowledge of both, although some seemed to focus more on content and gave less attention to the characteristics of the chosen text type.

Negative observations: First, the less successful candidates produced written tasks 1 that were descriptive summaries or reports of what they studied in class. Text type was often given little consideration and for that reason these tasks tended to take the form of an essay which is not an acceptable text type for WT 1. Secondly, candidates who decided to stick to rather 'safe' topics and text types usually produced rather bland written tasks which are often difficult to assess because they give little insight in the candidate's knowledge or understanding.

### Written task 2:

The written tasks 2 were a little less successful than the written tasks 1 this year. Most candidates produced good essays, a few submitted excellent ones. Some candidates did not score very highly.

Positive observations: The few excellent essays were fully focused on answering the set question, had good knowledge of the characteristics of a formal essay and good writing skills in Dutch. These essays were impressive and of high academic quality. Note that excellent candidates studied in class text materials that fit the scope of the set essay questions very well. Secondly, when compared to last year, candidates did much better in opening and closing their essays with appropriate introductions and conclusions which helped them in answering the essay question with more focus.

Negative observations: A rather large number of candidates had problems with answering or correctly interpreting the set question. Often candidates' essays included some content that referred to the set question but that did not answer it. Secondly, quite a number of candidates struggled to structure their essays; especially cohesion seems to be a problem. Ideas and arguments are presented in an incoherent way and cohesion between paragraphs is often deficient. Thirdly, even though the general linguistic level was higher this year, some candidates had problems with writing fluent, logical and complete sentences.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

### Written task 1:

**Criterion A:** Almost all students were awarded the two marks. Candidates usually provided the requested information. For some candidates the language used in the rationale was considerably less fluent and correct than that of the actual task.

**Criterion B:** Most candidates did well to very well (5 and 6 marks). The content was usually appropriate and showed a good to very good insight in the materials studied in class. Complying with the conventions of the chosen text types seemed a little harder for candidates than dealing with content which explains why 7 and 8 marks were not always awarded.

**Criterion C:** Most candidates' tasks were structured and organised, although not often very well, hence there was a large number of marks 4, some marks 3, awarded for this criterion. In general, candidates complied with the prescribed word limit.

**Criterion D:** Most candidates were awarded a mark 4 or 5 as generally language and style were effective and appropriate. There has been a good improvement for this criterion compared to last year.

### Written task 2:

**Criterion A:** Most candidates were awarded the full 2 marks, although a small number of candidates did not mention the chosen set question or the chosen text in their outline.

**Criterion B:** Most candidates were awarded a mark 4 or 5 for this criterion. Quite a number of them struggled with answering the set question or with staying focused on the question. Some candidates included few or unconvincing references to the chosen text.

**Criterion C:** Candidates were generally awarded a mark 4 or 3. Although most essays had a structure, and a good introduction and conclusion, arguments were not always fully developed. Also cohesion was a problem for a number of candidates.

**Criterion D:** Mostly marks 4 were awarded for this criterion. Most candidates' writing skills were appropriate for an academic essay.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- WT 1: Lay-out and format of a text (e.g. blog, article) are important. Some candidates did not seem to be aware of this.
- WT1: A report or summary on a topic or text studied in class is not a convincing WT 1 and will be marked down for most of the criteria. Encourage your students to be original when choosing a text type and not to directly choose the more traditional and safer types.
- WT2: students need to be aware that the scope of WT2 is to provide an answer to the chosen set question. Not many essays were fully focused on answering the question.
- WT2: some candidates need more guidance and support when structuring their ideas. Their ideas might be relevant but need to be turned into a coherent and logical essay.

## Standard level written assignment

### Component grade boundaries

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

### Recommendations for IB procedures, instructions and forms

Some schools still use Dutch A2 paper work, especially for the rationale and programme summary. They need to use the appropriate documents for Dutch A LAL.

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

Overall the SL written tasks were very good; a large number of high quality tasks were submitted this year. On average they were more successful than the HL written tasks 1. The weaker tasks amounted to a relatively small number.

