



Scottish Certificate of Education

**Standard Grade Revised Arrangements in
English**

Foundation, General and Credit Levels in and
after 1989

STANDARD GRADE ARRANGEMENTS IN ENGLISH

Publication date: September 2010

Published by the Scottish Qualifications Authority

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NOTE OF CHANGES TO ARRANGEMENTS SECOND EDITION PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 2010

COURSE TITLE English(Standard Grade)

COURSE NUMBER 0860 01

National Course Specification: Statement on authentication amended as no teacher/lecturer signature is required

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Introduction

The current syllabus and assessment arrangements for English on the Standard Grade of the Scottish Certificate of Education were issued in January 1984, following consultation of interested bodies on the proposals produced by a Joint Working Party of nominees of the Board and the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum.

In response to a substantial number of representations from teachers that the Standard Grade assessment arrangements were unduly onerous, the Scottish Education Department published a report by the Standard Grade Review of Assessment Group (SGROAG): "Assessment in Standard Grade Courses: Proposals for Simplification". A Short Life Working Group (SLWG) was established in each Standard Grade subject to revise the assessment arrangements in line with the SGROAG recommendations. The Report of the SLWG on English was issued for comment in April 1987. The views submitted by interested bodies are gratefully acknowledged.

In preparing the Revised Arrangements, the English Subject Panel, with assistance of the SLWG, has taken account of observations received and has amended the proposals as appropriate.

Standard Grade examinations in English at Foundation, General and Credit Levels will be offered in and after 1989 on the basis of the Revised Arrangements detailed below.

Section 1

The Course: General Aims and Structures

1 The Course: General Aims and Structures

- 1 1** An English course should take as its starting points the needs of young people and the needs of the individual pupil.

Young people in general need to develop a competence in language which will allow them to cope with the requirements of adult life; they need to learn to use language to interact with others and also to sustain a measure of self-reliance and autonomy; they need experiences of language which will extend them intellectually, imaginatively, morally and emotionally. These language needs should be the concern of all subjects in the school curriculum but they are the central business of English.

Any English course, whatever its stage or level, should seek to enrich the lives of pupils, contribute to their personal and social growth, and enable them to develop to the highest possible level the skills associated with listening and talking, reading and writing. In so doing, it should make them aware of the main ways in which language works in their lives. Within this context, pupils should be made aware of the cultural diversity in Scotland and of the contribution of minority cultures. These aims are most likely to be achieved in situations which encourage in pupils qualities such as resourcefulness, cooperativeness, ambition and mutual respect. The teacher's role and the relationship built up with pupils are crucial.

- 1 2** The complexion of a particular course will depend upon the teacher's judgement of the needs of each pupil. In planning pupils' work account should be taken of their individual interests, degree of maturity and linguistic competence.

The importance of structure in the course has to be recognised. Language skills do not simply mature in the fullness of time; their development requires conscious cultivation. There is, therefore, a place for the teaching and application of techniques. The point is that awareness of the need for these will arise out of the contexts of the course.

In the provision of these contexts in an English course, literary texts are of central importance. They offer the vicarious experiences through which the teacher will pursue the main, subtly-linked aims of English. They are not, however, the only opportunities available: any situation or activity is valuable if through the processes of language it can be made to yield growth for the pupils who participate in it.

If Scottish pupils are to achieve the linked aims of linguistic development and personal enrichment described above, it is important that they should have some experience of the work of Scottish writers.

- 1 3** Assessment in English is a continuing process and is very much a part of teaching. Its main purpose in the classroom is to help the teacher and the pupil find ways of improving the pupil's learning. Provision for such assessment should be part of the structure of the course.

Section 2

The Content of the Course

2 The Content of the Course

- 2 1 The content of any English course comprises its materials and experiences, the language activities which the teacher derives from these, and the teaching which develops the pupil's competence and maturity through these activities.

A great many of the activities at the heart of an English course will take the form of open-ended tasks which can be successfully tackled by pupils at different levels of competence, though teachers may wish to differentiate in choice of materials, assignments, pace and amount of support, for the benefit of individuals or groups.

- 2 2 Other important activities and the materials on which they are based will be inherently complex and will presuppose a certain level of linguistic competence in the pupils who undertake them. Even here, however, the pupil's motivation and interest together with good teaching can make such demanding activities and difficulty materials more easily accessible than they seem.

- 2 3 It is a matter for the teacher's professional judgement whether to choose apparently "easier" or "harder" activities and materials. In coming to a decision, account should be taken of the nature of the recent work of the pupil, the pupil's current interests and future needs, and the amount of supportive teaching which can be provided. Situations should be avoided in which the pupil's development is frustrated, either by being confined to a diet of undemanding activities or through being obliged to tackle challenging activities without adequate preparation and support.

- 2 4 The bilingual skills of pupils for whom English is a second language should be acknowledged and valued. Bilingual pupils may gain in confidence if they are encouraged to discuss in their mother tongue the preliminary approaches to tasks and stimulus material. The cultural diversity offered by such pupils should be exploited.

- 2 5 The pattern of assessment does **not** require the construction of separate Foundation, General and Credit courses, each with its distinctive syllabus. In describing the higher levels of performance in Reading, however, the Grade Related Criteria require pupils to be able to demonstrate independently their competence in handling successfully materials of a greater degree of complexity than those for lower levels of performance.

That apart, these Arrangements do **not** specify any distinct level-to-level differentiation of course content. Consequently, they neither call for sections to be set according to ability, nor prevent this form of organisation, but rather they leave the question to the judgement of individual English departments.

Section 3

The Main Purpose of an English Course

3 The Main Purpose of an English Course

3 1 It will be helpful to start from a reasonably systemic description of the main purposes of each of the four modes of an English course; Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking. Such descriptions are offered in 3 2 below.

These descriptions can be used as instruments of analysis in a variety of important ways: to survey the potential of materials; to plan units and longer cycles of work; to review courses to check that balance is being maintained; to plan assessment and identify reasonable levels of expectations of achievement. They are not, however, in themselves a syllabus or a ranking or priorities.

Though their modes are distinguishable, in practice they also depend on and reinforce one another. Teachers may from time to time chose to emphasise one mode or another; but generally they will want to link them naturally and to keep them in overall balance.

The processes of enrichment and growth are not in some way separate from these language modes; they work through them.

It is easier to assess the end-products of language activities than the processes themselves. Nevertheless the aims of English are served as much in the processes by which pupils learn as in products that can be assessed at a given time.

Listing the purposes of each mode is not to imply that these purposes are mutually exclusive. Language being what it is, they are all likely to operate together, but one will predominate. A reader may, for example, read a newspaper article with the main purpose of obtaining particular information. It is likely, however, that in the pursuit of this reading purpose other purposes will be simultaneously fulfilled: for example, gaining an overall impression, grasping certain implications and forming some opinion of the writer's attitude to his subject.

Such considerations serve as a reminder that in planning an English course and its assessment these descriptions of language purposes should be used flexibly and with professional discretion.

3 2 The four modes and the purposes identified for each are as follows.

3 2 1 Reading

During the course pupils learn to read for a variety of purposes and in appropriate ways. The main purposes are:

- to gain overall impression/gist of a text
- to obtain particular information from a text
- to grasp ideas or feelings implied in a text
- to evaluate the writer's attitudes, assumptions and argument
- to appreciate the writer's craft
- to enjoy and obtain enrichment from a text.

3 2 2 Writing

During the course pupils learn to explore feelings and clarify ideas by writing for a variety of purposes and audiences in appropriate forms and styles. The main purposes are:

- to convey information
- to deploy ideas, expound, argue and evaluate
- to describe personal experience, express feelings and reactions
- to employ specific literary forms (eg short story, letter, poem).

3 2 3 Listening

During the course pupils learn to listen for a variety of purposes and in appropriate ways. The main purposes are:

- to gain overall impression/gist of a message
- to obtain particular information from a message
- to grasp ideas or feelings implied in a message
- to evaluate the attitudes, assumptions and arguments expressed in a message
- to appreciate the techniques used in a message
- to enjoy and obtain enrichment from a message.

3 2 4 Talking

During the course pupils learn in discussion and individual talk to explore feelings and clarify ideas by talking for a variety of purposes and audiences in appropriate forms and styles. The main purposes are:

- to convey information
- to deploy ideas, expound, argue and evaluate
- to describe personal experience, express feelings and reactions
- to create particular effects.

