

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

Paper 0500/01
Reading Passage (Core)

General comments

Overall candidates responded well to this paper and their answers revealed both interest in and engagement with the reading passage. Most showed a good general understanding of the material and a pleasing number were capable of identifying some of the more subtle points in some of the questions in **Question 1**. The majority of responses to **Question 2** were of at least adequate length and most candidates showed an awareness of the need to refer to the three elements of this task.

As has been mentioned in previous reports, the standard of written expression was mainly satisfactory to good and there were very few scripts indeed in which the candidates' linguistic capacity was so limited that meaning was significantly obscured. Nearly all candidates made a serious attempt to produce the best work of which they were capable on this paper, and only a very small minority failed to complete the paper to an adequate length.

Handwriting and presentation were usually of at least a satisfactory standard although there remain some candidates who seem to take a perverse pride in producing work which is both scruffy and extremely difficult to read; they should be advised that this is not in their interests. Examiners are unable to credit responses that they are unable to read no matter how hard they try. It should also be made clear to candidates that their answers should be written on the answer booklet and not on the question paper itself as some candidates continue to do – if the question paper is submitted along with the answer booklet, then the Examiners will, of course, mark such responses; however, if this procedure is not followed then any answers written on the question paper will be lost.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The reading passage on which this paper was based was an extract from George Orwell's *Homage To Catalonia* in which the author describes an incident that happened to him while fighting as a volunteer soldier (or 'soldier' as many candidates referred to him) in the Spanish Civil War in 1937. Although it was in no way necessary for the candidates to have any knowledge of the historical context other than that contained in the question paper itself, the fact that many candidates automatically assumed that the event took place during totally different conflicts (the First World War was the most popular choice, but the wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan and Iraq also had their champions) suggested that they had not read the introduction to the passage, in which the date was given, with sufficient care and concentration. The point being made here is not to criticise the candidates' limited historical knowledge but to emphasise that one of the reasons that candidates fail to reach the highest grades is due to a failure to read both the passage and the questions in sufficient detail and with the required concentration. Examiners felt that many candidates had the capacity to score higher marks than those they actually achieved and, in nearly all such cases, this resulted from failing to focus sufficiently clearly on the actual requirements of specific questions. This is particularly the case with the apparently more straightforward tasks, in answer to which many candidates tend to ignore the obvious points and lose marks as a consequence.

- (a) A pleasing number of candidates appreciated the understated tone of the writer and were able to make clear that it was unusual to describe being shot as 'very interesting' when words such as 'scary' or 'terrifying' would have been more appropriate. Less successful responses were able to say that the word was not really suited to the event but were unable to go to the next stage and give a specific explanation as to why they thought that it was so.

- (b) In general, this question was answered well and many candidates clearly identified the elements of the sky becoming light at that time of the day and the fact that anyone standing in the trench would be silhouetted (or outlined) against the lightning sky. There were a small number of candidates who were under the impression that it was still dark at this time and that the writer was spotted because he lit a cigarette (which indicated a less than close reading of the text) and others who assumed that the answer must lie beyond the text completely and posited the idea that it was a dangerous time because the enemy would have woken up after a good night's sleep and would, as a consequence, be fully alert. It must be emphasised that unless the wording of a question invites speculation and the use of inference by asking candidates 'what do you think?' about a point, then the answer to the question is to be found in the passage itself.
- (c) This question required candidates to select three words or phrases from a specified part of the text and to explain how each of these helped the reader to understand the effect of being shot as described by the writer. Most candidates successfully identified three appropriate expressions and achieved at least three marks as a result. Fewer, however, were able to give convincing explanations as to the effects achieved by their choices. It is important with this type of question that candidates make some attempt to engage with and respond to the author's choice of words; it is, therefore, fully acceptable to say that the phrase 'a shock...such as you get from an electrical terminal' conveys the effect of being shot as it expresses a sudden, fierce tingling sensation. Such a comment indicates a clear appreciation of the force of the simile. It is less acceptable, however, to say that the comparison of the event to being 'at the centre of an explosion' means that the writer felt that he was standing at the centre of an explosion, as such an answer gives no indication that the candidate has understood the meaning of the expression.
- (d) A similar comment applies to responses to this question as to the previous one. Most candidates competently explained that the writer did not feel any painful sensation (although some omitted to make this point, possibly on the assumption that it was so obvious that explanation was not necessary) but had greater difficulty with the second half of the statement, *vague satisfaction*. What was required was an explanation on the lines of 'the writer had a feeling of hazy contentment'. However, many candidates, rather than attempting to explain the meaning of the words, preferred to give reasons for why the author might have felt the way he did. If the reasons were appropriate to the passage and were prefaced with a statement such as 'he felt pleased', then the candidates were awarded the mark.
- (e) This question asked for an explanation of why the writer thought that his wife would be pleased that he was wounded. Most candidates showed at least a general understanding of the point that by being wounded he might avoid being killed, and gained at least one of the two marks available. Those who made it clear that by being wounded he would be invalided away from the front and would, as a result, not fight in the coming 'great battle' in which the risk of death was considerably greater, were awarded both marks.
- (f) The answer to this question was straightforward: the writer could not speak because he had been shot in the throat, and was answered correctly by many candidates. However, some responses produced more fanciful reasons which suggested either that the text had not been read closely, or that some candidates could not believe that the answer could be so simple (and, possibly, failed to note that this was a question worth only *one* mark).
- (g) This question required the candidates to comment on the effect of the statement, *The meaningless of it*. The full two marks were gained by candidates who identified it as an emphatic exclamation which forcefully conveyed the writer's anger at the futility of the whole experience; most found this difficult but those who conveyed a general understanding of the effect of the phrase were awarded one mark.
- (h) This question asked candidates to explain, in their own words, the meaning of three phrases from the passage and proved to be a good discriminator. Many responses revealed a general understanding of some or all of the phrases but only a small number were successful in explaining all three of them in sufficient detail to score full marks for this question. Explanation of the sentence *the stupid mischance infuriated me* was often affected by a misunderstanding of the passage which led to the assumption that the writer had been wounded by friendly fire.
- (i) Candidates responded well to the summary question and a pleasing number gained all seven marks available. Some wrote in too general a way about this episode and failed to identify specific points (particularly those relating to what the writer thought); a small number of candidates

answered this question by copying out virtually the whole of the lines to which it related. This was a practice to be recommended – this is specifically a summary task – and candidates were warned that unless the Examiner is convinced that the points made in an answer have been understood, then marks will not be awarded. The points which were credited were as follows:

