

Benchmarking Selected IB Diploma Programme Language Courses to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Submitted to the International Baccalaureate by UK NARIC

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List of Acronyms

CEFR	The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment
DP	Diploma Programme [International Baccalaureate]
HL	Higher Level [Diploma Programme course]
IB	International Baccalaureate
PLA	Prescribed List of Authors [International Baccalaureate]
PLT	Prescribed List in Translation [International Baccalaureate]
SL	Standard Level [Diploma Programme course]

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Executive Summary

UK NARIC has been commissioned by the International Baccalaureate (IB) to undertake an independent comparative study of a selection of IB Diploma Programme (DP) English language courses to *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (CEFR).

The study reviewed the following seven English language courses:

- English B Standard Level (SL)
- English B Higher Level (HL)
- English A: Language and Literature SL
- English A: Language and Literature HL
- English A: Literature SL
- English A: Literature HL
- English Literature and Performance SL.

The purpose of the study was to establish how the level of English language competency expected on completion of each course and indicated by the associated course grades compared to levels on the CEFR.

The methodology drew on *Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment – A Manual* (Council of Europe, 2009) to review and evaluate the selected IB DP courses in English against the CEFR, examining the language skills and competencies developed and assessed through the courses in comparison to those associated with the CEFR levels. This analysis made reference to a variety of CEFR scales and sub-scales for reading comprehension, written production, and spoken interaction and production.

The review involved an objective, desk-based review of the IB DP language guides (detailing the course aims, content, learning outcomes, and assessment objectives, methods and criteria), along with past papers and associated mark schemes for May and November sittings for 2013-15. By comparing the question types, mark schemes and associated level descriptors, and cross-referencing with grade boundaries over three-four exam sittings, it was possible to determine how the individual assessments compared with CEFR. Cross-referencing the preliminary findings with marked student work at a range of achievement levels (typically high, medium and low scoring work) provided an opportunity both to examine the application of the mark schemes and assessment criteria in practice, and to provide a measure of quality control in determining the final comparability.

Taking into consideration the weightings of each assessment to the overall grades for each course, together with the overall grade boundaries over at least three sittings, the project team was also able to establish comparisons between the overall course grades and CEFR levels, where applicable.

Overall the study found the IB DP English language courses to develop skills across all four key language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) with sound assessment in place

to assess students' reading comprehension, written production and speaking interaction and production skills in English. As illustrated in the chart below, all courses have at least one grade that can be considered comparable to CEFR B2, the level most commonly requested by universities as meeting the English language requirements for admission:

CEFR Level	English B		English A: Language and Literature		English A: Literature		English Literature and Performance
	SL	HL	SL	HL	SL	HL	SL
C2							
C1		7	7	7	7	7	
B2+	7	6	6	6	6	6	
B2	6	5	5	5	5	5	5
B1	5	4		4	4	4	
A2	4	3					
A1	3	2					
	2						

Notes

- 1) Thresholds: As can be seen above, there are instances where DP course grades may not align exactly with a single level, such as a grade 4 for English B HL. Review of specifications and assessment materials concluded that a B2 threshold would fall within a grade 4 for a number of courses. This is similarly true for the C1 threshold and a grade 6 in English A: Language and Literature HL, and English A: Literature SL and HL.
- 2) Grades not shown: In some instances, it is not possible to draw comparisons between lower grades and CEFR. For example, since there is no fail grade, a grade of 1 would encompass those scoring from 0 upwards. In the case of English A courses, since these subjects combine language and literature, low scores may reflect a lower level of subject ability rather than the student's English language competency. By contrast, to achieve the higher grades in each assessment, students would need to demonstrate a high level of reading (receptive) and written productive competence in English.
- 3) English Literature and Performance: Literature and Performance is a course combining Studies in Language and Literature and The Arts. The course undoubtedly requires and supports a strong level of English across the four key skills areas but assessment criteria related to performance and dramatization cannot be linked to CEFR, the analysis focussed on identifying an appropriate threshold grade to reflect CEFR B2. Accordingly, those scoring a grade of 5 and above can be considered to have achieved a CEFR B2, and above.

