**CCEA Entry Level in English
(March Series) 2019**

Principal Moderator's Report

english

Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the March 2019 series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's section on our website at www.ccea.org.uk.

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ENTRY LEVEL ENGLISH

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Overview

In this third year of submissions for the Revised Specification, it was evident to moderators that centres have confidence in delivering the specification and have enhanced their expertise in augmenting the materials provided by CCEA on the website by designing and utilizing a range of their own teaching materials and assessment task sheets to enable candidates to fulfil the Learning Outcomes and demonstrate their ability to meet the Assessment Criteria. As with previous years, centres are to be commended on the range of learning experiences provided for candidates which resulted in many responses of a high quality and, also for their diligence with administrative work in collecting and collating materials. Moderators were impressed with the presentation of the portfolios and the imaginative and engaging ways that centres had approached the teaching and assessment of all units.

For a full award, candidates must complete all six units and most centres submitted work accordingly. However, it is not necessary to wait until the end of Year 12 to submit portfolios for all units. Centres have the option of submitting some units in Year 11 and completing the full award in Year 12.

The Learning Outcomes for each unit set out what learners are expected to know, understand or be able to do at the end of their 120 hours of guided learning. The Assessment Criteria specify the standard that learners must meet to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes at that level within the unit.

For each candidate, a Unit Record Sheet, signed by both the teacher and the candidate, and a Portfolio Progress Tracking Record should be included with the submission. The Tracking Record is a crucial document for the moderation process as it identifies for the moderator where each Assessment Criterion has been met and where the specific evidence can be found within the portfolio. It therefore follows that the work submitted should have numbered pages to make the Tracking Record more specific. Annotation on the body of the work should identify the Assessment Criterion being addressed. It is only necessary to submit one piece of evidence for each Assessment Criterion. A specific date should be given for when each Assessment Criterion was achieved – not just the same month and year for everything submitted in a unit.

The Progress Tracking Record also provides the opportunity for teachers to submit additional comments and information regarding, for example, the level of support which a candidate has received or if work was completed independently. This is especially important where significant support has been given and the work seems to suggest to the moderator that a candidate has provided evidence of being able to meet a particular Assessment Criterion when, in fact, they are not able to do so without significant support and the teacher had reflected this in the level achieved and assessed accordingly. Unless supporting comment is provided, the Moderator can only assess what is on the page in the work submitted.

Assessment Unit 1   English through the Media: Still Image

There still seems to be some uncertainty in a few centres about the focus of this unit. A 'Print Media Product' is more than an individual photograph and, while the use of photographs and images/illustrations will feature in any print media product, there are many other elements which must be addressed, as is clear from the Assessment Objectives and Learning Outcomes. This unit is designed to engage students with the techniques and features in still image media, not just still images. While some centres focused very closely on pictures, photographs and images, to fulfil and provide evidence for the Assessment Criteria, even at Level 1, it is necessary to move beyond this and look at media products.

The CCEA-produced materials have been up-dated and focus more specifically on advertisements but it is good to see that many centres have gained the confidence in teaching this unit to produce their own contemporary, real-life advertisement task sheets. Where this occurred, it was obvious that candidates were familiar with the products in the advertisements and were able to respond more confidently and fulfil the Assessment Criteria regarding audience and features clearly.

The responses to Learning Outcomes 3 and 4, where candidates had to plan and produce a print media product of their own, demonstrated clearly how they were able to employ the techniques about which they had been learning. Candidates' engagement and enjoyment were evident and the moderators enjoyed seeing the finished products, many of which used real-life events such as posters for schools fairs and concerts but others which were more traditional advertisements for products such as chocolate bars.

It is anticipated that at Levels 2 and 3 the planning for Learning Outcome 3 will relate specifically to the print media product created to fulfil Learning Outcome 4.

Assessment Unit 2   English through Poetry

Learning Outcome 1 requires engagement with a range of poetry. No number of poems is specified and the simplest way to provide evidence for this is a short list of the poems with which the candidates have engaged. It is not necessary to study all poems equally but rather that candidates have the opportunity to see/read/hear a range of poetry and respond to some of it at greater depth. Some centres also used song lyrics and their candidates engaged well with this.

To provide evidence for Learning Outcomes 1 and 2, good use was made by centres of highlighting and underlining words, phrases and features in one or more of the poems studied. This is a simple way for the candidates to demonstrate their understanding. At Level 1 the moderators were happy to have a Witness Statement from the teacher and/or photographic evidence to show candidates identifying features of poetry.