- 1 People surrounded him/came to help (him)
- 2 They wanted to cut open his shirt/called for a knife
- 3 He knew there was a knife in his pocket/could not remove it/right arm paralysed
- 4 Felt a vague satisfaction/no pain/knew his wife would be pleased
- 5 He wondered where and how badly he had been hit
- 6 He had difficulty speaking
- 7 People brought bandages and alcohol field-dressings
- 8 The alcohol was put on the wound
- 9 A stretcher was brought
- 10 He thought he would die/wondered how long he had left

Question 2

As has been the case in previous examinations at this level, candidates' responses to the writing task were generally of a pleasing standard. Most wrote to at least an adequate length and made a serious attempt to apply the understanding they had gained of the passage to meet the three elements of the question: the writer's thoughts and feelings; his wife's reactions; their hopes for the future. Many used the opening of the passage (the writer's use of 'very interesting') and his refusal to feel bitterness against the man who shot him as a basis for their presentation of his character and convincingly portrayed him as a decent and humane man. Similarly, the writer's reference to his wife's wanting him to be wounded so that he would survive the war provided a good insight into her character on which many candidates built successfully. Less convincing were some of the names given to the wife; one Examiner reports that they ranged from Tracey to Ken. It should be emphasised, however, that candidates were not penalised for inappropriate nomenclature. Less successful, and less detailed, were the attempts to write about hopes for the future; most responses suggested that the couple would take a holiday and then settle down quietly either in mundane occupations or in retirement. Such suggestions were perfectly acceptable but revealed some limitations in the ways the candidates had understood the characters from the hints in the passage. The candidate who wrote that, once he had recovered, the writer's intention was to exchange his rifle for the typewriter and devote his life to writing books intended to reveal the evils of fascism certainly deserved credit, both for responding perceptively to the passage and for introducing relevant details from his wider knowledge into his response.

Examiners commented favourably on the candidates' linguistic competence. As mentioned in the introduction to this report, there were very few scripts in which the expression was so limited that it was not possible to understand clearly what had been written. In general, the quality of spelling and punctuation was good, and vocabulary was usually adequate to convey meaning. The features most apparent in those scripts which attained Band 1 rather than Band 2 for written expression were the ability to separate sentences by using full stops (rather than commas); the use of well constructed and appropriately linked paragraphs and vocabulary which showed some precision and thought.

It was also pleasing to note that most candidates attempted to write in the appropriate genre (a newspaper interview). Only a small number, however, were able fully to replicate the features of this type of writing; most produced something far closer to a transcript of a radio or television interview – this was not specifically penalised by Examiners but in some cases was a factor in influencing the decision to keep a borderline script in the lower of the two grades under consideration.

In conclusion, Centres and their candidates can again be congratulated for the way they prepared for and performed in this examination. There were a pleasing number of very good responses and a very large number which were nearly very good: the difference between the one type of response and the other lay mainly in the amount of detail and the precision of focus which the candidates included in their responses.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

Paper 0500/02

Reading Passages (Extended)

General comments

This report contains valuable advice that may be used by teachers preparing candidates for future First Language English examinations.

Candidates who had been well prepared for this paper scored high marks and demonstrated understanding of what was required in their answers to each question. Weaker candidates gave poorly focused answers and only showed simple reading skills.

Areas for recommended improvement:

- **Reading the questions carefully**
It was not only important to follow the wording of the questions, but also to focus carefully on both the questions and the passages. For example, many candidates made reference to lifestyle in their answers to **Question 1**, but quickly drifted from the point by using large numbers of irrelevant details from Passage A. In **Question 3** candidates were told to 'write about 1 side in total' but exceeded this length, sometimes excessively.
- **Learning to adapt the content of the passages to the demands of the question**
Many candidates used content indiscriminately, perhaps believing that if they located a mass of ideas and reproduced them in their answers, they would be given marks. It was particularly important that a measure of adaptation and selection was evident in the answers to **Question 1**. A more obvious example was the use of irrelevant material in the summary question. Some of this indiscriminate material was very poorly paraphrased or even lifted directly from the passage.
- **A greater knowledge of both the meaning and the effects of a writer's choice of words**
In their answers to **Question 2**, many candidates gave weak explanations. For example, where the writer used 'giant' to describe the sand dunes, candidates frequently underestimated the force of this word and said it meant 'big'.
- **A more precise understanding of the nature of a summary**
For the summary exercise, candidates are required to find fifteen facts, to represent them in informative prose and to avoid comments and unduly long explanations. Despite comments made in previous reports, some candidates continued to score low marks because they failed to adhere to instructions and advice.

Centres are reminded that this is a paper marked almost entirely for reading skills. These include the ability to understand what candidates read and to show that understanding by using it in different contexts. The strategy of locating relevant or semi-relevant material from a passage and reproducing it without adaptation or selection does not successfully prove that a candidate has the ability to understand what has been read. It is the mark of a competent First Language English candidate that he or she is able to handle content with some degree of confidence.

Candidates used a wide range of paper sizes and types, some of which did not have margins. On a practical note, Examiners have to use margins to annotate scripts, often to separate a reading assessment from a writing assessment. Without a margin, it is difficult for them to achieve the clarity necessary to ensure an accurate assessment. Some Centres did not fasten the sheets of their scripts together and Examiners found several to be out of order. Centres are reminded that a script may be handled and/or re-marked on several occasions during the assessment process and if not fastened together securely, it is possible for a sheet of paper to go astray.

Comments on specific questions**Part 1****Question 1**

Imagine that you are Donovan Webster. You are being interviewed for a television programme about your visit to Diuidu in Mongolia. Your interviewer asks the following questions:

- Could you start by telling the viewers a little about Diuidu's lifestyle?
- What did you admire most about Diuidu?
- How has your meeting with her made you consider your own lifestyle and values?

Write the words of the interview.

[20 marks]

The three sections of this question were equally weighted and candidates could score fairly high marks by showing merit in any two. It was not necessary to write at great length for any one section, but most good candidates produced approximately two sides for their answers.

The first section was not always well done. There may have been some lack of clarity of what a lifestyle was, but even candidates who appeared not to understand usually made some valid lifestyle comment.

Good candidates started by stating that Diuidu's lifestyle was *simple* and were able to select a number of details about what she did and the evidence of her house and property that proved the point. They often supplemented this by a second point, such as it was *traditional*, although here more adaptation of examples was required. A third good point was that it was a lifestyle that was directed by her *natural surroundings*. A fourth was that it was a *lonely* lifestyle, and here candidates were able to make something of the presence of birds in her house.