1. Introduction

1.1 Context and scope

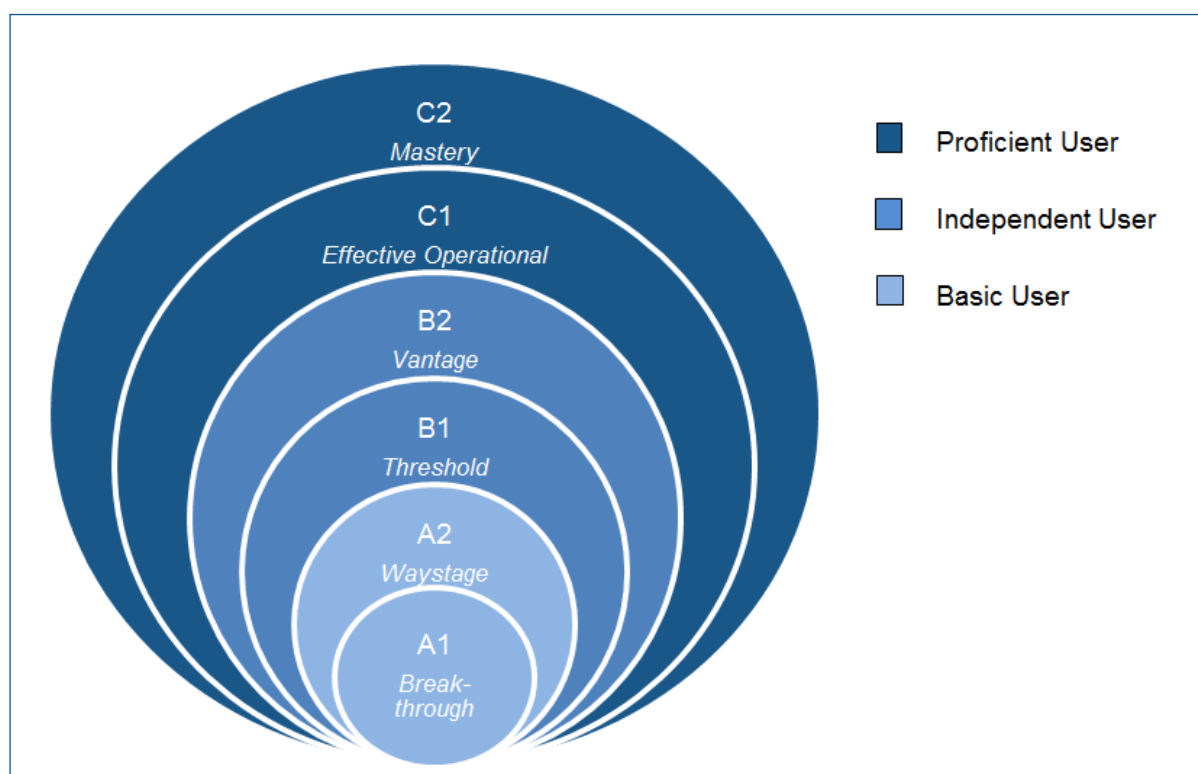
The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (hereafter referred to interchangeably as “CEFR” or “the Framework”) was published by the Council of Europe in 2001. Widely used in the development and referencing of language syllabi, qualifications, assessment and other learning materials, it is also commonly used by universities today to express English / other language proficiency requirements for admission to undergraduate and postgraduate study.

This study, commissioned by the International Baccalaureate (IB), intends to provide an independent comparative study of a selection of IB Diploma Programme (DP) English language courses to CEFR, in order to establish how the level of English expected for each course and its associated grades compare to levels on the CEFR.

1.2 Overview of CEFR

The CEFR is designed to provide a common and neutral basis for all languages to define levels of language proficiency. The Framework consists of language related competency descriptors, referred to as ‘can do’ statements. These illustrate what an individual with proficiency at a given level of the Framework should be able to do in terms of spoken interaction, spoken production, listening, reading and writing in their chosen language. There are six proficiency levels in the framework as follows:

Figure 1: CEFR scale and associated proficiency level



To support and provide guidance on competencies at each level of the CEFR scale above, a range of further documents with scales and grids have been published by the Council of Europe. This includes the global scale, which can be applied to all languages, with overarching 'can do statements' as seen below:

Table 1: CEFR global scale descriptors¹

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

¹ Council of Europe – Modern Languages Division, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. [pdf] Published by: Cambridge University Press. Available at: <http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/framework_en.pdf>.

In addition to these descriptors, illustrative scales with ‘can do’ descriptors have been developed. These illustrate what an individual should be able to do at each proficiency level in the Framework in regards to reading, writing, listening and speaking in a given language, with scales reflecting learners’ receptive, productive, interactive, and mediation competence.