3 3 While the concept of a four-mode English curriculum reflects the linguistic processes which characterise teaching and learning in the subject, in practice, the modes of Talking and Listening are closely related. Talking and Listening exist on a continuum of interaction: at one extreme there is the sort of talk whose intention is to communicate with minimal response on the part of the listener; at the other extreme is the sort of listening whose purpose is to receive communication, with minimal opportunity to respond; between the two extremes is the sort of situation where the purpose is to engage in discussion, which features talking and listening in roughly equal proportions.

Accordingly, for the purpose of certification, the Listening mode will be subsumed under Talking, resulting in three assessable elements: Reading, Writing and Talking.

3 4 With the exception of listening, the foregoing analysis of the modes in terms of purposes is used as the basis for the Grade Related Criteria for English (see Section 7).

35 It is important that all pupils should gain from these language activities some knowledge of the main features of language in use, and sufficient technical vocabulary to allow them to handle their own and other people's language accurately and confidently.

It is also desirable that pupils should be introduced to some of the main ways in which:

- language varies: Scottish forms of English, regional dialects, standard and non-standard forms
- English is used/has developed in different cultures and communities
- register operates in language
- language is manipulated for different purposes.

During the course it is likely that consideration will be given to some of the main ways in which:

- sentences are constructed and punctuated
- words are built up from constituent parts
- meanings develop and change
- the spelling system operates
- devices of structure and style are used
- spoken language differs from written forms.

How far the teacher will wish to take the study of these concepts will depend on pupils' needs, interest and understanding. Normally it will be contextualised in the work of the class. Some direct study and teaching may still be called for, but the important thing is that pupils should be able to apply their knowledge in using and understanding language. The Grade Related Criteria show the extent to which concepts of language and literature are involved in each of the three assessable elements. However, knowledge of language will not be separately and directly assessed at Standard Grade.

Section 4

Planning: The Unit

4 Planning: The Unit

4 1 The language activities of an English course will take place in units. The term is used in a general sense to indicate a component part of the course. A unit is any structure in which the aims of linguistic and personal development can be realised. It is designed to engage pupils in varied and purposeful use of the interrelated skills of language. Learning takes place in these situations because the pupils need to use language in particular ways, and the teacher is able to respond to what they produce, helping them to refine and extend their skills.

4 2 Many units will be text-based; some will be thematic or totally non-textual; others will focus on particular skills and processes of language. An individual unit may extend over three weeks or a single period; it might be a block study of “Macbeth”, a single lesson on an aspect of language study, or a set group of discussions.

Many units will have their origin in pieces of work already well established within the department. Some of these will remain as they are because they do not require expansion and already contain a variety of activities covering different purposes. It is neither necessary to include all the modes in each unit, nor to insert activities which have no appropriate place in it. On the other hand, departments will certainly need and wish to devise some units which incorporate activities in all four modes and with a new variety of purposes.

4 3 Underlying all the different possibilities are certain important basic characteristics of the worthwhile unit:

- a central stimulus or kernel of experience
- a variety of language activities and purposes
- some room for teacher support and intervention
- clearly identifiable outcomes, enabling pupils to know what they are aiming at and what they have achieved.

4 4 Individual departments may wish to construct units according to their own preferences and conditions. The following sequence is offered as general guidance on the process of developing a unit:

- consider the needs of the pupils on the course
- identify an appropriate central experience for the unit
- decide on the language objectives and outcomes for the unit, bearing in mind pupils’ needs
- devise activities that cover the chosen objectives
- put the unit into shape as classroom materials
- evaluate the unit as it is taught and after it is finalised.

4 5 If the work of a unit is to be repeated or taken over by another teacher or reviewed by the department, some kind of description is needed. The writing up of unit plans need not, however, be elaborate. The crucial consideration is that there should be enough detail to allow another teacher to carry out the plan. To that end, the plan should indicate briefly the unit’s objectives, main activities and suggested methods. It should also state what pupils are expected to undertake and how their work is to be assessed.

4 5 (continued)

Writing up and reviewing unit plans is a time-consuming enterprise for both the individual teacher and the English department. It is not to be expected that departmental banks of unit plans can be built up overnight. Their production should, however, be a continuing priority of departmental policy within the time available. The shared development or exchange of units by a number of neighbouring departments is a possibility that is worth considering.

Whatever the source of their unit plans, teachers will not wish to use and re-use them uncritically. Units will usually need some adjustment in content, sequence or approach to meet the particular needs or interests of different classes.

4 6 When a teacher comes to choose materials and activities for a unit, it is important to feel confidence in the value of these and actually like the idea of using them. Departments should establish principles for making selection. The following set of questions, designed to identify worthwhile learning activities, is recommended as an aid in planning and evaluating units.

Are the activities related to the interests of the pupils?

Do they give pupils an active role in learning?

Do they “extend” pupils, requiring of them some persistence, allowing both prospect of success and risk of failure?

Can they be attempted by pupils at several different levels of competence?

Do they give pupils a chance to collaborate in the planning and carrying out of the activity?

Do they give pupils scope for choices in carrying out the activity?

Do they ask pupils to think about and use their own experience?

Do they ask pupils to consider unfamiliar ideas and situations?

Do they ask pupils to engage in inquiry into a significant human issue?

Do they place pupils in situations where they are likely to gain satisfaction from re-writing, rehearsing and polishing their initial efforts?

Do they require pupils to work with the language products of contemporary society?

Do they involve pupils in the learning and purposeful application of concepts and skills?

Do they ask pupils to read literary texts of sufficient quality?

It goes without saying that no one unit is likely to meet all of these criteria.

4 7 An important feature of any worthwhile unit is that opportunities for assessment should be built into it. This assessment will be mainly formative and informal: on completion of the unit each pupil might well have a simple record of the main activities attempted and of progress in each.

Section 5

Advice on Planning the Course

5 Advice on Planning the Course

5.1 Course Design

This section advises English departments how to construct courses for pupils in S3 and S4 leading to the award of Standard Grade. The assessment system to be used by the Board is set out in Section 6. It bears on the planning of courses in certain general ways:

- it indicates the aspects of English which will be assessed
- it indicates the nature of the coursework on which internal grades are to be based (where these apply)
- it indicates the nature of the coursework which is to be submitted for external assessment
- it indicates the aspects of the course which are to be tested by external examination.

The Grade Related Criteria describe the kinds of performance required for particular Levels of award.

These factors will obviously influence the design of English courses – in terms of scope, balance and objectives. They do not, however, amount to a national external syllabus for English. English departments thus retain considerable freedom to plan courses appropriate to the needs of their own pupils. Teachers in a department should be able to reach agreement on matters of course design without stifling individual initiatives and teaching styles and without imposing certain texts or materials.

In practice, course design often begins with an analysis of available content in the light of general awareness of the needs of the pupil and overall departmental policy and aims. This will lead to the design of specific lessons or units and an ensuing analysis of the activities undertaken. A consequent analysis of the **balance** of activities may result in modifications or additions being made to the teaching programme.

Departmental syllabus notes will be a central aid to planning. These might take the form of:

- a statement of the department's general aims and the main course activities
- an outline of the work proposed, indicating types, number and possible sequence of units and the range of materials available for the course
- an indication of the means by which the progress of the pupils is to be assessed; and where appropriate, the means by which internal grades are to be arrived at for certification purposes
- a description of the support available for pupils with acute learning difficulties.

In planning the course, thought should be given to the sequence and balance of activities over the course as a whole.

5 2 Sequence in the Course

Preferably the English teacher should start with some provisional notion of the order in which it is hoped to offer the units of a particular course. While it is true that the development of the English skills and experiences of a group of pupils ought not to be seen as a simple whole-class progression, nonetheless, over the period of S3 and S4 the units of the course are likely in general terms to present an increase in linguistic demand and to assume a growing maturity in pupils' interests. This will reveal itself in the nature of the input materials and the assignments set. The levels of performance expected of pupils will also rise.

The ordering of units within a course should take account of these general considerations. Teachers will also wish to phase their courses to secure the overall balance referred to in 5 3, and to stimulate the interest that comes from a variety in choice of topic, type of material and teaching strategy.

It is of paramount importance that the linkage of the units of a course should be relaxed enough to allow the teacher to review what has been done and to adjust to pupils' responses and needs as the course develops. There should always be scope for unplanned events.