There were also candidates who chose less well, making much of her natural surroundings without showing how this was a part of her lifestyle. They tended simply to quote facts about the lake and the greenery round it, and the plants growing on the slopes of the hills. Another example of a less appropriate starting point was that she was *hospitable*. This was less obviously connected to lifestyle and, in some cases, led to long narrative accounts of the tea-making process. These candidates perhaps needed a pause for thought before launching into their answers.

The weakest candidates did not categorise their answers but merely located a group of details and wrote these down indiscriminately, leaving the Examiner to sort out what the answer was about. They sometimes made a valid comment about lifestyle, but failed to prove it by relevant detail and then moved onto something else.

The second section was about character. Many candidates started by suggesting that everything about Diuidu was admirable, but the best chose a feature such as her *fortitude* or her *hospitality*. Again it was a matter of finding the details that proved the point. Most used the general welcome and the tea, but did not go on to add references to the meal and to the rice drink.

The very best candidates picked out her views about life in the towns and her refusal to change her way of life, and used what she said to prove her *toughness* and her *adherence to the old ways*.

Most candidates were able to make one or more points and some wrote down a list, usually without any reference to the passage.

The final section invited comment, a contrast perhaps between the old and the modern ways. This was a good test of candidates' writing. Good candidates were able to show how they might sensibly review their own lives. They most commonly questioned whether their way of seeking satisfaction through technological machinery made them any happier, and they wrote about the pace of life and how they worried about things that did not occur to Diuidu. They presented their argument as a series of steps in which they tried to reconcile the two lifestyles. Weaker candidates made simpler comments and did not develop them in any way. Some wrote not about the general but about the particular, for example, love for their cellphones.

This question required candidates to write mostly in order to comment, partly to argue a case. Much of the writing was good and it was in the last section that some of the most powerful feelings and ideas were expressed.

Question 2**Re-read the descriptions of:**

- (a) the countryside in paragraph 1;**
(b) Diuidu in paragraph 6.

By selecting words and phrases from these paragraphs to support your answer, explain the effects the writer creates in using these descriptions. [10 marks]

It was not difficult to locate and select appropriate words and phrases that formed the basis of the descriptions. A very small number of weak candidates reproduced the original words from the passage and provided no explanations at all. Many candidates experienced great difficulty in explaining the effects the writer achieved. They limited themselves to statements such as, 'The language is very descriptive' or 'It makes you feel that you are really there'. As has been emphasised in previous reports, comments such as these attract no marks.

Other candidates were able to define the meaning of some of the words and commonly scored around five marks. For example, they wrote that 'glittering' meant the water was 'shining' and that 'vermillion' was a type of red. They found their own words to describe Diuidu's clothes.

Some candidates made partial attempts to describe the effects achieved by the use of some of the words. They concentrated on the easiest examples such as 'giant', which they realised was more than 'big', maybe 'huge' and that the word 'sit' of the blockhouses, emphasised the loneliness of the landscape. They were also able to understand the unusual word 'drift' of the movement of the animals, which some described as 'ghostly' or 'magical', but most said emphasised the peace and tranquillity of the valley. These candidates scored around six or seven marks, according to the consistency of the explanations.

The best candidates were able to give an overview, such as a statement about the contrasts in shape and colour in the landscape. They also saw the contradictions in Diuidu, with the alertness in her eyes and her black hair despite her age (represented by the many wrinkles in her face). They also recognised and explained the images. 'Bowl-shaped' was easy and with its smooth base and sides contrasted with the sand dunes. Few candidates explored the use of the word 'rich' to describe the quality of the grass and therefore the fertility of the water's edge. Hardly anyone picked out and suggested why the writer used 'fringed'. The best candidates attempted the 'map of wrinkles', comparing Diuidu's face with the contour lines on a map.

Marks of nine or ten were not awarded unless there was evidence that some attempt had been made to explain the simple imagery of the piece.

This question required candidates to write prose to analyse and to comment.

Finally, here is an answer that demonstrates the type of comment that candidates could give. The length of this answer takes up about a side and a half of normal examination paper and contains more points than would be necessary for the full mark.

When describing the Mongolian countryside the writer uses simple imagery. The 'giant' sand dunes suggest unusual and extreme size, towering over the travellers. By contrast, the 'bowl-shaped valley' gives a picture of a flat base and gradual, smooth slopes stretching upwards. The writer emphasises the strange colour scheme. You can imagine the 'rich' greenness round the lake, suggesting a bright or deep colour contrasting with the orange of the sand. Even odder is the 'vermillion' lake; the water is a bright red that 'glitters', reflecting back the sun like crazy broken glass. On the slopes the animals 'drift', another image to express the fact that the travellers can hardly discern any movement, bringing an unreal, peaceful atmosphere to the valley. The two blockhouses 'sit' awkwardly, as if they had been placed for no particular reason, and emphasising the loneliness of the surroundings as the only sign of human intervention.

The writer describes Diuidu sparingly. Her clothes are 'loose' and of 'blue cotton', suggesting comfort and strangely one of the few modern things about her. Her 'bandanna' suggests something a little young and fashionable and her hair is described as black, so perhaps she is not old for her seventy-two years. The alertness of her 'dark eyes sharp and quick' confirms this impression. The 'broad planes' of her face only confirm her race, but the 'weathered' face makes you think of a geological feature, worn down after years of working outside with her animals. Lastly her face is described as a 'map of wrinkles', the wrinkles suggesting old age and wisdom and the map like the representation of contours, close together as they depict, perhaps, the way up from Diuidu's valley to the top of the giant dunes.

Part 2**Question 3****Summarise:****(a) the things that make the writer's lifestyle difficult in Passage B;****(b) the things that enable Diuidu to cope with the challenges of her lifestyle in Passage A. [20 marks]**

As usual there were up to fifteen marks available for the selection of relevant facts and up to five for focusing on the question, writing concisely and using one's own words. There were twenty-six possible answers listed in the mark scheme so that candidates who read carefully and methodically had no difficulty in scoring full marks for content.

However, there were still candidates who misunderstood the nature of a summary. The writing that was required was informative. Many wrote at least partly in the style of a commentary, and this diverted their attention from the task of getting the content points onto paper. Commentaries meant that rewardable facts were few and far between.

