

November 2013 subject reports

Malay B

Overall grade boundaries

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 15	16 - 27	28 - 44	45 - 57	58 - 70	71 - 84	85 - 100

Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 12	13 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 26	27 - 30

General comments

In general, the internal examination enabled candidates to demonstrate their oral and interactive skills. The photographs and questions were good stimulus and guidance to assist candidates to use and apply language knowledge and skills in performing the tasks assigned.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

There was a wide range of topics for discussion which allowed candidates to demonstrate various skills and abilities in the use of language. The photographs and captions chosen were also relevant and appropriate to the age and the experience of the candidates. The captions range from simple titles to longer quotations which provided ample opportunity for the candidates to explore the issues further. The questions used for demonstration of oral interaction skills covered all levels of difficulty, some required high order thinking. Questions were also open-ended and provided space for further interaction. As a result, the samples assessed were varied and some displayed a high level of oral proficiency.

The exams were conducted as recommended and the candidates were able to provide spontaneous responses according to their level with sufficient opportunities to use language in the authentic manner.

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

Criterion A – Productive skills

In Part 1 of oral presentation, candidates showed a high level of language competence. Only a few grammatical errors were observed and the vocabulary used was appropriate. They showed they were well-prepared. The captions of some photographs enabled candidates to express their thoughts using their acquired communicative language skills.

Criterion B – Interactive and receptive skills

Candidates who did not do well fared very low in the interactive and receptive skills. Lack of vocabulary prevented ideas to be delivered cohesively, clearly and coherently. Ideas at times were irrelevant. Some candidates were not spontaneous when answering the questions and this affected the fluency of conversation and ideas could not be expanded appropriately.

Nevertheless, the majority of the candidates showed very good linguistic skills. Most of the candidates were able to provide appropriate responses to open-ended questions presented by teachers. Generally, questions enabled candidates to demonstrate their oral competencies.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Learners were exposed to a variety of contexts; the use of photographs of different themes helped them use appropriate words and expressions. In class, the use of internet materials and social media for communication could help them to understand the different language registers.

It is recommended to share the rubrics with candidates in order to help them understand the requirements of the oral assessment. In addition, learners need to know what is expected of a standard presentation. This could be done by providing models of successful presentations. Besides, more time could be allocated to enhance the learner's presentation skills and spoken interaction skills to improve their ability to answer questions with confidence.

Through various questioning techniques, teachers could help candidates develop their creative and critical thinking. Open-ended and thought-provoking questions are good examples of this and will help candidates be prepared for this type of oral exam.

Standard level written assignment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 19	20 - 22	23 - 25

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The work submitted by the candidates generally met the purpose and requirements of the examination. The topics selected were relevant and suitable to the students' level. The topics also covered a wide range of interests, most of them related to current issues. The sources used for the assignment were also varied in terms of depth and text type and all related to the core topic chosen.

It was evident that the range of the written assignments varied according to candidates' competencies in using the language. The ability to produce clear well-linked and cohesive written work was reflected in the way they use their language skills and knowledge well.

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

Criterion A – Language

Candidates demonstrated a good command of the language. They were able to use a range of vocabulary appropriately. The sentence structures ranged from simple to compound. In some cases, good complex sentences were effectively used by better performers. Some candidates used idiomatic expressions that were appropriate to the context of discussion. There was evidence that candidates acquired an adequate command of Malay, some of which were able to use the language effectively.

Criterion B – Content

Candidates were generally able to provide good and relevant content to support their writing. They were able to gather appropriate information and apply it in their writing. Candidates were also able to provide relevant rationale(s) and linked the sources selected for the topics chosen.

Criterion C – Format

This criterion seems to be connected to the ability of the candidates to recognise the appropriate language register. Generally they were able to produce appropriate text type.

Criterion D – Rationale

Candidates were able to specify the rationale of writing task and the text type. Many candidates did not include the number of words used in the rationale but did provide the number of words for the whole assignment.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

From the candidates' performance, there was evidence that the teaching of productive skills is moving in the right direction. They were able to generate main and supporting ideas from different sources.

