

Malay A

Overall grade boundaries

Grade:	E	D	C	B	A
Mark range:	0-7	8-15	16-22	23-28	29-36

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Overall, the assignments submitted were appropriate and within the range and suitability for the demands and expectations of the task. Candidates demonstrated a considerable range of variety in choice of topics. The majority kept their investigations and arguments within the scope of literary aspects. The quality of most essays and accompanying remarks by teachers reflect that supervision has been consistent for almost all submissions. Generally, most of the candidates performed satisfactorily overall. The particular strengths are in their introductions, knowledge and understanding, use of subject language and formal presentation. However, there are a number of candidates having difficulty in formulating clear and precise research questions. Some titles are either too broad or vague, or not definitive or focused.

Although there were mentions of various sources of reference, the information gathered was at times not sufficient for a good analysis and reasoned argument. Furthermore, there was a tendency to quote verses from the Quran or the Hadith. It is now very common to find dogmatic arguments because almost every facet of discussion is based on the religious template. When candidates base their arguments on verses from holy books, there is no way to argue and form a more learned and critical view. Verses from Holy Scriptures are 'absolute' and should be dealt with with cultural sensitivity as per the ethical guidelines. Given this, it is difficult to form any argument and it therefore curbs further exploration and critique. This deprives the candidate of the opportunity of critical thinking. Candidates should be encouraged to seek explanations, reasons, (both logical and practical).

Candidates need to improve their analytical and evaluative skills by reading a wider spectrum of reference. Candidates rarely use articles from academic journals or respected periodicals. If candidates are exposed to these types of reading material they will have a better opportunity to improve their writing skills and styles, reaching the required level of academic formality.

Some weakness in analysis was a result of poor source selection. This session some candidates presented essays which were more like literature reviews with a synopsis. Most candidates opted for text analysis as the basis of their essays. On the matter of text analysis, there are numerous studies on works from unknown or budding writers whose works are still

laden with superficial issues. As observed for the last few sessions, there are still quite a number of candidates struggling with abstracts. This can be remedied easily by referring to the assessment criteria. Within the guide, criterion J clearly states that the requirements for the abstract are for it to clearly state the research question that was investigated, how the investigation was undertaken and the conclusion of the essay.

Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

The formulation of the research question needs to avoid ambiguity and prevent candidates attempting topics that are too broad. More comprehensive explanations of the methodology (investigations) should also be encouraged. For each approach taken there must be a rationale and focus. Candidates should explain what they did, to get what, and why. Please keep in mind that a systematic investigation should start with the research objective(s).

Abstract writing was another problematic area. Although the abstract sits in front of the presentation, it is usually written after the conclusion has been completed. The abstract should embody the whole research question, findings and conclusions. Please refer to the assessment criteria and work from there.