Too many candidates wrote far too much. While Examiners did not count words, they expected the summary to take up about a side. Candidates who wrote two and a half sides were demonstrably ignoring the requirements of the question and their answer normally consisted of long and inappropriate explanations.

Some candidates found it necessary to write explanations, for example, of the saga of the laundry arrangements of the man who lived in the woods, or the operation of the solar collector for making tea. For both of these a simple reference was enough.

Most candidates had clearly read the whole of the second passage, but in a few cases the distribution of the points showed that only half had been completed.

Some candidates interpreted 'things' as ideas and concepts for Passage A. This question does not test ideas, but only facts. It is designed to test the ability of candidates to read a satisfactory length accurately within a short space of time. Some candidates attempted to write a comparison of the two passages which was not required.

Finally, here is a model answer that would take somewhat less than a whole side of A4 paper to write in long hand. It contains all twenty-five points.

In Passage B the writer's lifestyle was made difficult by the extreme cold that forced him to wear extra clothing at night. He had to get up early in the morning and run for the bus, which made him too hot. His journey to work took two hours and when he got there the room was so hot he felt ill. To make things worse his colleagues teased him about his lifestyle. He had to eat excessively to keep his energy up and at the end of the day he was too exhausted to visit his friends or to go to the gym. His main aim became survival. His laundry was a problem and he became grimy at the weekend. Badly cooked food made him ill and he was scared by strange animal noises.

Diuidu was able to cope with the challenges of her lifestyle because she had all the basics, a solar collector, a traditional stove and a kettle. When winter came she had extra blankets, bricks of camel dung to burn for cooking and warmth and a shady place outside her blockhouse to deep freeze her sheep for eating. She had plenty of space for storing her food. She cheered herself up with her rice drink and she welcomed birds into her house for company.



Location Entry Codes

As part of CIE's continual commitment to maintaining best practice in assessment, CIE has begun to use different variants of some question papers for our most popular assessments with extremely large and widespread candidature. The question papers are closely related and the relationships between them have been thoroughly established using our assessment expertise. All versions of the paper give assessment of equal standard.

The content assessed by the examination papers and the type of questions are unchanged.

This change means that for this component there are now two variant Question Papers, Mark Schemes and Principal Examiner's Reports where previously there was only one. For any individual country, it is intended that only one variant is used. This document contains both variants which will give all Centres access to even more past examination material than is usually the case.

The diagram shows the relationship between the Question Papers, Mark Schemes and Principal Examiner's Reports.

Question Paper	Mark Scheme	Principal Examiner's Report
Introduction	Introduction	Introduction
First variant Question Paper	First variant Mark Scheme	First variant Principal Examiner's Report
Second variant Question Paper	Second variant Mark Scheme	Second variant Principal Examiner's Report

Who can I contact for further information on these changes?

Please direct any questions about this to CIE's Customer Services team at: international@cie.org.uk

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

Papers 0500/31

Directed Writing and Composition

General comments

Although there were few obvious examples of failure to finish the paper in the time available, there were a number of issues related to timing.

- Some candidates took too long over **Question 1** and did not give themselves time to think about the content of the continuous writing.
- Some candidates tried to write too much for the continuous writing and lost control of structure, interesting content and accuracy as a result.
- Many candidates failed to think carefully before starting their continuous writing. This sometimes led to the candidate running out of things to write about before reaching the end.

Candidates who gave themselves time to think and to plan before starting to write did better. Those who rushed into writing a first draft and then attempted major revisions and edits ran into trouble. They confused the process for drafting coursework with what was suitable for an examination.

A common problem was that of paragraphing. A large number of candidates did not write in paragraphs at all. This was most prevalent in the descriptive topics, but even here the Mark Scheme requires a structure, and the primary way to demonstrate this is through paragraphing. Except in rare circumstances, candidates who wrote in large numbers of paragraphs, some only a sentence long, failed to link up their ideas and to express extended, developed thoughts. Examiners expected most pieces of writing to be presented in four, five or six paragraphs. However, they understood that in most cases where the paragraphing was wrong, the structure was in place, so the penalty was not more than a mark or two.

Candidates lost many of their marks for accuracy due to inaccurate punctuation. Many had scant knowledge of how to construct sentences and to vary their patterns. Some candidates would write a simple sentence and then another and would punctuate the two wrongly with a comma. Using the comma wrongly in this way went hand in hand with a failure to use commas to indicate meaning in longer sentences. However, many candidates punctuated well, particularly when writing dialogue.

Spelling varied but was often very well taught. However, it was increasingly common to see words joined together that should not be. These included *alot*, *inwitch (sic)*, *atleast*, *incase* and *incharge*. Sometimes it was very difficult to make out what a word was meant to be. The following ten errors were of particular note: *introjuice*, *apoorling*, *physilities*, *weriod*, *goruguse*, *herondious*, *opottunity*, *elution*, and *tecknowledge*.

Candidates are reminded that when they are given permission to use a word processor for their answers, they must not use a spell check or a thesaurus. Two candidates gave themselves away when one wrote 'Out of the trees came big black swarms of misquotes' and the other 'but there are some floors in this plane' meaning *flaws* and *plan*. They were accordingly marked down.

Comments on specific questions**Section 1: Directed Writing****Question 1**

Write an article for the school magazine in which you highlight the advantages and disadvantages of the new scheme (for a school court). [25 marks]

This directed writing task was based on a letter to parents from a headteacher and a dialogue between two candidates. Candidates were instructed to base their ideas on the two passages and to add their own ideas and comments based on the reading material. There were ten marks for using the reading material and fifteen for writing appropriately for a school magazine and also for writing correctly and stylistically.

Reading:

Good candidates wrote a useful introduction in which they directed their readers to the need for the court and advised them to consider the advantages and disadvantages with some care. They then made some reference to the court itself, but bore in mind that parents, and presumably their children, had already seen the details. The main body of the article was made up of a selection of advantages, in the candidate's own words and with a certain amount of comment and development. The highest marks went to those who read between the lines and were able to see possible dangers to the scheme. These dangers were often countered by arguments from the other side. For example, the court might indeed be biased, but if the training was effective, this would not happen.

Candidates scoring five or six marks provided a good number of advantages and disadvantages, but they were very often much as they appeared in the original article, sometimes using the same words. For six marks they were expected to combine the advantages from the two passages. In general it was disappointing to find that candidates were so easily satisfied with merely locating the content and copying it out. This was especially true of the headteacher's letter, paragraphs two and three. The repetition of this information was not worth any marks because it did not prove reading skills apart from the very simple one of location.