5 3 Balance in the Course

An English course, at any Level, should include a wide range of activities in good overall balance, as between:

- competence in language and development of the imagination
- the acquisition and application of concepts and skills
- the productive and receptive uses of language
- the written and spoken modes
- individual and collaborative activities
- texts of immediate relevance and those that provide more extended horizons
- printed texts and non-print stimuli.

To achieve this balance over the course as a whole, teachers do not need to build it into each and every unit of the course. Some will choose to work in this way; others may prefer to plan on a larger scale, and will check overall balance perhaps once or twice a term.

5 4 Evaluating the Course

In evaluating its own course arrangements a department will find it useful to ask the following questions.

Are the longer cycles of the course punctuated by attainable short-term goals and objectives?

Are these scales of planning set in some kind of provisional sequence for the two years of the course?

Is the course organised in terms of units which provide activities and outcomes?

Does it make substantial use of imaginative literature?

54 *(continued)*

Does it provide continuing help with the application of formal rules and conventions of language?

Does it provide for pupil choice?

Is the planning flexible enough to permit adjustment in response to pupils' different learning needs?

Is the course explained to the pupils?

Section 6

Assessment for Certification

6 Assessment for Certification

6.1 Introduction

Assessment has an important contribution to make to the teaching and learning process, but such assessment is not the concern of this section. Advice and guidance on assessment in this connection are to be found in Appendix I.

The pattern of assessment derives from the concept of English as a unitary subject, that is, a subject in which differentiation is based not upon candidates being involved in different activities and learning, but upon their engaging in the same kinds of activity at different levels of perception and to different levels of attainment. There are consequently no modes of language distinctive of any Level, Foundation, General or Credit, nor any purposes of language reception or use not appropriate to all Levels. However, there is a recognised need in Reading to differentiate by the difficulty of tasks set to candidates, whereas in Writing and Talking, differentiation will be based largely on candidate performance.

The system attempts, as far as possible, to remove the necessity for candidates to be presented in the examinations at a predetermined Level and to offer the opportunity for each to demonstrate maximum attainment. In Reading there will be different levels of textual difficulty, but the system is designed to ensure, where appropriate, that candidates are not limited to attaining a grading within one Level. Candidates will require careful guidance from their teachers as to which paper(s) to attempt.

The elements of Reading, Writing and Talking will be formally assessed; they will be equally weighted. Reading and Writing will be assessed externally, Talking will be assessed internally.

Listening will not be formally assessed; its importance in the curriculum will be reflected in course content, in approaches to teaching and learning and its influence on the assessment of the three elements.

6.2 Pattern of Assessment

In terms of a 7-point scale, the Certificate will record an overall grade for English and grades for each element.

There will be three forms of assessment for certification for all candidates:

- internal assessment of Talking
- external assessment of a folio of coursework in Reading and Writing
- external examination in Reading and Writing.

The terms Credit, General and Foundation define three broad levels of performance; they do not define syllabuses.

6 3 Presentations for External Papers in Reading

At the time of presentation, centres will be required to indicate the Level(s) of the external papers which each candidate will attempt, as follows:

- Foundation Level only,
- or* Foundation and General Levels only,
- or* General and Credit Levels only.

This presentation does not imply any restriction on grades available for the external paper in Writing, the Reading and Writing aspects of the Folio of Coursework or for Talking.

Candidates presented at two Levels are not obliged to attempt both papers but are strongly advised to do so, since, other than as a result of an appeal, candidates can only be awarded one of the grades assessed by the paper(s) attempted or Grade 7.

The following table may be helpful as a guide to presentation.

<i>Expected External Grade</i>	<i>Presentation Level(s)</i>	<i>Grades Assessed</i>
7, 6	Foundation	6, 5
5, 4	Foundation and General	6, 5, 4, 3
3, 2, 1	General and Credit	4, 3, 2, 1

This arrangement allows in each case for a grade award higher or lower than expected (except at Grades 1 and 7 respectively). A candidate expected to achieve Grade 6 may choose to be presented for both the Foundation and the General papers; or a candidate expected to achieve Grade 3 may choose to be presented for the Foundation and General combination of papers, thereby accepting that Grade 2 or Grade 1 will not be possible.

Candidates who attempt papers at two Levels will be given the better of the two grades achieved on these papers. Performance at one Level will **not** be taken into account in grading at the other Level.

6 4 Grade 7 and No Overall Award

For any element, Grade 7 will indicate that the candidate has, in the element concerned, completed the course but has not demonstrated achievement of any specified Level of performance as defined by the Grade Related Criteria.

The Board will regard the submission of an estimate grade for an externally assessed element as evidence that the course has been completed in that element.

Candidates who have not complied with the assessment requirements in any element (eg due to unauthorised absence from the external examination or failure to submit a folio) will be deemed not to have completed the course, in that element. Such candidates **will not receive a grade** for that element and hence **will not receive an overall award** for the subject. In such cases, however, if a grade is gained for any other element, that grade will be recorded on the Certificate.

6 5 Folio of Coursework

All candidates are required to compile and submit to the Board, by 26 March of the relevant academic session, a folio of written work for external assessment, as specified below.

6 5 1 Writing

Candidates will be required to submit **two** pieces of extended writing, as follows:

- **one** of a broadly transactional/discursive kind (focusing on one or other of the first two purposes listed in 3 2 2);

and
- **one** of a broadly expressive/imaginative kind (focusing on one or other of the latter two purposes listed in 3 2 2).

6 5 2 Extended Responses to Reading

Candidates will be assessed on their written responses to whole texts that they have studied in class or as personal reading. They will be required to submit **three** pieces of extended writing on literary or media texts, as follows:

- **two** critical evaluations of literary texts, each of a different form, ie poetry, drama or prose (fiction or non-fiction);

and
- **one** further critical evaluation of a literary text, from any form;

or
- **one** critical evaluation of a media text or texts (film, radio or television programme or programmes);

or
- **one** imaginative response to a literary text or texts.

One or more of the three pieces may be on a text or texts of the candidate's own choice and/or studied independently. All three pieces will be assessed as evidence of performance in Reading.

It should be noted that an imaginative response to a literary text or texts may be submitted as evidence **either** of Writing **or** of Reading. In either case it must meet the relevant Grade Related Criteria.

The five pieces for Reading and Writing should comprise the candidate's best work, in terms of the above specification. The selection for the folio should be made by the candidate in consultation with the class teacher. The folio should normally consist of items completed in the later part of the course.

6 5 2 (continued)

While candidates are encouraged to read widely and discuss their work in preparation for writing their folio pieces, the work must be produced in such a way that candidates can truthfully sign a declaration that the pieces are their own work. Clearly, then, teachers should be aware of what is legitimate by way of help in the process of re-drafting. It is not permissible to make corrections for candidates to copy. Rather, teachers should direct candidates towards the areas requiring re-drafting, editing or correcting and having where necessary taught or re-inforced the necessary skills, leave the candidates to prepare a final version. This arrangement allows that the pieces do not necessarily have to be completed in school or under formal examination conditions.

The folio should contain only pieces which the candidate regards as finished work. Earlier drafts should not be included. The selected pieces should not carry a grade.

For each of the five pieces a brief, but clear, description of the context and purpose of the task should be appended.

SQA will check that the five pieces conform to the folio specification. Guidance on length of folio pieces is to be found in the Grade Related Criteria for the various levels of performance. The overriding consideration at all levels of performance, however, will be appropriateness to the purpose of the writing task.

All five pieces will be assessed by means of the Grade Related Criteria.

Failure to comply fully with these requirements may result in no award being made.

6 6 Reading

6 6 1 External Papers (Close Reading)

In addition to the folio of coursework, Close Reading will be assessed by external examination. Three papers will be offered, designated as Foundation (assessing Grades 6 and 5), General (assessing Grades 4 and 3) and Credit (assessing Grades 2 and 1).

Marks will be allocated to each question and a total mark obtained. The two grades associated with each Level will be distinguished by setting two cut-off scores. The lower score will reflect a satisfactory overall standard of performance, the upper score a high overall standard of performance.

Candidates will be assessed on their comprehension of short messages, texts and extracts. At all Levels, candidates may be required to make “objective” responses (underlining, ringing, numbering, completing, etc), to provide one-word or brief written answers, and to make more extended written responses.