1.3 The Diploma Programme

The DP is a two-year baccalaureate-style programme, offered to students internationally between the ages of 16-19 and widely accepted for undergraduate admission. No specific entry requirements are set for the DP, due to the different countries (and therefore education systems) it is offered within and the mother tongue and linguistic background of the learners can similarly vary.

The curriculum comprises the compulsory DP core (Theory of Knowledge; extended essay; and creativity, action, service) and six subject groups, from which students choose at least one course per group:

- Studies in language and literature
- Language acquisition
- Individuals and societies
- Sciences
- Mathematics
- The arts.

Courses are offered at either higher level (HL) or standard level (SL), with each providing a different scope. For instance, HL students need to demonstrate greater knowledge, understanding and skills than those in SL. Students must select at least three courses (four maximum) at HL, while the rest are taken at SL.

The IB DP offers eight language courses, seven of which are reviewed in this study:

Table 2: DP language courses reviewed

Studies in Language and Literature	Language Acquisition
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• English A: Literature Higher Level (HL)• English A: Literature Standard Level (SL)• English A: Language and Literature HL• English A: Language and Literature SL• Literature and Performance SL.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• English B HL• English B SL.

This report seeks to establish how each course, and the varying grades available (1-7) for each, compares to CEFR levels by investigating the overall level of linguistic competence that can be associated with these grades in relation to the CEFR.

1.4 Structure of the report

Section 2 describes the methodology employed during this study, which draws both on *Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment – A Manual* (Council of Europe, 2009), hereafter referred to as “the CEFR Manual” and on UK NARIC’s experience in evaluating international qualifications and their assessment.

Section 3 provides a detailed description, review and analysis of the English B course at SL and HL, with particular focus on the assessment criteria and methods and the ways in which these test language competence. **Sections 4-6** similarly focus on the remaining IB DP courses from Table 2.

Section 7 provides a list of all materials used to inform the study.

The **Appendices** provide a small sample of completed forms and references to the other forms used in undertaking this study, which have been drawn and/or adapted from the CEFR manual, to provide transparency to the analysis and decision-making process.

2. Methodology

The methodology employed by UK NARIC in this study is designed to ensure a robust and transparent evaluation of the seven aforementioned IB DP language courses in English against the CEFR, through a comparative analysis of the language skills developed and assessed through the courses in comparison to those associated with the reference levels of the Framework.

The process undertaken by UK NARIC in conducting this study, which aims to reflect the key relevant principles outlined in the CEFR manual can be illustrated as follows:

Figure 2: UK NARIC methodological process for referencing the IB DP courses to the CEFR



2.1 Familiarisation with CEFR

Through provision of the English Language Assessment service for individuals, a range of independent evaluation projects comparing language tests against CEFR, and the promotion of the European Language Passport (through the management of the UK National Europass Centre), UK NARIC has established a solid understanding of CEFR. Nevertheless, as part of the study the project team undertook a number of familiarisation exercises, namely:

- Review of CEFR taking into consideration the salient characteristics of each level.
- Sorting and ranking activities of descriptors from a selection of grids and scales in the CEFR and CEFR Manual including but not limited to:
 - Overall written production
 - Overall reading comprehension
 - Overall spoken production
 - Overall spoken interaction

- Vocabulary range
- Thematic development
- Refresher training through the CEFRTrain website², including review of performance samples.

Particular reference was also made to the work on *Reference Level Descriptions* (RLD) for English undertaken by English Profile. RLD aim to present the CEFR levels in the context of the typical competencies expected of English language learners at each level. A full list of sources used can be found in Section 7.

2.2 Familiarisation and review of the IB DP courses

The next step was to review the DP language courses to ensure a thorough understanding of each course, creating a course profile for the four subjects, differentiating information specific to the HL and SL courses where necessary.

The focus of this initial review was on obtaining the following information for each course:

- Aims
- Course content
- Learning outcomes and assessment objectives
- Assessment methods and criteria.

As part of this, CEFR Form A1 was completed for each course. An example of this can be found in Appendix 4.

2.2.1 Aims

Acknowledging that the IB DP courses can be either language acquisition courses (English B) or studies in language and literature (English A courses), understanding the aims of the course is important to contextualise what the IB is looking to achieve in relation to language knowledge and skills within it. It is also useful to understand the age and educational background of the learners.