Candidates scoring less than half marks used very little of the material, sometimes only noting four points from the two passages. They copied expressions such as *'dynamic way'*, *'no-one knows teenagers better than teenagers themselves'* and *'some goody-goody's decision'* and proved little about their reading abilities and their capacity to understand.

It is essential that in exercises such as these candidates are prepared to adapt the ideas and the wording of the passages to prove that they understand what they are reading.

Writing:

It was good to see how many candidates understood that they were writing for their peers. While they wrote in a style that was sometimes authoritative, they nevertheless used rhetorical devices and sometimes gave the effect of talking directly to their readers.

Another good feature was the structure of the article. There were some good, meaty introductions (as distinct from plain, formal ones), followed by some form of information about the court (summarised at best), a paragraph each on the advantages and disadvantages, and a final recommendation. Most candidates were aware of the need to write in this order.

Generally the style was clear, but candidates who copied from the text were not able to show much of their own style and often made errors when they departed from the words of the passages. There were examples of awkward or unclear style, and some candidates wrote using a limited range of language.

Section 2: Composition

[25 marks]

Teachers are asked to refer to the comment at the beginning of the report, particularly about planning and paragraphing. They are also asked to study the Mark Scheme for Content and Structure in order to understand what Examiners are looking for when assessing work in the three genres.

Question 2: Argumentative/discursive writing

Of the four questions in the two versions of the question paper, two were answered well by many candidates. One was 'The world is an increasingly dangerous place to live in' and the other 'What do you think are the most important ways in which a government can improve the life of its people?' For both of these it was possible to divide the writing into separate sections, although there needed to be some sort of sequence. For example, one candidate thought out the most important priorities for a government, starting with 'the people having access to the most basic of needs', and only when this had been achieved, proceeding to health and then the care of the elderly. After this sensible and well-argued start, the candidate did what happened only too frequently and ran out of material. The second page consisted of a rather ill considered attack on politicians, three lines on the subject of tax and a paragraph about shops for women and pubs for men. Candidates should be warned about running into this sort of trap. Here it was clear that the candidate had started with the best of intentions and run out of ideas after the first page.

The pieces on the dangerous world were usually well structured, although some were frighteningly swayed by the exaggerations of the media. Some of the best of these suggested that the advances in technology and learning outweighed the dangers and some were able to quote history to show that the dangers were at least of the same sort as they had always been.

There were some very good, structured pieces on 'Teenagers are far too young to know what love really is'. They were very sensible, often analysing the differences between mature and young love, writing about the love that exists in the family, asserting the need for love but criticising teenagers who use their relationships as a status symbol. A high proportion of candidates approached the topic from an objective point of view. Some candidates scored very high marks, but there were also some poor pieces of writing. Some candidates wrote without thinking or ordering their ideas and there was a good deal of repetition and thinking in circles. The topic, 'The generation gap is a real cause of conflict' also elicited some excellent writing for the same reasons as given above, though poor candidates again wrote emotionally without structured thought.

The quality of the written style varied in the responses to these topics, but was often clear and candidates did not try to over-reach themselves. Where a candidate's style was not up to the complexity of the topic, his/her work was sometimes very difficult to understand.

Question 3: Descriptive writing

Centres are reminded that the Mark Scheme for Content and Structure at Band 1 states that 'overall structure is provided through devices such as the movement of the writer, the creation of a short time span, or the creation of atmosphere and tension. There is no confusion with writing a story'. Understanding of how a good description works has liberated this genre which, only a few years ago, was very rarely attempted. Now it is equally as popular as the other genres.

This is not to say that the Examiners did not see some poor descriptions this session. For example, 'By the Waterside' elicited some very static writing of lists of details, as if one were standing, taking everything in, but nothing was happening that might interest a reader.

The most interesting topic was to 'describe the discovery of your own secret hideaway. It could be an overgrown garden or a deserted shack'. It was of course, essential to have a realistic eye on the topic. Some of the descriptions followed much the same pattern, the same flowers, the same birds and even the same bees, and at the end of the day the place did not sound real because the candidate lacked the skill to make what was imaginary real. Nearly all the gardens had fountains in them, in much the same condition as each other. One garden struck a chill into its discoverer and the statues became threatening: this piece was original and truly imaginative.

The best were realistic and original at the same time. There were some very good descriptions of the way to the place, although some of these took too much time. Some pieces were first class. The description of the burnt-out Matt's music store with the ghosts still present; running out into the snow and finding a cave made

out of stems and branches where there was a fawn; spending a day underneath an upturn in a remote beach: all these were examples of writing that could well have been published.

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Question 4: Narrative writing

Despite warnings in the past, candidates sometimes still fell into the trap of writing some very silly and immature stories. The secret of writing is to sustain the attention of the reader and, as the Mark Scheme implies, 'fantastic, non-engaging events' do not do this well. Good writers can make the most unlikely scenarios sound possible.

So the 'Day in the Secret Life of...' (a person with the powers that can only be used for the good of humankind) was a good test. There were some excellent pieces that brought out the dilemma of having to be an ordinary person at home and in school and yet of responding to amazing tasks at a moment's notice. There was some good discussion of the feelings of such a person. Some candidates shied away from recounting an actual event, which was a pity since many of what was narrated rang true. An original example was the person who cracked enemy codes for the government and who was, when no longer useful to them, transferred to a lunatic asylum. This was his 'leaked document'. The special birthday present, 2035, was another challenge, but here again, many candidates were able to make something interesting and realistic out of the idea.

For the story that included the lines 'The radio crackled as the distant voice spluttered and died. Now they felt completely alone, but surely there must be others like them out there?' most candidates ended their story with this quotation, but it often did not fit into the narrative particularly well. Some of the stories carried on without preparing the reader for the radio and its significance. There were some improbable stories about aeroplane crashes. Some candidates found the story which included the line 'He had always been a favourite, an example to all those who knew him...' difficult to sustain. Candidates often started well, drawing a good character study, but the fall from grace was sometimes clumsy.

In these narratives, candidates often opted for a common interpretation. As in the descriptions, it was often the candidate who took the unusual and strikingly original way forward who scored high marks.

There was the inevitable range of quality in writing. The commonest problems were: awkward and clumsy style, poorly made sentences, lack of full stops, incorrect use of tenses and a limited range of vocabulary.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

Papers 0500/32
Directed Writing and Composition

General comments

Although there were few obvious examples of failure to finish the paper in the time available, there were a number of issues related to timing.