Each paper, lasting 50 minutes, will consist of a passage with accompanying questions designed to identify the levels of performance described in the relevant Grade Related Criteria and to sample the purposes of reading listed in 3 2 1. The nature of the passages may vary from year to year, using literary, journalistic or discursive material.

6 6 1 (continued)

In the Foundation Paper, questions on the passage will usually require brief responses of a one-word or objective kind, although there will be some opportunity for more extended response.

In the General Paper, the passage and the accompanying questions will be more demanding, and candidates will usually be required to answer at moderate length and in their own words.

In the Credit Paper, the passage and the accompanying questions will be more demanding than those in the General Paper; response requirements will be similar to those in the General Paper.

6 6 2 Overall Grade

In reaching an overall grading for Reading, performance in the external test and in the Reading component of the folio will receive equal weighting.

6 7 Writing

6 7 1 External Papers

In addition to the folio of coursework, Writing will be assessed by an external paper of 1¼ hours' duration. The same paper will be attempted by all candidates.

The paper will be in the form of a number of stimuli from which the candidate will choose one. These stimuli will be both pictorial and verbal, and may be accompanied by suggestions as to how the task might be undertaken. Performance will be assessed using the Grade Related Criteria.

6 7 2 Overall Grade

In reaching an overall grading for Writing, performance in the external test and in the Writing component of the folio will receive equal weighting.

6 8 Talking

6 8 1 For the purposes of assessment, Talking is regarded as falling within one or other of two categories, Discussion and Individual Talk. Discussion comprises all forms of talking in which the participants take turns to contribute; it includes, for example, reciprocal talk between individuals, interaction in groups, and contributions to discussion within the whole class. Individual Talk takes in all forms of talking in which the speaker communicates with minimum response on the part of the listener(s); the audience can range from a single listener to a group or class. It is recognised that these categories are not watertight and that activities such as interviews may legitimately be placed in either, according to whether or not the assignment calls for the participants to interact significantly.

Talking will be internally assessed using the Grade Related Criteria. Presenting Centres will be required to submit to the Board by 26 March a grade for each candidate which will be the aggregate, with equal weighting of a grade for Discussion and a grade for Individual Talk. The Board will issue guidance on the process of aggregation.

6 8 2 There is no requirement for a specified number of assignments to be undertaken for the purpose of certification. Over the two years of the course, teachers should create opportunities which will allow them to cover the range of purposes set out in 3 2 4, and maintain the balance between Discussion and Individual Talk. Other situations will present themselves informally from time to time (in class, group and individual assignments) and these are no less important in contributing towards the record of each candidate's performance in Talking. The final grade submitted to the Board should take account of the course as a whole.

6 8 3 Some means of recording assessments on paper should be used. This should be as simple as possible but capable of informing fairly the subsequent summative grading of the candidate's performance and the process of moderation. It is suggested that for individual candidates the following details should be noted each time they are assessed in Talking:

- type of activity (Discussion/Individual Talk)
- purpose (See 3 2 4)
- topic (eg group prediction assignment on a short story)
- assessment (comment, symbol or grade as appropriate).

Centres are free to decide the form of assessment record they will use; one example in the form of a candidate profile is offered as guidance in Appendix II.

6 8 4 The internal assessment will be externally moderated by means of a Visiting Moderator trained by the Board. The Moderator will visit the presenting centre in November/December of the year prior to presentation and will proceed as follows.

- a) A meeting will be conducted with all teachers who are presenting in the year in question. The Moderator will issue the Board's assessment sheets explaining how these are to be used in the moderation procedure and will then present to the meeting a number of video-taped examples of performances in Talking. These pieces, which will be provided by the Board, will illustrate types of talking and different levels of performance. After each example has been viewed, teachers will record their individual assessments using the Grade Related Criteria. They will not consult their colleagues. When the assessment sheets have been collected, the teachers will be given an opportunity to discuss the examples with the Moderator who will explain the Board's assessments.

When the Moderator has had an opportunity to consider the responses of the teachers, taking into account the teachers' assessment records for the course if necessary, the Moderator will form a judgement of how well the teachers' assessments correspond to national standards.

The Moderator will discuss with the Head of department any adjustments to the grades submitted by individual teachers. If advisable, the Moderator may enter into discussion with the teachers concerned.

6 8 4 (continued)

- b) It will be the responsibility of the Head of department to ensure:
- that teachers act upon the guidance of the Moderator to apply national standards
 - that the work of any teachers whose initial assessments cause concern is properly monitored thereafter.
- c) Presenting centres will conduct their assessments in line with the guidance given and will submit grades for Talking to the Board by 26 March. It will be the responsibility of the Head of department to ensure that common standards are applied across the department. The Head of department will countersign the grades submitted by all teachers in the department, indicating satisfaction that the grades conform to the guidance offered by the Moderator.
- d) The Board's examiners will scrutinise the grades submitted and, late in May, a follow-up visit may be made by the Moderator where further discussion of the assessments is judged appropriate. During these visits, the Moderator may, if necessary, require teachers to carry out an assessment of certain talking activities while the Moderator is present.

6 9 Scottish Materials

Although a Scottish Dimension will not be mandatory in the Standard Grade course, Scottish materials may be used in assessment in the following ways.

The external test of Reading will frequently, though not invariably, make some use of texts by Scottish writers. These texts may occasionally include Scots language forms.

It is open to the candidate in compiling the folio of coursework on Reading to submit one, two or all three pieces of extended writing on literary/media texts of Scottish origin.

6 10 Estimates for Reading and Writing

Centres must submit to the Board, by 26 March of the year of the examination, an estimate grade for each candidate for Reading and Writing. The teacher should determine the estimate on the basis of each candidate's work. Estimates may be used by the Board for its internal procedures, including such cases as absence from external examinations, adverse circumstances and appeal. Evidence in support of these estimates should be retained by centres for submission to the Board if required.

Section 7

Grade Related Criteria

7 Grade Related Criteria

7.1 Definition

Grade Related Criteria (GRC) are positive descriptions of performance against which a candidate's achievement is measured. Direct comparisons are not made between the performances of one candidate and that of another.

7.2 Types of GRC

Summary GRC are broad descriptions of performance. They are published as an aid to the interpretation of the profile of attainment by candidates, parents, employers and other users of the Certificate.

Extended GRC are detailed descriptions of performance. They are intended to assist teachers in making their assessments for each element, and to be used by examiners when conducting external assessment.

7.3 Application of GRC

GRC are defined at three Levels of performance: Foundation, General and Credit.

Awards will be reported on six grades, two grades being distinguished at each Level. The upper of the two grades at a given Level will be awarded to candidates who meet the stated criteria demonstrating a high standard of performance; the lower grade to those who demonstrate a lower, but still satisfactory, standard of performance.

There will be a seventh grade for candidates who complete the course but fail to meet the criteria for any Level.

The GRC state, for purposes of national certification by the Board, the standards of unaided performance required at the end of a two-year course. It follows that their principal application summative, both for the Board and for individual English Departments. Teachers will find them of use in their own classroom assessments.

7.4 Use of GRC by English Departments

GRC will be used for certification purposes by English Departments:

- to assist in the process of selecting folio pieces
- to assess Talking internally
- as a basis for providing the Board with estimates of performance in Close Reading and in Writing.

GRC are generalisations: they assimilate aspects of the mode, and attempt to sum up and characterise the **typical** performance. When impression assessment techniques are used, their application depends on the professional judgement of the assessor. They cannot explicitly provide for all the ways in which strengths and weaknesses compensate for, and combine with, each other in individual performance within the same grade range. Therefore, application of the GRC in English will, in practice call for a continual process of adjustment by the teacher to arrive at a holistic assessment of a pupil's performance.

The Board plans to define the standards described in the GRC by providing in due course illustrative samples of candidates' written and taped work and to issue instructions on how the GRC are to be applied in assessing pupils' course work.

7 5 Reading – Summary GRC

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)

The candidate demonstrated in writing some evidence of understanding whole works and extracted passages. These passages were brief and readily understandable were related to personal interests and dealt with relationships or ideas in a straightforward way. Grasp of ideas and appreciation of the author’s purpose and technique were rudimentary. The candidate showed traces of a personal response to what had been read.

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

The candidate demonstrated in writing a fair understanding of whole works and extracted passages. These passages were on the whole readily understandable, were mainly related to personal interest and dealt with relationships or ideas in a straightforward way. Grasp of ideas was on the whole adequate and there was appreciation of some obvious aspects of the author’s purpose and technique. The candidate made a reasonably developed statement of personal response to what had been read.

