AQA

AS LEVEL
ENGLISH LANGUAGE
7701/1 Language and the individual
Report on the Examination

7701/1
June 2023

Version: 1.0

General

It was clear that students of all abilities found the texts accessible and were able to meet the assessment objectives with varying degrees of success.
It was also pleasing to see that there was comparability across the three questions, showing that centres are working successfully with students on effective timing.

Criteria used to award marks

Assessment objectives for Question 1 and 2:

AO1: Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression (10 marks).
For this AO, students were rewarded for the accurate and precise identification of a range of language features from different language methods, using appropriate terminology.

AO3: Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning (15 marks).

For this AO, students were rewarded for discussing contextual aspects such as audience, genre and purpose linked to the data. They were also rewarded for considering the various representations in each text.

Assessment objective for Question 3:

AO4: Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic concepts and methods.
For this AO, students were rewarded for making connections between the two texts. A range of different connections was credited. A focus on language similarities and differences characterised the higher levels.

Specification Content

The specification outlines how, in this unit, students should analyse texts and explore language. In doing so, they should use linguistic terminology when analysing different areas of language including graphology, lexis, grammar, pragmatics and discourse (AO1). In this series, almost all students used some linguistic terminology.

There was a clear understanding from students of all abilities that **identification** of language features was what was being assessed for AO1.

The specification also states that in this exploration of language, students should consider how language is shaped by context including audience, purpose and genre (AO3). It was evident in response to the 2023 paper that students of all abilities did show a clear awareness of context and were confident when, for example, identifying the audience and purpose of both texts.

Finally, the specification outlines how the exploration of language when analysing texts should focus on representations. It is very clear that centres are aware of the specification requirements and are successfully directing students to look for and discuss different representations. This has continued to be more successful over several series and it was very pleasing to see representations at the forefront of the majority of responses.

Focus on Assessment Objectives

AO1: the range of terminology used by students across all centres was, once again this year, impressive. Many students were aware that in order to gain the higher marks, they should be precise when identifying specific language features. Precision when labelling an appropriate number of relevant language features is far better than using more general terms in a wide range of less relevant features.

It was also good to see students identifying features which were appropriate and linked to representations rather than discussing 'random' AO1 features that they had found. This is perhaps evidence of students starting with representations and then identifying the AO1 features which help create such a representation – this is certainly good practice. The most successful students recognised how several language features can work together to create a particular representation at discourse level.

AO3: it was clear that students were aware of the need to move beyond the identification rewarded for AO1, and link their example to context. Those students achieving the lower marks focused solely on mode, purpose and audience with little engagement with representation. However, the number of students who did address representation in a methodical manner once again improved this year. Many of those students who were awarded the higher marks for AO3, structured their response around various representations (that is to say, writing a paragraph on each of the representations they had identified).

However, it is important to note that focusing solely on context or representation without tying points to any language features can only have limited success. This tended to happen where students begin with an overview of the two texts with no reference to any aspects of language. Criteria for band 3 of the mark scheme for AO3 requires context to be tied to language choices. If students want to start with an overview and gain marks for it, they therefore need to refer to language at the outset.

Question Focus

Question 1 (Text A)

With regards to AO1 in this question, those students achieving the higher marks were precise in their identification and accurately labelling of language features. Common terms used for this text which showed this precision included: noun phrase, abstract noun, concrete noun, pre-modifier, modal verb, first person subject pronoun, exclamatory sentence and simple sentence.

It was good to see that students used AO1 to develop their discussion of key representations rather than writing about them in isolation or simply listing AO1 features. For Text A in the 2023 paper these representations included:

- Hayley Carruthers as a runner in this Marathon
- Hayley Carruthers as an elite runner
- Hayley Carruthers as an NHS staff member
- Hayley Carruthers as both a runner and NHS worker (combining the two)
- The London Marathon

Question 2 (Text B)

Once again, the data allowed students to access the higher levels through precise identification of language features. Typical terminology used at this level when identifying language features in Text B included: third person plural pronoun, second person subject pronoun, second person possessive pronoun (plus other possessive pronouns), post-modifier, pre-modifier, noun phrase, abstract noun, simple sentence, modal verb. Recognising patterns of use was also typical of the higher levels as was, for AO3, the discussion of a range of representations.

These included:

- Virgin Money
- The Event Director
- Unsuccessful applicants
- The London Marathon
- Charities

Q1 and Q2: A Summary

To summarise, best practice was seen in questions 1 and 2 when students:

- identified a wide range of specific and relevant language features, using precise and accurate linguistic terminology when labelling
- linked these language features to a range of contextual factors, moving beyond audience, purpose and genre and considering a range of ideas regarding representation

Less successful responses for questions 1 and 2 included:

- a narrow range of language features identified by students (some only identifying two or three from the whole text) or a lack of precision when writing about language
- a lack of exemplification for AO1
- limited discussion of representation
- writing about context without any reference to the data

Question 3 (Comparison of Texts A and B)

Students offered a range of comparisons across the two texts, considering similarities and differences, which was pleasing to see. It was very uncommon to see students only writing about one text or addressing each text individually without any comparison or use of comparative language.

Some key comparisons seen in this series included:
- representation of the London Marathon
- representation of runners/those who had entered
- use of specific language features including:
    - modifiers
    - pronouns
    - graphology
    - noun phrases

Students achieving at the lower end (particularly Level 2) tended to focus on comparing the content of the two texts without any linguistic focus. Others at the lower end tended to compare audience, purpose and genre but with limited focus on language or exemplification from the texts.
It is imperative that in this question, students do use clear examples and, when appropriate, identify and classify specific language features. It is also important that as part of their comparison, they link these language features to context which can then move them into Level 4.

To summarise, best practice in Q3 was seen when students:
- compared and contrasted language, context and content offering a range of connections
- exemplified their discussion with specific language features, integrating linguistic knowledge into their comparisons.

Less successful responses to Q3 included:
- a focus solely on content to compare and contrast
- lack of language focus or exemplification

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.