- Some candidates took too long over **Question 1** and did not give themselves time to think about the content of the continuous writing.
- Some candidates tried to write too much for the continuous writing and lost control of structure, interesting content and accuracy as a result.
- Many candidates failed to think carefully before starting their continuous writing. This sometimes led to the candidate running out of things to write about before reaching the end.

Candidates who gave themselves time to think and to plan before starting to write did better. Those who rushed into writing a first draft and then attempted major revisions and edits ran into trouble. They confused the process for drafting coursework with what was suitable for an examination.

A common problem was that of paragraphing. A large number of candidates did not write in paragraphs at all. This was most prevalent in the descriptive topics, but even here the Mark Scheme requires a structure, and the primary way to demonstrate this is through paragraphing. Except in rare circumstances, candidates who wrote in large numbers of paragraphs, some only a sentence long, failed to link up their ideas and to express extended, developed thoughts. Examiners expected most pieces of writing to be presented in four, five or six paragraphs. However, they understood that in most cases where the paragraphing was wrong, the structure was in place, so the penalty was not more than a mark or two.

Candidates lost many of their marks for accuracy due to inaccurate punctuation. Many had scant knowledge of how to construct sentences and to vary their patterns. Some candidates would write a simple sentence and then another and would punctuate the two wrongly with a comma. Using the comma wrongly in this way went hand in hand with a failure to use commas to indicate meaning in longer sentences. However, many candidates punctuated well, particularly when writing dialogue.

Spelling varied but was often very well taught. However, it was increasingly common to see words joined together that should not be. These included *alot*, *inwitch (sic)*, *atleast*, *incase* and *incharge*. Sometimes it was very difficult to make out what a word was meant to be. The following ten errors were of particular note: *introjuice*, *apoorling*, *physilities*, *weriod*, *goruguse*, *herondious*, *opottunity*, *elution*, and *tecknowledge*.

Candidates are reminded that when they are given permission to use a word processor for their answers, they must not use a spell check or a thesaurus. Two candidates gave themselves away when one wrote 'Out of the trees came big black swarms of misquotes' and the other 'but there are some floors in this plane' meaning *flaws* and *plan*. They were accordingly marked down.

Comments on specific questions**Section 1: Directed Writing****Question 1**

Write an article for the school magazine in which you highlight the advantages and disadvantages of the new scheme (for a school court). [25 marks]

This directed writing task was based on a letter to parents from a headteacher and a dialogue between two candidates. Candidates were instructed to base their ideas on the two passages and to add their own ideas and comments based on the reading material. There were ten marks for using the reading material and fifteen for writing appropriately for a school magazine and also for writing correctly and stylistically.

Reading:

Good candidates wrote a useful introduction in which they directed their readers to the need for the court and advised them to consider the advantages and disadvantages with some care. They then made some reference to the court itself, but bore in mind that parents, and presumably their children, had already seen the details. The main body of the article was made up of a selection of advantages, in the candidate's own words and with a certain amount of comment and development. The highest marks went to those who read between the lines and were able to see possible dangers to the scheme. These dangers were often countered by arguments from the other side. For example, the court might indeed be biased, but if the training was effective, this would not happen.

Candidates scoring five or six marks provided a good number of advantages and disadvantages, but they were very often much as they appeared in the original article, sometimes using the same words. For six marks they were expected to combine the advantages from the two passages. In general it was disappointing to find that candidates were so easily satisfied with merely locating the content and copying it out. This was especially true of the headteacher's letter, paragraphs two and three. The repetition of this information was not worth any marks because it did not prove reading skills apart from the very simple one of location.

Candidates scoring less than half marks used very little of the material, sometimes only noting four points from the two passages. They copied expressions such as *'dynamic way'*, *'no-one knows teenagers better than teenagers themselves'* and *'some goody-goody's decision'* and proved little about their reading abilities and their capacity to understand.

It is essential that in exercises such as these candidates are prepared to adapt the ideas and the wording of the passages to prove that they understand what they are reading.

Writing:

It was good to see how many candidates understood that they were writing for their peers. While they wrote in a style that was sometimes authoritative, they nevertheless used rhetorical devices and sometimes gave the effect of talking directly to their readers.

Another good feature was the structure of the article. There were some good, meaty introductions (as distinct from plain, formal ones), followed by some form of information about the court (summarised at best), a paragraph each on the advantages and disadvantages, and a final recommendation. Most candidates were aware of the need to write in this order.

Generally the style was clear, but candidates who copied from the text were not able to show much of their own style and often made errors when they departed from the words of the passages. There were examples of awkward or unclear style, and some candidates wrote using a limited range of language.

Section 2: Composition

Teachers are asked to refer to the comment at the beginning of the report, particularly about planning and paragraphing. They are also asked to study the Mark Scheme for Content and Structure in order to understand what Examiners are looking for when assessing work in the three genres.

Question 2: Argumentative/discursive writing

Of the four questions in the two versions of the question paper, two were answered well by many candidates. One was 'The world is an increasingly dangerous place to live in' and the other 'What do you think are the most important ways in which a government can improve the life of its people?' For both of these it was possible to divide the writing into separate sections, although there needed to be some sort of sequence. For example, one candidate thought out the most important priorities for a government, starting with 'the people having access to the most basic of needs', and only when this had been achieved, proceeding to health and then the care of the elderly. After this sensible and well-argued start, the candidate did what happened only too frequently and ran out of material. The second page consisted of a rather ill considered attack on politicians, three lines on the subject of tax and a paragraph about shops for women and pubs for men. Candidates should be warned about running into this sort of trap. Here it was clear that the candidate had started with the best of intentions and run out of ideas after the first page.

The pieces on the dangerous world were usually well structured, although some were frighteningly swayed by the exaggerations of the media. Some of the best of these suggested that the advances in technology and learning outweighed the dangers and some were able to quote history to show that the dangers were at least of the same sort as they had always been.

There were some very good, structured pieces on 'Teenagers are far too young to know what love really is'. They were very sensible, often analysing the differences between mature and young love, writing about the love that exists in the family, asserting the need for love but criticising teenagers who use their relationships as a status symbol. A high proportion of candidates approached the topic from an objective point of view. Some candidates scored very high marks, but there were also some poor pieces of writing. Some candidates wrote without thinking or ordering their ideas and there was a good deal of repetition and thinking in circles. The topic, 'The generation gap is a real cause of conflict' also elicited some excellent writing for the same reasons as given above, though poor candidates again wrote emotionally without structured thought.