Positive observations: Like in HL, the language standard has improved considerably when compared to last year's. Very few candidates lacked the necessary language skills for this level. Secondly, candidates chose more varied text types than last year and the conventions of the new types, such as blogs and online forums, seem to be well known. Most candidates also gave the necessary attention to the lay out and format of their text and used convincing illustrations. More literary text types, such as poetry and drama, remained popular and most candidates opting for these types had very good overall writing skills using a very effective register and style.

Negative observations: Some candidates had difficulties in distinguishing between formal and informal language, especially when it comes to choosing appropriate vocabulary. In a few cases, candidates struggled with making the distinction between spoken and written language. For some candidates, the conventions of more formal text types, such as police reports, seemed less well known. Just like for HL, a number of candidates had problems with structuring a coherent and continuous text: problems with dividing a text in paragraphs, using titles and subtitles, etc. were noted.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

**Criterion A:** Almost all candidates were given the full 2 marks. There is a clear improvement this year in the attention given by candidates to writing a clear and helpful rationale.

**Criterion B:** Most candidates did well to very well (5-7 marks most common) for this criterion. The majority of candidates showed adequate to very good understanding of the topic or text studied in class, and also the conventions of the text types were generally well-known. Only a few low marks were awarded.



**Criterion C:** Mostly marks 4 and some marks 3, were awarded here. Although generally candidates submitted an organised task, this remains one of the more difficult aspects of the SL written task for a number of candidates.

**Criterion D:** Most candidates were awarded marks 4 or 5. Language and style considerably improved this year. Most candidates had the required linguistic training for this level.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Some candidates produced very well-written tasks, but the rationale seems to have been written without any language support. It would be good if teachers could also dedicate some time to looking through their students' rationale.
- Quite a number of candidates had problems with the correct use of capital letters, indicating direct speech or using references in their text. Candidates would benefit from more guidance.

## Higher level paper one

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 7	8 - 10	11 - 13	14 - 16	17 - 20

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

Many candidates have difficulties organizing their comparative analysis around relevant and interesting aspects of the text, i.e. aspects that are worth comparing; instead they tended to focus too much on the similarities and differences in the content of the text rather than on the differences in purpose, register, tone, etc.

The weakest element of many scripts was the analysis and identification of stylistic features. Non-literary texts such as forums or blogs can be challenging in this respect. Most candidates had some knowledge of literary devices but weaker candidates did not know how to link that knowledge to the two texts they were analyzing in a meaningful way. They tended to restrict themselves to a list of textual features and examples.

Although the quality of the language used was overall good, many candidates seemed to have given up on the correct use of the d/t/ dt endings of verbs and – to a lesser degree- of the correct gender of articles and pronouns. This shortcoming is regrettable because it shows a lack of understanding of how the Dutch language works.

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

Most candidates understood the texts well and could read between the lines. They recognized the pretend narrator and grasped the camouflaged purpose in text A and the irony and sarcasm in text C. Most candidates were able to recognize the text types and compare at least some of the main characteristics.

Many of the strong candidates wrote in correct, clear and sophisticated Dutch.

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

Both combinations of texts were equally accessible to the candidates; overall there was a preference for Texts A and B. Texts A and B gave good candidates the opportunity to compare the characteristics of a well-written, ironical blog with a typical brochure. Good students exploited the possibilities of comparing the very similar content of the two texts and the completely different way of presenting the same ideas. Weak students had difficulties with the ironic dog's point of view in text A. Candidates who took C and D had a similar challenge. Weaker candidates tended to take text C at face value, missed the mockery and took the point of view of the writer too seriously. Comparing the column with the forum was more difficult than the comparison in A/B because of the random and ordinary appearance of the comments. Strong candidates could exploit the spectrum of opinions and styles and find the similarities with C but many weaker students gave text D far less attention than C, which led to an unbalanced comparison.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Most candidates had some knowledge of the different text types and know how to structure a comparative essay but many needed more specific and detailed knowledge of less familiar text types and better strategies to deal with them. More extensive teaching and more practice with paper 1 could help those candidates who underachieved because they did not have the tools they need. It is also important not to let students get away with incorrect spelling and poor grammar in any of their written work.