Practicing writing skills in every lesson will certainly improve performance in this component.

It is recommended that candidates are habitually exposed to various reading materials and encouraged to respond to them in writing.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 7	8 - 14	15 - 20	21 - 26	27 - 33	34 - 40	41 - 45

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

Reading comprehension activities which required candidates to infer and interpret the texts were difficult for candidates. This was particularly the case in tasks for Text B and Text C, where candidates had to provide a free response. Similarly, they presented problems when dealing with true-false exercises where a justification was requested.

It was also noticed that activities such as those in which candidates had to find appropriate words to replace phrases proved hard for them. Some candidates, when confronted with this difficulty, tended to write rather lengthy answers.

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

Candidates, on the other hand, did well in attempting the Multiple Choice questions. They were also good at handling questions that require direct and straight-forward answers that could be found in the texts. In some instances, they were able to provide more than one correct answer. They demonstrated skills in scrutinising each and every word in the texts and were generous in their answers. It was evident that candidates were well prepared for reading comprehension.

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

Candidates generally performed well in this paper. They did well in questions which require short answers and in Multiple Choice questions. In Text B and Text C, they did well in MCQs and open-ended questions, in which they were able to provide more than what was required by the questions.

In Texts C and D, when handling questions on vocabulary, a good percentage of candidates could answer the questions correctly. Some candidates found contextual meaning challenging as their vocabulary was limited.

Another difficult area was the True/False with justification as these required understanding the statements and finding the correct information that would serve as a justification. Hence, practice on this type of exercise is recommended.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

The teaching of grammar would enable the candidates to understand and use the language appropriately. Contextual learning will enhance their vocabulary. By working on precise vocabulary they will become more skilful at articulating their ideas effectively. It will also deepen their understanding and hence their interest in the language.

Students should be exposed to a variety of text types in order to increase their vocabulary and language knowledge. They showed skills in reading comprehension by focussing on central points and words that help them understand the message of the texts. All questions were attempted, which could be seen as ability to manage time well under examination pressure.

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 25

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

Questions 3 and 5, related to topics of health, science and technology did not really appeal to candidates, probably because these topics required more specific terminology.

In many cases, the lack of precise vocabulary hindered the clarity and fluency of ideas delivered. As a result, the writing would appear to be less coherent and cohesive.

Another aspect of writing that appeared to be of a challenge was the use of the correct register (especially when writing a report or an interview). Perhaps they are not familiar with the appropriate pronouns which are frequently used in such text types.

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

Generally, candidates showed that they were well-prepared. They showed good interest in Malay. They are able to structure their ideas and made relevant and interesting points with appropriate supporting ideas. They demonstrated ability to exploit and use knowledge of various subjects in their writing.

A number of candidates were able to use various linguistic expressions, such as proverbs and frequent sayings and in general they show good knowledge of the regions where the language is spoken.

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

Most candidates of this level are familiar with the e-mail format. Hence, the most popular choice was Topic 1. They demonstrated good working knowledge on the places where Malay is widely spoken and that worked as an advantage.

Topics related to language and culture were the most popular, perhaps as these might be the most frequently used in the classroom.

Topic 2 was another very popular choice. Candidates demonstrated their ability to use appropriate language and a correct register.

Topic 4 was appealing to candidates who had knowledge of drama and theatre. While the number of candidates choosing this topic was not as high as that those selected Topic 2, they were able to demonstrate their ability to respond to the type of writing very well.

There were not many candidates who attempted Topics 3 and 5. Some of them had difficulty to use appropriate registers for an interview and a report.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

They need to recognize different types of writing and the appropriate language register that enable them to present their ideas well. Students need to be provided with good and varied examples of texts in order to understand the characteristics of good writing.

In addition, they need to equip themselves with adequate vocabulary to be able to deliver their ideas and supporting ideas effectively. Through extensive reading, they will enrich their vocabulary and improve their production. As always, knowledge of grammar is important to ensure accuracy in their writing.