

## External assessment

Assessment criteria are used to assess students for all assessment tasks. The assessment criteria are published in this guide.

There are four criteria for each of the assessment components. An attempt has been made to make these criteria mirror the assessment objectives closely. The criteria and descriptors are the same for standard level (SL) and higher level (HL) in the shared components.

The external components contribute 70% to the final assessment at SL and 80% at HL.

### External assessment details—SL

#### Paper 1: Guided literary analysis

**Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes**

**Weighting: 35%**

Paper 1 contains two previously unseen literary passages. Students write a guided analysis of one of these passages. A guided analysis in this context refers to an exploration of the passage supported by a guiding question, which asks students to consider a technical or formal aspect of the passage. The passages could be taken from any of the four literary forms on the *Prescribed reading list*. Each of the passages will be from a different literary form.

The passages for analysis may be either complete pieces of writing or extracts from a longer piece, and wherever possible they will not have been written by authors listed on the *Prescribed reading list* nor be taken from works likely to have been studied in class.

One guiding question will be provided for each passage on a central technical or formal element that may provide an interesting point of entry into the text. Although it is not compulsory to answer this question, students should be aware that it is expected that the analysis will be focused on a particular aspect of the text. Students may propose an alternative point of entry about any other technical or formal element of the text they feel important in order to provide such a focus.

The paper is assessed according to the assessment criteria published in this guide. The maximum mark for paper 1 is 20.

#### The learner portfolio and paper 1

The learner portfolio is **not** specifically assessed but it is an important tool in helping students prepare for formal assessment. It provides a place for students to practise and develop the skills necessary for performing successfully in paper 1.

In relation to the preparation of paper 1, the learner portfolio provides an opportunity for students to:

- record responses to a passage or text read for the first time
- formulate guiding questions for different passages and use them as a lens through which to view those passages
- assess which of the skills involved in paper 1 they feel less confident in and use the portfolio to track their progress in the development of those skills
- keep a record of the literary forms covered in their practice of paper 1 skills, make sure that they have covered all possible literary forms that might appear in paper 1, and assess how much of a challenge each one presents to them
- compare their successive practices of paper 1 to the first one they have done and monitor the evolution of their overall performance in the paper.

## Paper 2: Comparative essay

**Duration: 1 hour 45 minutes**

**Weighting: 35%**

Paper 2 contains four questions of a general nature, which require students to write a comparative essay referring to two works studied during the course. Students are required to answer **one** question only.

The format of paper 2 and the four questions are the same for both SL and HL students, and for both the language A: literature and language A: language and literature courses. The assessment criteria will also be shared by both levels and both courses.

The essay is written under examination conditions, without access to the studied works. Students will be expected to compare and contrast two of the works studied in relation to the question chosen. Attention should be paid to the relevance of the argument to the question chosen and to the appropriateness of the works selected by the student to address the question. Students are expected to make detailed reference to the works in their answer, but they are not expected to include quotations from them.

Given the open and flexible nature of the course, potentially any work studied can be used by students for paper 2. It is highly recommended, however, that students should preselect three of the works studied in preparation for this paper, either individually or in conjunction and in consultation with the teacher. This will make it more manageable for students, at the moment of the exam, to select the essay question and the two works to answer it with.

Under no circumstances can students use for paper 2 a work that has been already used for another assessment component, be it the internal assessment for both SL and HL, or the HL essay for HL.

The paper is assessed according to the assessment criteria published in this guide. The maximum mark for paper 2 is 30.

### The learner portfolio and paper 2

The learner portfolio is **not** specifically assessed but it is an important tool in helping students prepare for formal assessment. It provides a place for students to practise and develop the skills necessary for performing successfully in paper 2.

In relation to the preparation of paper 2, the learner portfolio provides an opportunity for students to:

- group the works studied according to a common theme or issue and explore their similarities and differences
- develop an awareness of the differences between literary forms and of how these differences may have a bearing on how different works approach one theme or issue
- consider which combinations of works might be the most productive ones to address the variety of questions they might encounter in the actual paper
- inquire into the connections between the works studied, the areas of exploration and the central concepts of the course to gain an awareness of the multiplicity of lenses that can be used when studying a work and the essay questions that these might potentially lead to
- compare their successive practices of paper 2 to the first one they have done and monitor the evolution of their overall performance in the paper.