## Further comments

Candidates should be asked not to use double space because this makes it very difficult for the examiner to mark on the web assessor; they should also be encouraged to write legibly.

## Standard level paper one

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20

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

Many of the weaker candidates did not employ the right method or the right language to deal with a blog or a brochure; they limited themselves to the generalities about the use of language (difficult words, easy to read), the tone (happy, optimistic) the audience (people who like animals), the text type (relaxed). For this reason, not many of them discussed those characteristics that are typical or atypical for the specific text type they were dealing with. This lack of knowledge about the method of analysis for their commentary led them to occasionally try to use methods or concepts that they have learned in other contexts, such as study of the novel, speech or debate. Many candidates also had difficulties structuring their commentary and organizing their paragraphs. In many cases, candidates paraphrased or described the content and added comments as they went along. This sometimes led to acceptable analysis but not to a coherent commentary. Dealing with formal and stylistic characteristics was a problem for many candidates. They usually had some knowledge of literary devices but they often did not know how to make a meaningful link with the text being analyzed and instead just produced with a list of similes, metaphors and other devices, sometimes accompanied by examples.

Spelling, grammar and syntax were often a problem and language skills varied significantly at standard level. The correct use of *d/t/ dt* endings of verbs and – to a lesser degree- of the correct gender of articles and pronouns was often ignored. This is regrettable because it shows a lack of understanding of how the language works.

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

Many candidates showed good understanding of the text and could recognize the text type and some of the main characteristics. Most candidates were able to read between the lines and recognize features like irony and exaggeration. Good candidates had a clear picture in their mind of the typical characteristics of the kind of text type they were analyzing and could use that knowledge to examine how the actual text at hand corresponded with or deviated from that picture. Good scripts showed that the candidates knew how to follow clear steps in the development of their analysis and how to integrate a clear answer to the guiding questions in their commentary.

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

Both texts were equally accessible to the candidates; overall there was a preference for Text B. Text A gave good candidates the opportunity to discuss the characteristics of a well-written blog; moreover, because the blog writer had some modest literary aspirations, they could also use their knowledge of literary features and their appreciation of irony and humor. Weaker candidates only noticed the friendly, chatty tone and reacted with not much more than a response to the content of the text. Their conclusion was often a comment on the love of cats rather than on the characteristics of the blog.

Text B was easier for the candidates in the sense that it offered more obvious opportunities to write about layout and format. For this reason weak students tended to prefer the second option. Strong students were well aware of the requirements and the characteristics of a job advertisement and could apply their knowledge to this well-chosen specimen.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Even good candidates cannot do well in paper 1 without specific knowledge of the nature of text types like blogs, brochures, and advertisements and without good strategies to analyze them. These text types need to be taught and practiced extensively. Special attention should also be paid to the aspects of tone and register because even good candidates find it difficult to write about these in a meaningful way.

## Further comments

Candidates should be asked not to use double space because this makes it very difficult for the examiner to mark on assessor; they should also be encouraged to write legibly.

## Higher level paper two

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 18	19 - 22	23 - 25

## General comments

The vast majority of students chose question 3 (26% of the candidates), 4 (22%) and 2 (20%), followed by 1 (17%), 6 (15%) and only one student opting for question 5. This last and rather surprising number might be explained by the fact that 'new media' is a rather new and therefore a less known term.

Overall, candidates were aware and to a lower degree well aware of the implications of the questions. Some questions, however, were more complicated than others.

The overall linguistic level was good with a few scripts of outstanding quality and quite a few with many and sometimes too many mistakes in the field of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In some cases the manner of expression caused severe problems for the essay's clarity and coherence.

The analysis of language was a weak point in most essays. Most students focused more on context rather than on language.

Even though only a few teachers added their comments on paper 2, it is being felt that there seems to be a discrepancy between teachers' perceived level of difficulty and the results of paper 2. Questions might seem (rather) easy but in reality many students struggled with the interpretation of the question and the response. Literary terms such as 'perspective', realism', or 'universal message' might have seemed simple but were more complicated than expected. An insufficient level of expression, a lack of (precise) knowledge of literary features, or a combination of both might explain this.