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)

The candidate demonstrated in writing a good understanding of whole works and extracted passages. These passages went beyond what was readily understandable or related to personal interests: they sometimes featured unfamiliar, abstract ideas and complexity of structure and tone. Grasp of ideas was firm and there was sound appreciation of the author’s purpose and technique. The candidate made a perceptive and developed statement of personal response to what had been read.

7 6 Writing – Summary GRC

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)

In finished work the candidate managed to communicate meaning largely at a first reading despite formal errors and weaknesses. The writing was limited in ideas and language, but showed a few signs of awareness of the requirements of the task. Where appropriate, the candidate was able to sustain a length of at least 100 words.

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

In finished work the candidate managed to communicate meaning at a first reading. There were some formal lapses but sentence construction was mostly accurate. Ideas and language were on the whole adequate and the work demonstrated a reasonable attention to the requirements of the task. The candidate was able to write at a length appropriate to the task.

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)

In finished work the candidate communicated meaning clearly at a first reading. Formal errors were insignificant and sentence construction was accurate. There was some distinction in ideas and language. The work demonstrated a detailed attention to the requirements of the task. Where appropriate, the candidate sustained the quality of the writing at some length.

77 Talking – Summary GRC

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)

In discussion and individual talk the candidate managed to convey a few simple ideas; weaknesses in expression did not prevent communication. There were a few signs of awareness of the purpose and situation of the talking. In discussion account taken of others was intermittent. In individual talk the candidate used a limited range of language and needed substantial support through prompting and questioning.

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

In discussion and individual talk the candidate conveyed relevant ideas adequately; expression showed some traces of variety. On the whole, the candidate was aware of the purpose and situation of the talking. In discussion account taken of others was reasonably regular. In individual talk language was generally accurate; some support was needed through prompting and questioning.

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)

In discussion and individual talk the candidate conveyed substantial relevant ideas readily; expression was fluent. The candidate was consistently aware of the purpose and situation of the talking. In discussion close account was taken of others. In individual talk language was varied and accurate and there was little or no prompting.

78 Descriptions of Grades

These describe performance within Levels. They apply to each element.

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Grade 6 | The candidate has met the criteria for Foundation Level, demonstrating a satisfactory overall standard of performance. |
| Grade 5 | The candidate has met the criteria for Foundation Level, demonstrating a high overall standard of performance. |
| Grade 4 | The candidate has met the criteria for General Level, demonstrating a satisfactory overall standard of performance. |
| Grade 3 | The candidate has met the criteria for General Level, demonstrating a high overall standard of performance. |
| Grade 2 | The candidate has met the criteria for Credit Level, demonstrating a satisfactory overall standard of performance. |
| Grade 1 | The candidate has met the criteria for Credit Level, demonstrating a high overall standard of performance. |

7 9 Reading – Extended GRC

7 9 1 Extended Responses to Reading

In what follows the term “text(s)” should be taken to refer to poetry, drama and prose (both fiction and non-fiction) and also to films and radio and television programmes.

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)

The quality of the text(s) chosen should allow the candidate to demonstrate the following skills.

a) *Critical Evaluations*

As appropriate to the purpose of the assignment, the candidate can:

- display some familiarity with the text(s): this appears in the statement of one or two of its main ideas and/or purposes and through reference to one or two relevant areas of content; he or she shows a little ability to relate detail to the overall context of the work(s) studied
- make a statement about at least one aspect of the text(s) that has affected him or her: this conveys traces of a genuine personal response
- identify one or two features of technique which contribute to some obvious effect: this is accompanied by some reference to the text(s) and/or quotation
- display some signs of awareness of the purpose and nature of the assignment: some of what is selected from the text(s) is relevant and a degree of attention is given to what is important; the response is at least 100 words in length.

b) *Imaginative Responses*

The candidate can display, as appropriate, some familiarity with the text(s) through allusion to one or two relevant areas of content and recognition of one or two of the main ideas and purposes. There are some signs that account has been taken of the purpose and nature of the assignment.

Factors Differentiating Grades 6 and 5

a) *Critical Evaluations*

Grade 6	Grade 5
The candidate’s grasp of main ideas and/or purposes is tenuous.	The statement of main ideas and/or purposes displays a basic grasp.
The statement of personal reaction lacks clarity but conveys a recognisable stance in relation to the text(s).	The statement of personal reaction is brief but clear.
Awareness of technique is detectable, but tends to appear implicitly.	Awareness of technique is conveyed explicitly in simple, non-technical language.
Awareness of purpose appears briefly and/or implicitly.	There is at least one explicit reference to the purpose of the assignment.

b) *Imaginative Responses*

Grade 6

The candidate displays very little skill in using the chosen literary medium; there are fleeting signs of:

- familiarity with the text(s)
- awareness of technique
- powers of organisation.

Grade 5

The candidate displays limited skill in using the chosen literary medium; nevertheless there is a little evidence of:

- familiarity with the text(s)
- awareness of technique
- powers of organisation.

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

The quality of the text(s) chosen allows the candidate to demonstrate the following skills.

a) *Critical Evaluations*

As appropriate to the purpose of the assignment, the candidate can:

- display an acceptable familiarity with the text(s): this appears in a statement of its main ideas and purposes and through reference to some relevant areas of content; he or she shows some ability to relate detail to the overall context of the work(s) studied
- make a reasonably developed statement about aspects of the text(s) which have affected him or her; this conveys the sense of a genuine personal response and is accompanied by some reference to pertinent features of the text(s)
- identify individual features of technique and explain their effects, using basic critical terminology where appropriate: this involves the brief explication of obvious stylistic devices and is accompanied by some reference to the text(s) and/or quotation
- organise the response so as to take some account of the purpose and nature of the assignment: most of what is selected from the text(s) is relevant and adequate attention is given to what is important; the response is a reasonably extended one, probably between 300 and 800 words.

b) *Imaginative Responses*

The candidate can display, as appropriate, an acceptable familiarity with the text(s) through allusion to some relevant areas of content, some attention to the main ideas and purposes, and occasional evocation of mood and tone; some awareness of technique appears through the use of more obvious stylistic devices. Organisation takes some account of the purpose and nature of the assignment.

Factors Differentiating Grades 4 and 3

a) *Critical Evaluations*

Grade 4	Grade 3
The statement of main ideas and purposes is less complete or less correct than at Grade 3.	The statement of main ideas and purposes is reasonably comprehensive and accurate.
The statement of personal reaction is more superficial and generalised than at Grade 3.	The statement of personal reaction displays a degree of insight.
Use of basic critical terminology falters on occasion.	Use of basic critical terminology is reasonably assured.
A sense of the purpose of the assignment is present but not explicitly acknowledged throughout.	There is clear reference, throughout, to the purpose of the assignment.

b) *Imaginative Responses*

Grade 4	Grade 3
The candidate is less confident in using the chosen literary medium; there is some evidence of:	The candidate displays some skill in using the chosen literary medium; there is clear evidence of:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • familiarity with the text(s) • awareness of technique • powers of organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • familiarity with the text(s) • awareness of technique • powers of organisation.

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)

The quality of the text(s) chosen should allow the candidate to demonstrate the following skills.

a) *Critical Evaluations*

As appropriate to the purpose of the assignment, the candidate can:

- display a thorough familiarity with the text(s): this appears, for example, in the analysis of its main ideas and purposes and through detailed reference to relevant areas of content; he or she shows an ability to relate significant detail to the overall context of the work(s) studied
- give a perceptive and developed account of what he or she has enjoyed in and/or gained from the text(s): this clearly conveys the sense of a genuine personal response and is substantiated by reference to pertinent features of the text(s)

- demonstrate awareness of technique by analysis, using critical terminology where appropriate: this appears in full and perceptive explication of stylistic devices substantiated by detailed reference to the text(s) and, where appropriate, apt quotation
- organise the response in such a way as to reflect, accurately the purpose and nature of the assignment: this appears in an ability to select what is relevant in the text(s) and give due weight and prominence to what is important; the response is a substantial one but not normally exceeding 800 words.

b) *Imaginative Responses*

The candidate can display, as appropriate, a thorough familiarity with the text(s) through detailed allusion to relevant areas of content, sustained attention to the main ideas and purposes and sensitive evocation of mood and tone; awareness of technique appears through skilled deployment of appropriate stylistic devices: organisation accurately reflects the purpose and nature of the assignment.

