

Introduction

The materials in this document have been prepared to exemplify the marking of candidate work in the Advanced Higher English Literary Study question paper. The questions are based on an early version of the specimen question paper which is no longer available on our website.

The work of seven candidates has been marked and explanations of how marks have been awarded have been provided. These are presented in the form of an extended commentary on each essay.

Some essays have been typed by candidates. Responses have not been corrected or edited in any way.

Commentary on candidate evidence

The candidate evidence has achieved the following marks for each question of this course assessment component.

Candidate 2

Discuss some of the ways by which poetry explores aspects of change. In your answer you should refer to three poems.

The candidate was awarded **13/20 marks** for this response.

In the candidate's introduction, they begin by addressing the question and by acknowledging the complexity of the idea of 'change'. They choose appropriate texts with which to answer the question effectively. There is an indication that this candidate will confuse the poet and the persona in their response. The candidate takes a superficial approach to the central concerns of *The Barn*, but firmly focuses on the demands of the question to introduce their response.

The response has been structured appropriately using a horizontal approach. The candidate has split the poems into three parts in order to draw close comparisons between the beginning, middle and end of the poems. They begin by making an assertive point about the personas being a 'reflection of Seamus Heaney', which indicates confusion between poet and persona. As they move to *DOAN*, there is evidence of well-chosen quotation and analysis that strengthens their argument. It is focused upon the persona's innocence. There is no evidence of a range of techniques being discussed, but they do allude to the use of 'climax' to create tone. The candidate is able to use linking language to move on to discuss the opening of *The Barn*. Again, they use apt quotations and offer basic, but relevant analysis, without reference to specific technique. When they link to *Personal Helicon*, they are able to use language to highlight contrast. Analysis remains at the same level: basic but relevant.

The candidate moves on to discuss the 'transition' experienced in these poems, and consequently the nature of 'change'. The discussion of *The Barn* is insightful, particularly when referring to a 'learning process'. The candidate's analysis links well to an evaluative stance. *Personal Helicon* in contrast, is handled with less surety. They are able to discuss structure and time, but their use of quotation does little to deepen their argument.

The candidate begins their final section by pulling together how structure in each poem reflects 'change'. They make good use of quotation to highlight change, but their analysis is only relevant; it does not discuss a range of literary techniques. In the discussion of *The Barn* effective evidence is chosen, but it is used more to support the narrative than for analytical purposes. Evaluative words like 'striking'

convey the candidate's engagement with the material as they link to the final poem, Personal Helicon, and again shows a broad knowledge and understanding, which is focused on the question. Although the analytical comments are relevant, the candidate offers no close analysis of the allusion to Narcissus. There is a broad look at the central concerns as is evidenced again in the conclusion.

Knowledge and understanding

This candidate demonstrates a broad knowledge and understanding of the texts and has approached the question in a relevant and thoughtful way. The use of textual evidence is relevant to the demands of the question.

Analysis

There is evidence of relevant analysis and evidence that the candidate is able to comment on some literary techniques. This is weaker, but focused on the demands of the question.

Evaluation

There is a discernible and relevant evaluative stance based on evidence discussed within the response.

Technical accuracy

The essay meets the competence criteria.

The candidate's work just meets the standard described in the 15 to 13 marks range and so has been awarded 13 marks out of 20.