2.2.2 Course content

Reviewing course content was important in order to better understand what students cover in the courses and therefore the expected domains, topics and themes students would likely be familiar with for the assessment.

² The CEFRTrain project, funded by the European Commission, established an online training platform to provide familiarisation with CEFR where users are tasked with rating samples of listening, reading, writing and speaking against relevant CEFR scales. The platform is available at:
<<http://www.helsinki.fi/project/ceftrain/index.php.37.html>> [Accessed June 2016].

2.2.3 Learning outcomes and assessment objectives

Learning outcomes set out the intended knowledge, skills and competencies expected on successful completion of a course. Assessment objectives set out the key knowledge, skills and competencies to be formally assessed. Review of the learning outcomes / assessment objectives helped to provide a clear picture of the types of language and related skills to be assessed by the IB DP courses, informing the selection of appropriate CEFR scales for reference in the comparative analysis (Specification stage, section 2.3).

2.2.4 Assessment methods and marking

Substantial emphasis was placed on reviewing the assessment of the seven IB DP courses, reviewing whole external assessments, guidelines on internal assessments (where available), mark schemes and assessment criteria. More detailed information can be found on this within the Specification stage (section 2.3).

2.3 Specification

The specification stage involved an independent review of the coverage of the IB DP language course assessments (content, task types, mark schemes) in relation to language use and language competences as described in CEFR.

The review comprised three levels:

- A review of the overall assessment for each DP language course, including:
 - the weighting of external and internal assessment to the overall course grade
 - the number and type of summative assessments for each course, along with the weighting and duration of each,
 - identification of the skills facets the assessments seek to test with reference to the CEFR skills facets defined below (Table 3)
- A detailed review of past examination papers (2013-2015, May and November sittings)³, other assessment tasks, and associated mark schemes and assessment criteria including:
 - the type(s) of questions posed in each, categorising wherever possible into the response types set out in the CEFR Manual⁴, as well as the specific language skills being assessed by these
 - the number of questions, together with the mark allocation for each
 - a review of any unseen texts used to test students' receptive language competency
 - any resources available to the student (e.g. dictionary or key terms/definitions provided to them in the exam)
 - a review of the mark schemes and assessment criteria to determine the specific skills being graded, and the expected language skills at each level of achievement

³ Sample questions and responses described in this text are drawn from the 2015 May and November sittings.

⁴ Extended answer (text / monologue); Gap fill sentence; Gapped text / cloze, selected response; Interaction with examiner; Interaction with peers; Matching; Multiple-choice; Open gapped text / cloze; Ordering; Sentence completion; Short answer to open question(s); True / False; Other. Council of Europe (2009), p. 126.

- A review of marked student work to observe the application of the assessment criteria in practice and enable student responses and scores to be compared against CEFR.

Table 3: Language competences in the CEFR

Reception		Production		Interaction		Mediation	
Reading	Listening	Spoken	Written	Spoken	Written	Spoken	Written

“Reception” refers to the learner’s comprehension of a written, audio or audio-visual text, whether listening or reading for gist, specific information or in-depth understanding for example.

“Production” is where the learner is producing the text. In written production, this encompasses activities such as writing reports, articles or letters; or creative writing. In the case of spoken production, activities may include giving a speech or presentation; reading a written text aloud or acting in a rehearsed role. This differs from “Interaction”, in particular spoken interaction, where the individual would be alternating as the speaker and listener as part of a formal or informal conversation, discussion or transaction for example. Similarly, written interaction would usually be where two or more people are communicating in writing, for example, exchanging notes or emails or working collaboratively on documents (e.g. proof-reading or otherwise negotiating content).

“Mediation” is where the learner is summarising, paraphrasing, translating or interpreting text as an intermediary between two speakers or readers (typically between speakers of different languages).

To ensure consistency in the decision-making process, the project team first reviewed the DP courses by skills facet, for example reviewing reading (receptive) activities and standards across all courses, before moving on to written production and spoken production and interaction.

2.3.1 Reading and writing

Due to the varying aims and purpose of English A and B courses (studies in language and literature versus language acquisition), the assessment items and assessment criteria also differ between the courses, necessitating at times a tailored approach for the different courses. Any differences in the approach taken to compare the courses are identified in this section.

An initial overall review of reading comprehension was conducted using the detailed subject guide for each course in relation to Form A10, Reading Comprehension, of the CEFR Manual (for English B courses) and A16, Integrated Skills (for English A courses, reflecting the integrated skills assessment of reading and writing). These examined expectations of students’ ability in terms of:

- Contexts (domains)
- Communication themes
- Communicative tasks, activities and strategies

- Text types and length that students were expected to be able to understand and/or produce.