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

Each and every question can be considered like a jigsaw puzzle that consists of different elements that a candidate needs to address in his or her essay. First and foremost, a student needs to define the (boundaries of the) aspects of the question upon which the essay is based. For example: if a student decided to write about question 4, which invited the student to reflect on timeless (universal) messages of a literary work, he or she needed to specify first of all what universality means, and secondly explain what the messages of the literary works are, before moving to step 3 which is to show to what extent and why the messages can be considered universal (or not).

Similarly, if a candidate opted for question 3, he/she needed to first analyse the concept of farewell. One can bid farewell to people, but not only that: one can also take leave from an idea or conviction, a life style, a country, and saying goodbye can be voluntary but also against one's will, depending on the situation. All these elements played a role in the response to the question.

A last example would be question 1, which asked the candidate to think about the difference in reaction between the older and younger generation. It was very important that a candidate indicated what 'older' and 'younger' meant in the context of the student's essay. The reading audience might have a different view, but at least it becomes clear what the candidate's definition is, when the terms are explained. In this way, an essay becomes more coherent and convincing. Too many students considered the terms 'older' and 'younger' as self explanatory, often in the sense of 'having lived through World War II' or not, but reality and time make the situation more complicated. A person born in 1946 will be 68 in 2014. This person has not lived through World War II, but is difficult to categorize as belonging to a younger generation.

This shows that it is extremely important that candidates provide the reader with a (personal) definition and boundaries of key elements used in the questions.

Students are not always aware of the fact that not all questions are equally applicable for all literary works. For example: we don't know a lot about the background, personal life and personal experiences of 'Willem die Madoc maakte', the author of 'Reinaart de vos'. As a result, this piece of literature is more difficult to use for question 6, which asks about the connection between personal experience of the author and the way these experiences make the characters (more) realistic.

Close reading is essential. Quite often, students think they know what they are supposed to do, but their essay demonstrates otherwise. The interpretation of elements of the question can be a challenge and the same happens with the instructions. All students based their essays on at least two literary works, but the next part of the instructions at the top of page was quite problematic at times. It asks students to analyse language and context of the literary works in their essays. Even though quite large a number of essays showed a lack of sufficient context and its analysis, the main problem constituted the analysis of linguistic features (such as register, vocabulary, dialogue).

Grammar, (verbal) spelling and punctuation could have been better. Apart from the fact that written and spoken language are mixed more often than before, the most worrying part seemed to be that a considerable number of students did not comply with basic spelling and punctuation rules, such as the use of capital letters to start a sentence, the use of full stops at the end, the correct use of quotation marks and the correct integration of quotes in a sentence, or the correct spelling of compositions. Quite a lot of students followed the English pattern of writing by using capital letters for each and every noun in a title. The correct use of verbal tenses and the verbal spelling itself (the so-called d/t-issue) are very often problematic as well.

It remains important to place students in the appropriate programme and level. In quite some cases, the students did not have the required linguistic knowledge to write a coherent and balanced essay. Since language lies at the base of an essay, it is of the utmost importance to verify if knowledge of grammar, spelling, and the range of vocabulary are good enough to be successful on this level.

This year, the students' handwriting caused more problems than last year. At times, parts and sometimes even considerable parts of the essay were hardly legible. It is true that the quality of handwriting easily deteriorates when a student writes under (time) pressure, especially towards the end of an essay, but it might be a good idea to practice handwritten essays on a more regular basis.

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

- The majority of students are well aware of the general trichotomic structure of an essay with an introduction, core and conclusion. Introductions were quite short at

times, but in general students wrote clear and matter of fact introductions that introduced the chosen question well.

- Students were generally well aware of the content of the literary works on which their essay was based. Facts and demonstrated knowledge were good.
- Overall, candidates were aware and sometimes well aware of the implications of the question, and chose relevant literary works for their response to the question.
- Most students used preselected and well-chosen quotes to support the presentation of ideas.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

**Criterion A:** On average students have a very good knowledge and understanding of the literary works. At times, a lack of context makes the essay less convincing.