## External assessment criteria—SL

### Paper 1: Guided literary analysis

**There are four assessment criteria at SL.**

Criterion A	Understanding and interpretation	5 marks
Criterion B	Analysis and evaluation	5 marks
Criterion C	Focus and organization	5 marks

Criterion D	Language	5 marks
<b>Total</b>		<b>20 marks</b>

### Criterion A: Understanding and interpretation

- How well does the candidate demonstrate an understanding of the text and draw reasoned conclusions from implications in it?
- How well are ideas supported by references to the text?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The response demonstrates little understanding of the literal meaning of the text. References to the text are infrequent or are rarely appropriate.
2	The response demonstrates some understanding of the literal meaning of the text. References to the text are at times appropriate.
3	The response demonstrates an understanding of the literal meaning of the text. There is a satisfactory interpretation of some implications of the text. References to the text are generally relevant and mostly support the candidate's ideas.
4	The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the literal meaning of the text. There is a convincing interpretation of many implications of the text. References to the text are relevant and support the candidate's ideas.
5	The response demonstrates a thorough and perceptive understanding of the literal meaning of the text. There is a convincing and insightful interpretation of larger implications and subtleties of the text. References to the text are well chosen and effectively support the candidate's ideas.

### Criterion B: Analysis and evaluation

- To what extent does the candidate analyse and evaluate how textual features and/or authorial choices shape meaning?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The response is descriptive and/or demonstrates little relevant analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices.
2	The response demonstrates some appropriate analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices, but is reliant on description.
3	The response demonstrates a generally appropriate analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices.
4	The response demonstrates an appropriate and at times insightful analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices. There is a good evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning.
5	The response demonstrates an insightful and convincing analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices. There is a very good evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning.

**Criterion C: Focus and organization**

- How well organized, coherent and focused is the presentation of ideas?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Little organization is apparent in the presentation of ideas. No discernible focus is apparent in the analysis.
2	Some organization is apparent in the presentation of ideas. There is little focus in the analysis.
3	The presentation of ideas is adequately organized in a generally coherent manner. There is some focus in the analysis.
4	The presentation of ideas is well organized and mostly coherent. The analysis is adequately focused.
5	The presentation of ideas is effectively organized and coherent. The analysis is well focused.

**Criterion D: Language**

- How clear, varied and accurate is the language?
- How appropriate is the choice of register and style? ("Register" refers, in this context, to the candidate's use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and terminology appropriate to the analysis.)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Language is rarely clear and appropriate; there are many errors in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction and little sense of register and style.
2	Language is sometimes clear and carefully chosen; grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction are fairly accurate, although errors and inconsistencies are apparent; the register and style are to some extent appropriate to the task.
3	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction despite some lapses; register and style are mostly appropriate to the task.
4	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with a good degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are consistently appropriate to the task.
5	Language is very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are effective and appropriate to the task.

**Paper 2: Comparative essay**

There are four assessment criteria at SL.

Criterion A	Knowledge, understanding and interpretation	10 marks
Criterion B	Analysis and evaluation	10 marks

Criterion C	Focus and organization	5 marks
Criterion D	Language	5 marks
<b>Total</b>		<b>30 marks</b>

### Criterion A: Knowledge, understanding and interpretation

- How much knowledge and understanding of the works does the candidate demonstrate?
- To what extent does the candidate make use of knowledge and understanding of the works to draw conclusions about their similarities and differences in relation to the question?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	There is little knowledge and understanding of the works in relation to the question answered. There is little meaningful comparison and contrast of the works used in relation to the question.
3–4	There is some knowledge and understanding of the works in relation to the question answered. There is a superficial attempt to compare and contrast the works used in relation to the question.
5–6	There is satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the works and an interpretation of their implications in relation to the question answered. The essay offers a satisfactory interpretation of the similarities and differences between the works used in relation to the question.
7–8	There is good knowledge and understanding of the works and a sustained interpretation of their implications in relation to the question answered. The essay offers a convincing interpretation of the similarities and differences between the works used in relation to the question.
9–10	There is perceptive knowledge and understanding of the works and a persuasive interpretation of their implications in relation to the question answered. The essay offers an insightful interpretation of the similarities and differences between the works used in relation to the question.