The quality of the written style varied in the responses to these topics, but was often clear and candidates did not try to over-reach themselves. Where a candidate's style was not up to the complexity of the topic, his/her work was sometimes very difficult to understand.

Question 3: Descriptive writing

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FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

Paper 0500/04
Coursework Portfolio

General comments

Most of the coursework portfolios were well presented and it was rare to come across a portfolio that did not meet the requirements of the Examination. The assignments were generally acceptable, although, as the Moderators noted in reports to individual Centres, some worked out significantly better than others. Most Centres supplied copies of the texts set for Assignment 3.

In general, Centres supplied appropriate criterion-related comments for each candidate, but there were some weaknesses in the marking of individual pieces. Moderators complained that they occasionally found more technical errors and weaknesses in style than did some of the teachers. Some of the responses to the assignments had no comments at all. It should be understood that every piece of coursework should have evidence that the teacher has assessed it in detail.

Comments on specific aspects of the work

Drafts:

Although the drafts were not allocated marks, they gave Moderators a good deal of information about how candidates had worked their ideas into the final version of a response. Moderators wanted to see the nature of the changes that had been made during the process of writing.

There were some fine examples where the teacher had made general comments designed to persuade the candidate to revise, edit and correct. Such comments were, for example, (of a story), 'This section is too long' or 'Can you add some description here?' or (in an essay), 'I do not follow your argument'. These comments were made in one colour and the candidate responded in another colour by substituting text or words, or just by crossing out or making a comment. The improvements then appeared in the final version, and the Moderator was able to see the re-drafting process that had taken place.

Teachers were reminded that their advice must not constitute the correction. Moderators saw examples where teachers had provided corrections for spelling and punctuation, and that is not acceptable.

Unfortunately, a number of candidates wasted the opportunity to improve their work by submitting drafts identical to the final version.

Use of the spell check:

There were yet again many examples of candidates using the spell check without discretion, substituting a new word for an old, which patently did not make sense. This either exposed their ignorance of the meanings of words or their lack of effort in proof-reading the work adequately. Where there is any doubt of this sort, candidates should revert to a dictionary and check what they have done. Bad proof reading was sometimes the deciding factor in disagreeing with a Centre's marking. There were some rare occasions when the Centre did not appear to have noticed the errors either.

Commonest errors:

The commonest errors were the failure to use full stops between sentences, and not using commas where they were essential or advisory. In stories, tenses and the sequence of tenses were often wrong.

Assessment:

Internal standardisation was carried out well, and most Centres provided reliable orders of merit. In some cases where candidates' marks had been altered, the Moderators thought that the adjustment had not been quite enough, although there were rare occasions where the original teacher's mark was preferred. Some teachers had given inaccurate marks to individual pieces when they were first marked, but the final mark was usually correct. The commonest reason for adjustments made by the Moderators to the writing marks was

the failure by the Centre to take account of error, or to regard it as 'minor' when it was not so. The standards of reading were sometimes too high because candidates had not explored or engaged with the different opinions in the article set for reading. Marks were often raised because Centres had not rewarded the quality of language shown by the candidates. In some Centres this was a strong feature of the work.

Assignment 1:

One of the functions of the Coursework Portfolio is to encourage all candidates to become better writers. The language of the essay does not help in this process. Essays on euthanasia, abortion and the death penalty appeared with startling regularity and were remarkably similar. They did not give the impression of being original. This assignment should encourage some original thought and expression.

Candidates who chose topics that really interested them wrote much more convincingly. There were good coursework pieces on Barbie dolls, the addiction to the mobile phone and titles such as 'Are we alone?' and 'History is bunk'. It was true to say that the range of topics was wider than in previous years.

A number of Centres had taken the advice to steer clear of traditional essays and tried other approaches such as childhood memories, restaurant reviews, accounts of trips to all sorts of countries, a discussion of sporting activities in school, one's own obituary, a review of the school play, various speeches including one on fair trade, life in Bahrain and a letter to the President. There were many topics delivered in the form of a speech, and here the rhetoric livened up the writing.

Writing that was strongly based on what passed for research on the Internet should have been avoided. Many of these pieces owed far too much to the original structure and wording of websites. The best of the writing in this assignment demonstrated the ability of candidates to think for themselves and to express themselves in their own language and style.

The type of exercise set for Assignment 1 was not always different from that for Assignment 3. An aim of the syllabus is to encourage three different types of writing in order to allow the full range of marks to be awarded.

Some informative tasks were not challenging enough for the award of marks in Bands 1 and 2. There were also examples of tasks that were beyond the language capabilities of some of the weaker candidates.

Assignment 2:

Most candidates wrote narratives, either from their own experience or their imagination. Moderators did not think that one approach worked any better than the other. However, the best of the writing seemed to be when candidates had been taught how a short story works. They had been made aware of character, detail, and how a plot should be built up. The best of the stories also contained tension, excitement and perhaps most difficult of all, a well managed climax. Very often, the centre appeared to have taught a particular genre such as a ghost story, and the candidates had then made up their own title. It was generally less effective when a whole class wrote their response to a single title. Originality was the most difficult feature to achieve. An unusual ending was greatly favoured.

Assignment 3:

The reading material was most effective when it lasted approximately one side of A4 paper and dealt with a controversial topic that candidates could explore and discuss. The best tasks were directed ones where candidates wrote to the original writer, or to the editor of a newspaper or perhaps to one of the characters who might appear in the article. Candidates who followed this recipe were able to meet the criteria for reading in that they did not just repeat material from the article, but extended it or argued with it, for it or against it.

It was very clear that many candidates were struggling with unsuitable reading material. This was often because they had chosen it themselves and their choice had not been monitored.

The types of material that were unsuitable were as follows:

Several different articles or one very long article.

These were generally unsuitable since candidates found it very difficult to appreciate the material as a whole and often missed important stages in the arguments.

Articles that were too difficult for at least some candidates to understand.

Candidates who found the pitch too difficult usually resorted to repeating or copying sections of the material.

Newspaper stories without comment.

While it was possible for a candidate to comment on the event that was reported, there were no opportunities to engage with ideas and opinions within the report, which was simply narrative.

Lists of information from websites.

These were usually in the form of statistics or lists of advice and did not contain any ideas or opinions.

Advertisements with no or very little text.

While it was legitimate to discuss how visual images complemented the wording of an advertisement, or vice versa, Centres had to remember that this was a test of reading the written word.

Whole novels or plays.

The canvas was much too wide for the candidates to make specific comments on what they had read.