Factors Differentiating Grades 2 and 1

a) *Critical Evaluations*

Grade 2	Grade 1
Analysis of main ideas and purposes is full but less penetrating than at Grade 1.	Analysis of main ideas and purposes is thorough-going and precise.
The account of personal reaction is discerning but less fully realised than at Grade 1.	The account of personal reaction displays a high level of sensitivity and self-awareness.
Use of critical terminology is generally accurate but occasionally lacks the sureness of touch characteristic of Grade 1.	Use of critical terminology is confident and accurate.
Everything is relevant to the purpose of the assignment but there is some disproportion of constituent parts.	There is overall proportion and coherence in the structure of the response.

b) *Imaginative Responses*

Grade 2	Grade 1
There are occasional lapses in the candidate's control of the chosen medium; nevertheless the writing demonstrates a high level of:	The candidate is confident and accomplished in the use of the chosen literary medium; the writing consistently demonstrates:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • familiarity with the text(s) • awareness of technique • powers of organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • familiarity with the text(s) • awareness of technique • powers of organisation.

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)

Nature of Texts

The candidate can read texts that are, for the most part, brief and readily accessible, related to personal interest and experiences, dealing with concrete human relationships or containing clearly presented ideas.

As the nature of the text permits, the candidate can:

- state the main concerns of the text
- state accurately individual items of information from areas of the text which have been clearly defined
- draw an acceptable simple reference from a key statement in the text
- comment simply and intelligibly on an aspect of the author’s point of view that has been clearly defined and relate it to personal experience and/or knowledge
- identify a single feature (or features) of the author’s technique which contributes to some clearly defined effect.

Factors Differentiating Grades 6 and 5

Grade 6

While displaying as appropriate the characteristic essential for Foundation Level, the candidate is less consistent, less clear and more ambiguous in communicating responses than at Grade 5. Overall, the performance is more uneven than at Grade 5.

Grade 5

The candidate demonstrates understanding and some appreciation in responding to particular questions on the various aspects of purpose. The responses are more consistent, more comprehensible and more specific than at Grade 6.

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

Nature of Texts

The candidate can read texts that are accessible as a whole, mainly related to personal interest and experience, dealing with concrete human relationships or containing clearly presented ideas.

As the nature of the text permits, the candidate can:

- make a clear statement of the main concerns of the text
- state accurately in his or her own words (where appropriate) individual items retrieved from the text
- draw a precise inference from a key statement in the text
- comment relevantly on a clearly defined aspect of the author’s point of view, and justify the comment from personal experience and knowledge and from evidence in the text
- identify individual features of the author’s technique and explain their effects.

Factors Differentiating Grades 4 and 3**Grade 4**

While displaying as appropriate the characteristics essential for General Level the candidate's responses are less consistent, less apt in illustration and explanation and less successful in retrieving, paraphrasing, explaining and justifying than at Grade 3. Overall the performance is more uneven than at Grade 3.

Grade 3

The candidate demonstrates a clear understanding and a sound appreciation in responding to particular questions on the various aspects of purpose. The responses are more consistent, more relevant and more successful in retrieving, paraphrasing, explaining and justifying than at Grade 4.

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)*Nature of Texts*

The candidate can read texts that go beyond what is immediately accessible or related to personal interest and experience. Some texts feature unfamiliar, abstract ideas and complexity of structure and tone.

As the nature of the text permits, the candidate can:

- make a clear concise statement of the main concerns of the text, and show awareness of their inter-relationships
- state accurately in his or her own words (where appropriate) and collate as required, items of information retrieved from the text
- draw a precise inference from a key statement or statements, and substantiate this from evidence in the text
- comment relevantly on some aspects of the author's point of view and show some skill in justifying the comment from personal experience and knowledge, and from evidence in the text
- demonstrate some awareness of the author's technique by analysis, using critical terminology where appropriate.

Factors Differentiating Grades 2 and 1**Grade 2**

While displaying as appropriate the characteristic essential for Credit Level, the candidate's responses are less consistent, less clear in perception and less full in explanation than at Grade 1. Overall the performance is more uneven than at Grade 1.

Grade 1

The candidate demonstrates a sureness and sensitivity of understanding and appreciation in responding to particular questions on the various aspects of purpose. The responses are more consistent, more perceptive and more substantial (as required) than at Grade 2.

7 10 Writing – Extended GRC

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)

The work shows a few signs of appropriateness and commitment to the purposes of the writing task.

As the task requires, the candidate can:

- convey simple information
- present ideas and opinions in concrete personal terms
- convey the gist of a personal experience
- make a bald statement of personal feelings or reactions
- display a rudimentary awareness of the more obvious conventions of a chosen literary form, and occasionally attempt to use language to achieve particular effects.

A combination of these qualities may be called for by any one writing task.

Intelligibility and Correctness

Writing which the candidate submits as finished work communicates meaning largely at first reading: however, some further reading is necessary because of obtrusive formal errors and/or structural weaknesses, including inaccurate sentence construction and poor vocabulary.

Length

100 words is to be taken as a rough guide to the minimum length expected for each finished piece of work, but the overriding consideration should be that the length is appropriate to the purposes of the writing task.

Factors Differentiating Grades 6 and 5

Grade 6

Writing contains many formal errors and structural weaknesses but they do not overall have the effect of baffling the reader. The conveying of simple information is marked by obscurities and extraneous detail, and the presentation of ideas, opinions and personal experience is somewhat rambling and disjointed.

Grade 5

Writing rises a little above basic intelligibility and rudimentary attention to purpose. Formal errors and weaknesses are obtrusive but not as numerous as at Grade 6. Attention to the purposes of the writing task is weak, but the quality of the writer's ideas is perceptibly stronger than at Grade 6.

7 10 (continued)

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

The work shows a general awareness of the purposes of the writing task. It has a number of appropriate ideas and evidence of structure. Vocabulary is on the whole accurate, but lacks variety.

As the task requires, the candidate can:

- convey information in some kind of sequence
- order and present ideas and opinions with an attempt at reasoning
- give a reasonably clear account of a personal experience with some sense of involvement
- express personal feelings and reactions with some attempt to go beyond bald statement
- use some of the more obvious conventions of a chosen literary form, and occasionally use language to achieve particular effects.

A combination of these qualities may be called for by any one writing task.

Intelligibility and correctness

Writing which the candidate submits as finished work communicates meaning at first reading. There are some lapses in punctuation, spelling and sentence construction.

Length

Length is appropriate to the purposes of the writing task.

Factors Differentiating Grades 4 and 3

Grade 4

Writing approaches the qualities of adequacy required for Grade 3 but is clearly seen to be impaired in one of the following ways:

- there are significant inaccuracies in sentence construction
- or the work is thin in appropriate ideas
- or the work is weak in structure.

Grade 3

Writing is characterised by overall adequacy of communication. It conveys its meaning clearly and sentence construction and paragraphing are on the whole accurate. There is a reasonably sustained attention to purpose, and structure shows some coherence. Where appropriate there is a measure of generalisation and objectivity in reasoning.

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)

The work displays some distinction in ideas, construction and language. This is shown by a detailed attention to the purposes of the writing task; by qualities such as knowledge, insight, imagination; and by development that is sustained. Vocabulary, paragraphing and sentence construction are accurate and varied.

As the task requires, the candidate can:

- convey information, selecting and highlighting what is most significant
- marshal ideas and evidence in support of an argument; these ideas have depth and some complexity; he or she is capable of objectivity, generalisation and evaluation
- give a succinct account of a personal experience: the writing has insight and self-awareness
- express personal feelings and reactions sensitively
- display some skill in using the conventions of a chosen literary form, and in manipulating language to achieve particular effects.

A combination of these qualities may be called for by any one writing task.

Intelligibility and Correctness

Writing which the candidate submits as finished work communicates meaning clearly at a first reading. Sentence construction is accurate and formal errors will not be significant.

Length

When it is appropriate to do so, the candidate can sustain the quality of writing at some length. Pieces of extended writing submitted in the folio of coursework should not normally exceed 800 words in length. The overriding consideration is, however, that the length should be appropriate to the purposes of the writing task.

Factors Differentiating Grades 2 and 1

Grade 2

Evidence of one or more of the qualities of distinction in ideas, construction or language is present, but these qualities are less well sustained and/or combined than at Grade 1.