For English B courses, as well as the English A: Language and Literature and English A: Literature, which include assessment tasks with previously unseen texts (Paper 1), this review also considered the levels at which the unseen texts were set and the levels of reading comprehension associated with each marking band in relation to CEFR, with reference to CEFR scales for overall reading comprehension and relevant subscales.

To inform the latter point, the project team conducted a detailed review of reading comprehension assessment: as language acquisition courses, English B SL and HL include an examination paper, Paper 1, specifically designed to assess students' comprehension of unseen texts.

2.3.1.1 Review of unseen texts

Students' ability to comprehend previously unseen texts is assessed in Paper 1 of the English B courses. For the comparative analysis of unseen texts, the review centred on Paper 1 from two different sittings, for both the SL and HL. Using the CEFR Reading Grid as a guide, the following core information was identified Paper 1 for both the SL and HL:

Table 4: Information requirements in the review of unseen texts

Key information requirement	Meaning (Response)
Text source	Where the text is from (e.g. a newspaper, novel, non-fiction book etc.).
Authenticity	Whether the text is 'authentic' – e.g. the extract is taken directly from an existing text; in contrast to 'modified' texts where an extract is taken from an existing text but with some changes (information removed, added or rephrased) or where the texts have been created solely for the purpose of the test.
Discourse type	The nature of the text. Texts were categorised as follows: argumentative; narrative; descriptive; exposition; expressive; poetic; or transactional.
Domain	CEFR refers to four domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public domain "refers to everything connected with ordinary social interaction (business and administrative bodies, public services, cultural and leisure activities of a public nature, relations with the media, etc.);"⁵ • Personal domain, "in which the person concerned lives as a private individual, centred on home life with family and friends, and engages in individual practices such as reading for pleasure, keeping a personal diary, pursuing a special interest or hobby, etc.;"⁶

⁵ Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*, p.15.

⁶ Ibid, p.45.

Key information requirement	Meaning (Response)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational - "everything concerned with a person's activities and relations in the exercise of his or her occupation;"⁷ • Educational - "in which the person concerned is engaged in organised learning, especially (but not necessarily) within an educational institution."⁸ <p>Each text was categorised into one of the four above domains, based on the CEFR definitions and with reference where needed to the CEFR "External Context of Use" table⁹.</p>
Topic	<p>The subject matter of the unseen text, categorised where possible into topics defined within the CEFR Manual, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • daily life • education • food and drink • free time, entertainment • health and body care • house and home, environment • language • personal identification • places • relations with other people • services • shopping • travel • weather • other (specify).
Text length	Word count.
Vocabulary	Observations on and examples of vocabulary used, including the range, CEFR level and type of vocabulary used (e.g. routine vs idiomatic/colloquial vs technical).
Grammar	Observations on and examples of key grammatical features within the text.

Doing so helped to support a reasoned judgement on the CEFR level likely needed for the text to be comprehensible to the learner, with consideration given to the:

- Linguistic complexity of the text
- Text domain, style and content
- Text length, structure and presentation.

Linguistic complexity

This considered both the vocabulary and grammar used within the unseen texts and accompanying questions, to ascertain both the level and range of vocabulary used, and the range and complexity of grammar and syntax.

⁷ Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*, p.15.

⁸ Ibid, p.45.

⁹ The 'External Contexts of Use' table attempts to categorise different situations (locations; institutions/organisations; persons involved (relation to the learner); objects; events; operations; texts) by the four domains listed about. The full table can be found in the CEFR, p.48.

The CEFR table on *Salient Characteristics: Reception* (Table A2) proved useful here in demonstrating that when ascending through the scale, CEFR B2 is the first level at which learners might be expected to “Understand (with a large degree of independence)... propositionally and linguistically complex text”¹⁰. Noting the neutral nature of CEFR, reference was additionally made to sources specifically designed to transpose CEFR to reflect the level of English expected at each CEFR level. For example, when considering the vocabulary used within the texts, both the English Vocabulary Profile¹¹ and EAQUALS Core Inventory¹² were used as a point of reference. Whilst by no means exhaustive, the English Vocabulary Profile provides a useful search tool, specific to English language, of the vocabulary learners would know at each CEFR level, whilst the EAQUALS Core Inventory provides guidance on categories of English vocabulary which might be associated with each CEFR level. Accordingly, the project team annotated each unseen text with the words comprehensible to learners at each CEFR level and the relative proportion of text at each level.