When candidates responded to literary texts they usually made comments about ideas and opinions expressed in the writing. However, they nearly always added comments about literary devices and the choice of words, which interrupted the progress of the argument and made it difficult for the reader to understand their priorities.

Some examples of texts that elicited good responses were *My Daughter Smokes*, *Bringing up children*, *the Sudanese Teddy Bear*, *Schoolgirl Boxing* and *Gun Control*. All these articles dealt with controversial ideas and were themselves likely to provoke a response. The candidates that wrote well in response had obviously been trained to look for appropriate ideas.

The responses were often highly personal and the quality of the writing was frequently higher than that of the first assignment.

There is no reason why teachers should not give one article to the whole class. However, Moderators ask that a minimum of teaching or class discussion should take place. There were examples where all the candidates rehearsed the same arguments that did not appear to be their own, and that defeated the purpose of this particular exercise.

Tasks were best when they were simply directed, for example, a letter to the writer of the article. Tasks such as 'Analyse' or 'Give a response' had less character and feeling.

Some of the assessment was generous. Candidates who explored and engaged with ideas and opinions and showed that they understood the writer's intentions and shades of meaning could be given high marks. Those who summarised and paraphrased the original, without development or further comment achieved no more than five or six marks. Those who used the article as a stimulus for their own creative writing and gave no evidence of having read with care achieved few marks.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

Paper 0500/05
Speaking and Listening

General comments

This session administrative requirements were adhered to remarkably well - Moderators have no issues to raise relating to procedural matters.

Comments on specific aspects of the test

Part 1 - The Individual Task

Moderators reported that the most common format remains the fact-based informative 'talk' or presentation. Although the syllabus does allow a variety of approaches, monologues, dramatic performances and role playing of media/news/documentary reports, for example, are still uncommon.

The choice of topic does, of course, impact on the depth to which subsequent discussion can develop. A very personal piece or a common, perhaps mundane topic is unlikely to result in probing and lively discussion. By contrast, a candidate who sets out to explore, to challenge, to be creative, etc. is likely to attract the attention of the listener, and productive discussion will usually result.

Part 2 - Discussions

It was very pleasing to hear evidence that the majority of candidates were well prepared for this examination. Moderators are happy that, in almost all cases, Examiners were very much part of the discussions, entering into the spirit of the occasion, and conversations were generally productive extensions of the Individual Tasks. It was clear in many cases that candidates had planned for focused discussion.

Choice of topics

Moderators report a wider range of topics this session, with fewer of the more simple narrative accounts. This is to be welcomed.

Some of the more interesting topics chosen by candidates were: diabetes, how football is financed, autism, the nature of mothering, the effects of fast food on society, peer pressure, marriage, intelligence, Stephen Hawking, a monologue on bullying, free speech, why technology might not be such a good thing, role-playing the case of a wrongly accused person, and an empathic piece pretending to be a literary character.

From the above list, it can be seen that good topics are those which contain a judicious mix of research and personal involvement, and those which are well-defined and focused.

Assessment

For **Part 1**, Centres are reminded that "lively delivery sustaining audience interest" is necessary, and that "a wide range of language devices" should be present in a Band 1. In other words, a rather straightforward, pedestrian informative talk which is secure and safe is likely to satisfy the criteria for Band 3. For higher reward, the candidate needs to be attempting something more challenging, more creative, more ambitious perhaps. Band 2 will indicate partial success of this aim.

For **Part 2**, we are assessing listening skills using an independent set of descriptors. The essence of a good listener is that he/she will choose the right moment to respond and will respond accurately and in some depth, hopefully adding to the conversation. If a candidate responds to most of the Examiner's prompts soundly, this is likely to result in a Band 2 mark (7-8). For higher reward, the candidate needs to develop and extend the point being put forward. This involves the integration of speaking and listening skills.

Moderators noted that there is still some leniency in awarding Band 1 marks for **Part 1** – the high marks should be reserved for those candidates who are providing focused and stimulating talks/presentations and performances which illustrate a wide range of language devices.

Moderators would again like to emphasise the possibility of differentiating tasks according to candidates' interests and abilities. For example, it is permissible for a weaker candidate to select a more straightforward topic and to aim for a safe, competent presentation, perhaps accepting a Band 3. It is advisable, on the other hand, for a stronger candidate to select a topic which is more complex and is likely to result in a deeper level of discussion. More challenging topics will also require more sophisticated presentational skills and a wider deployment of language devices, which are needed if Band 1 is to be attained.

Advice to Centres

- Moderators would like to point out that a wider variety of approaches to **Part 1** is encouraged. There is no restriction, for example, on the use of literature – so monologues in character, dramatic or poetic performances, **using original content**, etc. are fine. Indeed, this might offer useful integration with texts being read for IGCSE Literature, for example.
- In a very small number of cases, the interpretation of 'postcard-sized cue card' was rather generous. Centres are reminded that candidates must not read from a script in **Part 1** – a few hand-written notes is what is intended here, written on a piece of paper about the size of a postcard.

Final comments

Moderators enjoyed listening to samples and recognise the amount of effort made by candidates and teachers at many Centres in presenting interesting and appropriate work.

Moderators would like to thank Centres for sending in samples on CD. CIE encourages this as it makes the task of external moderation more efficient. However, Centres doing so should ensure that the CDs can be played on a regular, portable CD-player.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

Paper 0500/06

Speaking and Listening (Coursework)

General comments

Moderators report that most Centres are completing appropriate coursework tasks. Indeed, in some cases the tasks are very interesting and result in stimulating speaking and listening activities which the candidates clearly enjoy. At such Centres, candidates and teachers are working together to design and implement a wide range of tasks which illustrate speaking and listening skills.

If teachers feel that they cannot conduct **three different tasks** in accordance with the syllabus requirements, then they are advised to enter candidates for Component 05, the Speaking/Listening Test.

Comments on specific aspects

Procedures were followed generally well. Centres who offered additional annotation (written on the Candidate Record Cards) accompanying each task undertaken by each candidate, helped to make the process of external moderation swift and efficient.

Assessment was applied by most Centres with a good deal of accuracy.

Advice to Centres

A Moderator is seeking to fulfil two main duties while listening to a Centre's coursework: initially to confirm the Centre's interpretation and application of the assessment criteria, but also to confirm that a variety of appropriate tasks have been completed.

For the moderation process to be completed efficiently, Centres need only submit **recordings of the Task 2 activity**. It is not necessary to send in recordings of group activities or talks/speeches from individual candidates.