Learning Outcome 3 requires candidates to provide a creative response. At Level 1 this may be in the form of a drawing or storyboard but for Levels 2 and 3 a written response is specified. This should be more than a response to a comprehension question(s). Answering questions about a poem they have read does not enable the candidates to explore their own creativity. Most centres submit a poem(s) written by the candidates, haiku and acrostic poems being particularly popular and it is obvious to the moderators that the candidates really enjoy this task. Other types of creative writing responses are equally valid e.g. letter to a character in a poem such as a soldier in 'Dulce et Decorum est' or as a character who features in a poem. 'Timothy Winters' is a particular favourite. Other candidates write a story of what happened before/after events in a poem. The only prerequisite is that the response is creative.

Assessment Unit 3   English through Drama

As with the first two units, it was obvious to the moderators that teachers are gaining confidence in delivering this specification. Whereas previously some centres, especially those with non-English specialist teachers, saw it as a more demanding unit, there is now much good work to enable candidates to access even quite challenging texts such as Shakespeare plays. There is some evidence that centres submit work which fulfils Level 2 when, with very little further evidence, candidates could achieve Level 3.

Throughout all the centres, there was clear evidence that the candidates had engaged well with the texts selected, 'Blood Brothers' and 'Our Day Out' being the most popular. A new addition this year was the use of the schools' own productions to deliver evidence of role play. All elicited good responses and showed that the candidates had enjoyed the tasks set. The designing of an appropriate costume continues to show the candidates' engagement with drama.

Appropriate use was made of media representations alongside hard copies of plays to enable candidates to demonstrate Learning Outcome 3, the features of the play. Teachers had put great effort into gathering material for their candidates with TV and film clips along with still images from the play being particularly useful for the candidates to demonstrate Learning Outcome 4 about movements and facial expressions.

A range of assessment styles was employed especially photographic evidence of candidates preparing and taking part in role plays where they could explore how a character feels in a scene and demonstrate their understanding of the use of movement, gestures and facial expressions. The moderators enjoyed seeing these.

Assessment Unit 4   English through the Media: Moving Image Genres

Candidates are very familiar with the Moving Image Media in their daily life and it was good to see an increasing ability to use some media-specific terminology. Candidates were able to identify a number of television and film genres and provide a range of examples of them. Sometimes their ability to provide evidence for a higher level was only limited by the demands of the task set for them. For example, Level 1 requires candidates to identify two features of a genre. Here the teacher can provide the genre and a range of features from which candidates can select appropriately. Level 2 requires candidates to recognise some features of two different genres. Again, the teacher can provide the genres and a range of features. Level 3, however, requires candidates to suggest three typical features of a specified genre not just select from a list.

Learning Outcome 3 provides the opportunity for candidates to display their knowledge and understanding and apply it to create ideas for their own TV programme or film. The moderators enjoyed the range of programmes suggested with appropriate detail and especially some interesting and imaginative titles such as 'Animation in High School' and 'Belleek Buddies'.

Assessment Unit 5 — English through Prose

'Of Mice and Men' and 'The Boy in the striped pyjamas' were the most popular texts studied in this unit. All centres provided a range of suitable tasks for their candidates. Evidence for Learning Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 was mostly provided through comprehension, sequencing exercises and cloze procedure tasks and this was totally appropriate and provided suitable scaffolding to assist candidates to show what they know and understand.

Learning Outcome 4 demands that candidates structure a narrative either with prompts (Level 2) or by themselves (Level 3). The moderators had anticipated more obviously narrative/story responses than some centres submitted as their final evidence. For 'narrative' the moderators were looking for a simple story – either real or imaginary – as the type of response.

Please note that for Level 3 the requirement is 'plan and make changes to improve' so moderators were looking for a plan and either a first and second draft of the narrative or at least a second plan which the narrative then reflected. This process is made easier when candidates had used word processing, which many centres did.

Assessment Unit 6 — English through Experience

There are only two Learning Outcomes in this unit.

Learning Outcome 1 asks candidates to communicate personal information. Most candidates provided a biography or piece of autobiographical writing such as an account of work experience, a CV or a personal statement.

The second Learning Outcome requires candidates to communicate information on a topic of interest to them. A key element of this is to 'gather some facts' (Level 2) or 'gather appropriate information…from at least two sources' (Level 3). The research element is an important feature of this Learning Outcome and should allow candidates to follow their own interests and hobbies. It is not anticipated that candidates will again be writing about themselves except when it is specifically focusing on a topic which they have researched but which also involves them such as a country they have visited or their hobby or pastime.

To fulfil the requirements for the award of Level 3, there must be a draft and redraft included in the portfolio (2.4) and even for Level 2 there should be some evidence that changes have been made to the work (2.4). Again, using word processing makes this easier for candidates.

The moderating team once again enjoyed reading the portfolios of the candidates. There is a wide range of work going on in centres and it is obvious that teachers are providing interesting and engaging learning experiences for their candidates. Much of the centre-produced materials reflects an imaginative and thorough approach to ensuring that candidates can access the materials and be enthused to respond.

The moderating team would like to thank all the teachers for the care and effort they put into their submissions and to congratulate the candidates for all their hard work.

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