In the main writing is substantial, accurate and relevant, but it lacks the insight, economy and style which characterise achievement at Grade 1.

Grade 1

The finished communication is not only clear, it is also stylish.

Attention to purpose is not only detailed, it is also sensitive.

Writing shows overall distinction in ideas, construction and language.

Vocabulary is apt and extensive, and paragraphing and sentence construction are skilful. In these respects performance transcends the level of accuracy and variety acceptable at Grade 2.

7 11 Talking – Extended GRC

7 11 1 Discussion

Introduction

These GRC are to be used for assessing all forms of talking in which the participants take turns contributing; these include, for example, reciprocal talk between individuals, interaction in groups, and contributions within a whole class.

When a candidate's performance in any kind of discussion is being assessed, the essential judgement to be made is holistic, ie **how effectively the candidate contributes to the main purposes of the discussion**. Evidence to support this assessment will be found in the quality of four aspects of the candidate's contribution:

- substance and relevance of contribution
- account taken of other contributions
- awareness of situation
- control of expression.

These aspects of performance cannot be weighted and aggregated according to a fixed formula; in different situations they will combine in different ways. They should be borne in mind, however, when assessing the quality of the candidate's performance as a whole.

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)

In discussion the candidate's performance is characterised by the following.

Substance and Relevance of Contribution

The candidate can contribute a few ideas/responses/opinions/experiences, and these are only tenuously relevant.

Account Taken of Other Contributions

The candidate shows a few signs of taking account of what others have to say, in one of the following ways: by repeating/using/supporting/challenging their contributions.

Awareness of Situation

The candidate shows a few signs of attempting to behave in a way appropriate to the situation by one of the following:

- acknowledging the status of any designated participant (eg chair, leader, interviewer, etc)
- allowing/encouraging others to have their say
- speaking readily but not excessively
- using language suited to the listener(s).

7 11 1 (continued)

Control of Expression

The candidate in part is audible and clear.

Factors Differentiating Grades 6 and 5

Grade 6

The candidate makes at least one audible, intelligible attempt to contribute relevantly to the course of the discussion, and shows some signs of willingness to co-operate in the situation or discussion.

Grade 5

The candidate's performance shows a few signs of attention to purpose.

It also combines some of the following features:

- a few contributions, though weakened by irrelevance
- some limited account taken of others
- some limited awareness of situation
- reasonably audible and clear expression.

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

In discussion the candidate's performance is characterised by the following.

Substance and Relevance of Contribution

The candidate can contribute some relevant ideas/responses/opinions/experiences, **and**

either occasionally support these with evidence/reasons

or occasionally question and answer relevantly.

Account Taken of Other Contributions

The candidate on the whole takes some account of what others have to say, in one of the following ways:

- by summarising/using/expanding/supporting/challenging their contributions.

Awareness of Situation

The candidate behaves in a way appropriate to the situation by two of the following:

- acknowledging the status of any designated participant (eg chair, leader, interviewer, etc)
- allowing/encouraging others to have their say
- speaking readily but not excessively
- using language suited to the listener(s).

7 11 1 (continued)

Control of Expression

The candidate is largely audible and clear, and shows some signs of varying intonation to point up meaning or adjusting pace to suit the circumstances.

Factors Differentiating Grades 4 and 3

Grade 4

The candidate's attention to purpose, though impaired in some significant ways, just achieves the adequacy required for General Level.

It also combines some of the following features:

- substance and relevance of contribution
- account taken of other contributions
- awareness of situation
- control of expression.

One or more of these is impaired in some way but the combination just achieves overall adequacy.

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)

In discussion the candidate's performance is characterised by the following.

Substance and Relevance of Contribution

The candidate's contribution is substantial in quality and is relevant to the purpose of the discussion. The candidate can:

- provide a good number of relevant ideas/responses/opinions/experiences
- support ideas with evidence
- question and answer relevantly.

Account Taken of Other Contributions

The candidate takes account of what others have to say, in several of the following ways:

- by analysing/summarising/using/expanding/supporting/challenging/refuting their contributions.

Grade 3

The candidate's attention to purpose is adequate.

It also combines some of the following features:

- adequate substance and relevance of contribution
- adequate account taken of other contributions
- adequate awareness of situation
- adequate control of expression.

7 11 1 (continued)

Awareness of Situation

The candidate behaves in a way appropriate to the situation by the following:

- acknowledging the status of any designated participant (eg chair, leader, interviewer, etc);
- allowing/encouraging others to have their say
- speaking readily, but not excessively
- using language suited to the listener(s).

Control of Expression

The candidate is consistently audible and clear, and shows some skill in varying intonation to point up meaning and in adjusting pace to suit the circumstances.

Factors Differentiating Grades 2 and 1

Grade 2

The candidate's attention to purpose is sound, but lacks some shrewdness, tenacity and subtlety.

In other respects the performance is generally good, but it is less fertile/less confident/less sensitive/less consistent than at Grade 1.

Grade 1

The candidate's performance is distinguished by a consistent, alert attention to purpose.

It also combines some of the following features:

- high quality in contributions and taking account of what others say
- confidence of expression
- tactful awareness of the situation.

Overall the performance is characterised by consistency of quality.

7 11 2 Individual Talk

Introduction

These GRC are to be used for assessing all forms of talking in which the speaker communicates with minimum response on the part of the listener(s); the audience can range from a single listener to a group or class.

When a candidate's performance in Individual Talk is being assessed, the essential judgement to be made is holistic. Evidence to support this assessment will be found in the quality of six aspects of performance:

- content
- aspects of purpose
- language
- expression
- awareness of audience
- duration.

7 11 2 (continued)

These aspects of performance cannot be weighted and aggregated according to a fixed formula: in different situations they will combine in different ways. They should, however, be borne in mind when assessing the quality of the candidate's performance.

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)

Content

The candidate can:

- express obvious and simple ideas
- display a little skill in linking ideas.

Purpose

The candidate can:

- present simple facts, ideas or opinions with little attempt at sequencing
- give a simple account of a personal experience with a limited sense of involvement
- in story telling, set the scene and outline the narrative.

Language

The candidate:

- uses a limited range of vocabulary and spoken language structures
- is restricted in register.

Expression

The candidate is, in part, audible and clear.

Awareness of Audience

The candidate:

- shows limited awareness of the requirements and reactions of the audience
- requires substantial support through prompting and/or questioning.

Duration

The candidate shows a limited ability to sustain his talk, as appropriate to the purpose.

Factors Differentiating Grades 6 and 5

Grade 6

The candidate communicates a few intelligible ideas at least one of which is to the point

Grade 5

The candidate's performance shows a few signs of attention to purpose.

It also combines some of the following features:

- several items of content though weakened by irrelevance and/or obscurity
- intelligible language, weakened by inaccuracy
- some limited awareness of audience
- expression reasonably audible and clear.

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

Content

The candidate can:

- express appropriate ideas
- link ideas with some skill.

Purpose

The candidate can, as appropriate:

- convey information in an orderly sequence
- order and present ideas and opinions with some attempt at reasoning
- give a reasonably coherent account of a personal experience, expressing feelings and reactions with some sense of involvement
- in story telling, set the scene, sustain the narrative to its climax and convey some sense of character.

Language

The candidate:

- uses vocabulary and spoken language structures which are largely accurate
- shows some awareness of appropriate register.

7 11 2 (continued)

Expression

The candidate:

- is largely audible and clear
- displays some fluency
- shows some signs of ability to vary intonation to point up meaning, or to adjust pace to suit the purpose.

Awareness of Audience

The candidate:

- shows awareness of the requirements and reactions of the audience
- occasionally makes appropriate use of eye contact, facial expression and gesture
- requires some support through prompting and/or questioning.

Duration

The candidate can sustain his talk at some length, as appropriate to the purpose.

Factors Differentiating Grades 4 and 3

Grade 4

The candidate's attention to purpose, though impaired in some significant way, just achieves the adequacy required for General Level.

Despite weaknesses, the combination of qualities of content, language, expression, awareness of audience just achieve overall adequacy.

Grade 3

The candidate's attention to purpose is intermittent but adequate.

It also combines some of the following features:

- adequate content
- adequate accuracy of language
- adequate expression
- adequate awareness of audience.

7 11 2 (continued)

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)

Content

The candidate can:

- express ideas of quality, relevance and interest
- link ideas clearly to each other and to the main purpose of the task.