**Criterion B:** The overall score for this criterion is good, but could sometimes be better. Candidates need to read the question well and think about its different elements.

**Criterion C:** This criterion is in need of improvement. Many students received fewer marks for this criterion as none or hardly any attention was paid to literary and stylistic features. This often meant that features were noticed, but that no comments were been made on the effects on the audience.

**Criterion D:** Most of the essays are generally well structured, but paragraph division, transitions, and coherence can be a challenge for students.

**Criterion E:** Some students write really well and in a thoughtful manner, the overall level is all right, but there is a growing tendency to pay less attention to (basic) spelling rules.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Help student analyse questions in a more detailed manner ('solve the puzzle').
- Even though most students chose an appropriate question, they should be made aware of the fact that not all literary works are equally suitable for any question.
- Close reading skills are an asset, especially when reading instructions.
- Students need to be aware of the value of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Even though knowledge of these linguistic fields is supposed to be common knowledge already, a lot of students would benefit from this, and the overall linguistic quality of an essay might improve, thus leading to higher marks.

- Students should be explained the difference between spoken and written language. It is important to show students how a written essay uses different linguistic features (different register, different word order...)
- More practice of writing essays by hand (under pressure of time).

## Standard level paper two

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 16	17 - 20	21 - 25

### General comments:

A very high percentage of students chose question 4 (39% of the candidates) when compared to the other questions: question 2 (26%), 1 (13%), followed by questions 3 and 6 (both 11%) and no student opted for question 5. This last and surprising number might be explained by the fact that 'new media' is a rather new and therefore less known term.

Overall, candidates were aware and to a lower degree well aware of the implications of the questions. Some questions, however, turned out to be more complicated than others. As the overall level of expression and understanding is a bit lower when compared to HL, this might mean that the interpretation of the questions was more of a challenge for SL-students.

The overall linguistic level was satisfactory with a few scripts of outstanding quality and quite a few with many and sometimes even too many mistakes in the field of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In some cases, the level of expression caused severe problems for the essay's clarity and coherence. A repetition of words and structures, and general terms instead of more specific terms, were examples of a more limited range of vocabulary.

The analysis of language and context was the weakest point in most essays. Most students do refer to context but only in a very general manner. There was far less attention given to literary and stylistic features. SL-students found it more difficult to name literary features, and explain their effects.

Even though only a few teachers added their comments on paper 2, there seems to be a discrepancy between teachers' perceived level of difficulty and the results of paper 2. Questions might seem (rather) easy but many students struggled with the interpretation of the question and the response. Literary terms such as 'perspective', 'realism', or 'universal message' might seem simple but are more complicated than expected. An insufficient level of expression, a lack of (precise) knowledge of literary features, or a combination of both might explain this.



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

Each and every question can be considered a sort of jigsaw puzzle that consists of different elements that a candidate needs to address in his or her essay. First and foremost, a student needs to define the (boundaries of the) aspects of the question that the essay is based upon. For example, question 4 that invited the student to reflect on timeless (universal) messages of a literary work, candidates needed to specify first of all what universality means, and secondly the candidate what the messages of the literary works were, before moving to what extent and why the messages could be considered universal (or not).

In question 3, the question about parting/farewell, the concept of farewell needed to be analysed first. One can bid farewell to people, but not only that: one can also take leave from an idea or conviction, a life style, a country and saying goodbye can be voluntary but also against one's will, depending on the situation. All these elements played a role in the response to the question.

Finally, in question 1, candidates had to think about the difference in reaction between the older and younger generation. It was essential for them to indicate what 'older' and 'younger' meant in the context of the essay. The reading audience might have a different view, but at least it becomes clear what the candidate's definition is, when the terms are explained. In this way, an essay becomes more coherent and convincing. Several students considered the terms 'older' and 'younger' as self explanatory, often in the sense of 'having lived through World War II' or not, but reality and time make the situation more complicated. A person born in 1946 will be 68 in 2014. This person has not lived through World War II, but is difficult to categorize as belonging to a younger generation. This shows that it is extremely important that candidates provide the reader with a (personal) definition and boundaries of key elements used in the questions.