### Criterion B: Analysis and evaluation

- To what extent does the candidate analyse and evaluate how the choices of language, technique and style, and/or broader authorial choices, shape meaning?
- How effectively does the candidate use analysis and evaluation skills to compare and contrast both works?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	The essay is descriptive and/or demonstrates little relevant analysis of textual features and/or the broader authorial choices.
3–4	The essay demonstrates some appropriate analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices, but is reliant on description.

Marks	Level descriptor
	There is a superficial comparison and contrast of the authors' choices in the works selected.
5–6	The essay demonstrates a generally appropriate analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices. There is an adequate comparison and contrast of the authors' choices in the works selected.
7–8	The essay demonstrates an appropriate and at times insightful analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices. There is a good evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning. There is a good comparison and contrast of the authors' choices in the works selected.
9–10	The essay demonstrates a consistently insightful and convincing analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices. There is a very good evaluation of how such features and/or choices contribute to meaning. There is a very good comparison and contrast of the author' choices in the works selected.

### Criterion C: Focus and organization

- How well structured, balanced and focused is the presentation of ideas?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The essay rarely focuses on the task. There are few connections between ideas.
2	The essay only sometimes focuses on the task, and treatment of the works may be unbalanced. There are some connections between ideas, but these are not always coherent.
3	The essay maintains a focus on the task, despite some lapses; treatment of the works is mostly balanced. The development of ideas is mostly logical; ideas are generally connected in a cohesive manner.
4	The essay maintains a mostly clear and sustained focus on the task; treatment of the works is balanced. The development of ideas is logical; ideas are cohesively connected.
5	The essay maintains a clear and sustained focus on the task; treatment of the works is well balanced. The development of ideas is logical and convincing; ideas are connected in a cogent manner.

### Criterion D: Language

- How clear, varied and accurate is the language?
- How appropriate is the choice of register and style? ("Register" refers, in this context, to the candidate's use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and terminology appropriate to the essay.)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.

Marks	Level descriptor
1	Language is rarely clear and appropriate; there are many errors in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction and little sense of register and style.
2	Language is sometimes clear and carefully chosen; grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction are fairly accurate, although errors and inconsistencies are apparent; the register and style are to some extent appropriate to the task.
3	Language is clear and carefully chosen with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction despite some lapses; register and style are mostly appropriate to the task.
4	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with a good degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are consistently appropriate to the task.
5	Language is very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are effective and appropriate to the task.

## School-supported self-taught students external assessment details—SL

All assessment tasks for school-supported self-taught (SSST) students are externally assessed.

Paper 1 and paper 2 are the same as for taught students. The weightings for each component, as well as the assessment criteria and the marks awarded, are also the same as for taught students.

The individual oral (SSST variant) is assessed externally.

### Individual oral (SSST variant)

The preparation and basic procedure of the individual oral for SSST candidates are the same as for taught students. In the oral assessment of SSST candidates, however, there will be no questions from the teacher. That time will be incorporated to the time available for SSST candidates to develop their individual oral. This component will therefore consist solely of a 15-minute individual oral by the candidate.

## External assessment details—HL

### Paper 1: Guided literary analysis

**Duration: 2 hours 15 minutes**

**Weighting: 35%**

Paper 1 contains two previously unseen literary passages and students are instructed to write a separate guided analysis of each of these passages. A guided analysis in this context refers to an exploration of the passage supported by a guiding question, which asks students to consider a technical or formal aspect of the passage. The passages could be taken from any of the four literary forms on the *Prescribed reading list*. Each of the passages will be from a different literary form.

The passages for analysis may be either a complete piece of writing or an extract from a longer piece, and wherever possible they will not have been written by authors listed on the *Prescribed reading list* nor be taken from works likely to have been studied in class.

One guiding question will be provided for each passage on a central technical or formal element that may provide an interesting point of entry into the text. Although it is not compulsory to answer this question, students should be aware that it is expected that the analysis will be focused on a particular aspect of the