Purpose

The candidate can, as appropriate:

- convey information, highlighting what is most significant
- marshal ideas and evidence in support of an argument
- give a succinct and coherent account of a personal experience, with sensitive expression of feelings and reactions
- in story telling, achieve effect through creative use of structure, tone, timing, vocabulary and characterisation.

Language

The candidate:

- uses varied and accurate vocabulary
- uses an appropriately wide range of spoken language structure
- uses a register appropriate to topic and audience.

Expression

The candidate:

- is consistently audible and clear
- is consistently fluent
- adjusts pace to suit the purpose
- varies intonation to point up meaning.

Awareness of Audience

The candidate:

- takes due account of the requirements and reactions of the audience
- makes appropriate use of eye-contact, facial expression and gesture
- requires little or no prompting.

Duration

The candidate can sustain his talk at considerable length as appropriate to the purpose.

Factors Differentiating Grades 2 and 1

Grade 2

The candidate's attention to purpose is sound, but lacks some sophistication, insight, fullness.

In other respects the performance is generally good, but it is less rich/less confident/less sensitive/less consistent than at Grade 1.

Grade 1

The candidate's performance is distinguished by a consistent and alert attention to purpose.

It also combines some of the following features:

- high quality in content and language
- confidence of expression
- sensitive awareness of situation and audience.

Overall, the performance is characterised by consistency of quality.

Appendices

Advice on Assessment for Teaching Purposes

This Appendix deals mainly with English Departments' own ongoing assessment of pupils' work, and any summative assessment that may be derived from it for schools' own reporting. The basis of this assessment, ie the Grade Related Criteria, is set out in Section 7 along with some advice on their application.

a) **Introduction**

The management of assessment requires an organised approach which should be developed in conjunction with course planning. It should be kept as simple as possible and should advance desirable learning activities. There should be no unnecessary form filling or pointless testing.

Advice has been offered on course planning in Section 5. The suggestions that are now made on the planning and management of assessment depends on, and should be taken in conjunction with, these earlier recommendations.

The individual teacher should be supported by a departmental policy on assessment. Time will need to be found for its development and review. In arriving at this policy, a department should consider the following:

Each pupil should maintain a folder of coursework.

Teachers should maintain a record of each pupils' progress in English. This can take any one of a number of forms. The record will be based on observation of pupils' coursework; it will note some signs of progress and difficulties encountered, and levels of achievement as required for report purposes.

In addition to their role in assessment, the Grade Related Criteria should be seen as a useful checklist of points for teaching and learning.

There should be opportunities for pupils to correct their own work (with teacher and peer assistance) and to undertake self-assessment in preparation for selecting their own best work. Pupils should be aware of the criteria by which their work is being assessed.

The response that the teacher will make to his pupils' work is likely to be some form of rapid impression marking. Such assessment benefits from departmental consideration of samples of pupils' work. By this means, agreement on standards within the department can be reached.

There should be an agreed correction policy which emphasises positive response and treats mistakes as opportunities to promote learning. In addition, it should be recognised that an occasional short discussion with a pupil might prove more profitable than copious notes written at the conclusion of an assignment.

Teachers might choose to concentrate on the assessment of a selected group of pupils at any particular time.

Departments could compile an “index of resources for learning difficulties”. All members might make a contribution to the gathering of this information but, ideally, the task might be co-ordinated by a specialist in remedial education, assisted by a school librarian, if available.

Where the opportunity for co-operative teaching exists, it should be used flexibly in order to allow organisation for teaching and assessment. For example, one teacher might take the majority of the class members for a particular activity while another teacher concentrated on assessment with a smaller group of pupils.

b) Writing, Reading and Talking

The specific advice on the assessment of each element which follows should be considered in conjunction with the general advice offered above as well as with the guidance provided in Section 3 since teaching and learning approaches are often inseparable from classroom assessment intentions.

i Writing

While teachers should respond in some way to everything that pupils write, the response will vary in such ways as:

- a “light” recognition of work satisfactorily completed
- concentration on one particular feature
- assistance with re-drafting, pointing up deep or surface features as appropriate.

The over-riding needs are that the teacher should:

- take account of context, purpose and audience
- start by being sensitive to what ideas pupils are trying to express and help them to express them
- praise them for what they have achieved
- regard their “mistakes” as stages in their progress
- look for “gaps” in their expression and encourage them to clarify the meaning
- develop in pupils the habit of proof-reading their work and rectifying any errors identified.

Pupils should be encouraged to correct their own writing, sometimes in consultation with their peers.

Consistency of standards throughout a department can best be achieved by agreement on the criteria and by multiple assessment of selected pieces.

ii Reading

Pupils might keep a note of what they have read in school and elsewhere. Teachers might occasionally interview them, using this record to explore what they have gained from the reading, and make suggestions about possible further reading and responses to it.

Evidence might be sought to ascertain how far pupils can actually use their experience of reading – by writing, by talking, by graphic explanation, by taking action etc.

Some of this evidence will be in the form of extended responses in writing. For such responses, the advice offered on the assessment of Writing above is also applicable. In addition, however, care should be taken to distinguish clearly the difference between an imaginative response to Reading and a response which is clearly critical and analytical. In arriving at decisions as to whether a piece of work better meets the criteria for Reading or for Writing, close reference to the Grade Related Criteria for each of these elements is essential. Pupils also should understand, as far as possible, such distinctions.

This is in no way to discourage the production of imaginative responses to Reading in coursework. However, it is important to recognise the position with regard to fulfilling the folio requirements (see 6 5).

Close Reading assignments can provide a useful part of a repertoire of assessment particularly if they arise out of works studies in class. They are most likely to be conducive to learning if:

- the text is reasonably accessible and of a sufficient length to create a context for the reader
- the text has some unity and shape, and has potential for stimulating interest, curiosity, desire to read on
- the assessment questions are formulated to promote ways of reading that suit the text.

A few key questions related to the purposes of the writing are often the most effective approach. However “true/false” and other such objective questions can be used when the text is suitable and when teachers wish to remove the complicating factor of written expression.

Listening to pupils reading aloud, and the use of informal reading inventories are valuable observation techniques.

Cloze, sequencing and prediction are primarily teaching approaches and may be useful in classroom assessment.

Multi-level reading laboratories may have a part to play in assessment for teaching purposes when used in a concentrated fashion.

iii *Talking*

Assessments should arise out of the natural work of the course rather than from a series of “tests” of talking. The final gradings for Discussion and Individual Talk should reflect holistically the range and balance of assessable occasions over the two years of the course.

The design of a Talking assignment should be such that the pupils are clear about what they are to do: in other words, the assignment should furnish the answer to the context question: who speaks to whom, why, about what, how and when (and possibly, for how long)?

In developing skills in Discussion and Individual Talk teachers should acquaint their pupils with the relevant criteria which in themselves provide useful guidance and learning; for example, in highlighting areas of group discussion, the importance of listening attentively will be clearly indicated.

Many activities will permit assessment of either Discussion or Individual Talk or both. The assessment will be concerned not so much with the context as with the main thrust of the talking taking place. For example, in a group discussion it may be that a pupil will start with a reasonably lengthy statement of the main concerns, at which point he may be assessed for Individual Talk. Later he may find himself displaying the characteristics of a good group participant, giving and receiving points in a responsive and tactful manner. At that point, the teacher may wish to record comments about that ability also.

The occasional taping of examples of pupils' talk will allow the teacher to check and reconsider his judgements, engage in departmental discussion of standards and encourage pupils to review and improve upon their performance.

Appendix II

Assessment Record: Talking

Pupil's Name:

Purposes: 1 to convey information; 2 to deploy ideas; 3 to describe personal experience; 4 to create particular effects.

Assessment: Tick for strengths, cross for weaknesses, comment where possible.

Individual Talk	Date: Purpose: Subject:	Date: Purpose: Subject:	Date: Purpose: Subject:	Date: Purpose: Subject:	Date: Purpose: Subject:
	Notes	Notes	Notes	Notes	Notes
Content					
Purpose					
Language					
Expression					
Awareness of audience					
Duration					

Discussion	Date: Subject:	Date: Subject:	Date: Subject:	Date: Subject:	Date: Subject:
	Notes	Notes	Notes	Notes	Notes
Substance and relevance of contribution					
Contribution of ideas					
Account taken of other contributions					
Awareness of situation					
Control of expression					