Students are not always aware of the fact that not all questions are equally applicable for all literary works. For example: we don't know a lot about the background, personal life and personal experiences of 'Willem die Madoc maakte', the author of 'Reinaart de vos'. As a result, this piece of literature is more difficult to use for question 6, which asks about the connection between personal experience of the author and the way these experiences make the characters (more) realistic.

Close reading is essential. Quite often, students think they know what they are supposed to do, whereas their essay demonstrates otherwise. Apart from the fact that the interpretation of elements of the question can be a challenge, so can the reading of the instructions be. All students based their essays on at least two literary works, but the next part of the instructions at the top of page was ignored at times. It asks students to analyse language and context of the literary works in their essays. Even though quite large a number of essays showed a lack of sufficient context and its analysis, the main problem constituted the analysis of linguistic features (such as register, vocabulary, dialogue).

Grammar, (verbal) spelling and punctuation could have been better. Apart from the fact that written and spoken language are mixed more often than before, the most worrying part seemed to be that a considerable number of students did not comply with basic spelling and

punctuation rules, such as the use of capital letters to start a sentence, the use of full stops at the end, the correct use of quotation marks and the correct integration of quotes in a sentence, or the correct spelling of compositions. Quite a lot of students followed the English pattern of writing by using capital letters for each and every noun in a title. The correct use of verbal tenses and the verbal spelling itself (the so-called d/t-issue) are very often problematic as well.

It is important to place students in the appropriate programme and level. In quite some cases, the students did not have the required linguistic knowledge to write a coherent and balanced essay. Since language lies at the base of an essay, it is of the utmost importance to verify if the knowledge of grammar, spelling, and the range of vocabulary are good enough to be successful on this level.

This year, the student's handwriting caused more problems than last year. At times, parts and sometimes even considerable parts of the essay were hardly legible. It is true that the quality of handwriting easily deteriorates when a student writes under (time) pressure, most of all towards the end of an essay, but it might be a good idea to practice handwritten essays on a more regular basis.

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

- The majority of students are well aware of the general trichotomic structure of an essay with an introduction, core and conclusion. Introductions were quite short at times, but in general students wrote clear and matter of fact introductions that introduced the chosen question well.
- Students were generally well aware of the content of the literary works on which their essay was based. Facts and demonstrated knowledge were good, and most students really made an effort to write as much as they could, which should be commended.
- Nearly all students worked with a draft.
- Overall, candidates were aware and sometimes well aware of the implications of the question, and chose relevant literary works for their response to the question.
- Most students used preselected and well-chosen quotes to support the presentation of ideas.

### Candidate performance against each criterion:

**Criterion A:** On average students have a very good knowledge and understanding of the literary works. A lack of context becomes regularly apparent.

**Criterion B:** The overall score for this criterion is good, but could sometimes be better. Candidates need to reflect on the question, think about its different elements and not underestimate the complexity of the question.

**Criterion C:** Performance in this criterion can improve. A relatively high number of students received fewer marks here as no or hardly any attention was given to literary and stylistic features and their effects. In general, the use of (literary) terminology was very basic.

**Criterion D:** Most of the essays were generally well structured, but paragraph division, and transitions proved difficult. A lack of coherence is a recurring problem.

**Criterion E:** Some students write really well and in a thoughtful manner, the overall level is good, but it has also become clear that the range of vocabulary and linguistic variety in general can be quite limited. Moreover, there is a growing tendency to pay less attention to (basic) spelling rules.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Help student analyse questions in a more detailed manner ('solve the puzzle').
- Students should be made aware of the fact that not all literary works are equally suitable for all the questions.
- Close reading skills are an asset, especially when reading instructions.
- The value of grammar, spelling, and punctuation needs to be discussed. Even though knowledge of these linguistic fields is supposed to be common knowledge already, a lot of students would benefit from this, and the overall linguistic quality of an essay might improve, thus leading to higher marks.
- Students should be explained the difference between spoken en written language. It is important to explain to students that a written essay uses different linguistic features (different register, different word order)
- More practice of writing essays by hand (under pressure of time).