Figure 3: Example of an annotated extract of unseen text from English B HL Paper 1

Soap operas tend to focus their plots and storylines around family life, personal relationships, emotional and moral conflicts and sometimes newsworthy issues such as teen drinking, drug abuse, adoption, illness and addiction.

While many of these scenarios might show up in other TV programmes, soaps are filmed to reveal the day-to-day lives of their characters, building the story over time. Perhaps the most common trait of a soap opera is that each episode ends with a promise for more drama the following day, rather than a neat tie-up of that episode's story as you'd find with other TV dramas.

[– 13 –]

Soap actors are some of the most skilled members of the profession as the amount of material they need to memorize is immense and the hours they spend on camera are relentless. Shooting a soap opera often requires quick thinking by the actors when unforeseen events occur. In addition, blocking (the way an actor faces a camera) is slightly unconventional and is contrary to how humans would normally interact. Because their faces are often shown close up to reveal the emotions relevant to the story, actors may have to tilt their bodies in an unnatural manner, which can be rather challenging.

A1 A2 B1 B2 C1 C2

The English Grammar Profile¹³, the Grammatical Critical Features¹⁴ of each level, and the EAQUALS Core Inventory were similarly used as a reference point for expected levels of English grammar comprehension when considering the complexity of the text.

¹⁰ Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, 2009. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - A Manual*. [pdf] Published by: Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, p. 124.

¹¹ Cambridge University Press et al (n.d.) *English Vocabulary Profile* [online].

¹² British Council/EAQUALS, 2010. *British Council - EAQUALS Core Inventory for General English*. [pdf] Published by: British Council/EAQUALS.

¹³ Cambridge University Press et al (n.d.). *English Grammar Profile* [online].


¹⁴ Cambridge ESOL and Cambridge University Press, 2011. *English Profile: Introducing the CEFR for English*, p.11.

As highlighted in the CEFR, “Complex syntax consumes attentional resources that might otherwise be available for dealing with content; for example, long sentences with a number of subordinate clauses, non-continuous constituents, multiple negation, scope ambiguity, use of anaphorics and deictics without clear antecedents or reference. Syntactic oversimplification of authentic texts, however, may actually have the effect of increasing the level of difficulty (because of the elimination of redundancies, clues to meaning, etc.)”¹⁵.

Text domain, style and content

This considered both the relevance of the content to the reader, their likely familiarity with the text domain, and the style of text. As illustrated in the CEFR *Salient Characteristics: Reception* grid¹⁶, the ability to understand abstract texts is associated first with level B2, whilst lower levels focus on concrete texts: in short, abstract texts require a higher level of receptive competence than concrete ones.

Figure 4: Understanding of concrete and abstract texts and topics in the CEFR

Setting		 <div>abstract</div> <div>concrete</div>
C1	Abstract and complex topics encountered in social, academic and professional life, whether or not they relate to own field/speciality	
B2+	A wide range of familiar and unfamiliar topics encountered in social, academic and professional life	
B2	Reasonably familiar concrete and abstract topics related to field of interest/speciality	
B1+	Common everyday or job-related topics Topics in his/her field of (personal) interest	
B1	Familiar topics regularly encountered in a school, work or leisure context Topics in his/her field of (personal) interest	
A2+	Familiar topics of a concrete type	
A2	Predictable everyday matters Areas of most immediate priority: basic personal, family, shopping, local area, employment	
A1	The most common everyday situations	

Source: Adapted from the CEFR Manual, p.124

In terms of topic content and domain, given that these exams form part of a secondary school qualification, it was assumed that texts of personal and educational domains were likely to be the most readily comprehensible for most candidates. The familiarity of the topic also has an impact on the vocabulary (discussed above) – basic users (A1 and A2) are expected to be able to understand vocabulary and texts on the most common, most immediate topics. Similarly, independent users should be familiar with vocabulary on everyday related topics and medium-high frequency general vocabulary (B1/B1+), and

¹⁵ Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*, p.165.

¹⁶ Council of Europe, 2009. *Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR): A Manual*, p.124.

possess a “broad active reading vocabulary but may experience some difficulty with low frequency idioms” (B2)¹⁷.

The text length, structure and presentation

Text length is an important, albeit not over-riding, consideration when evaluating reading tasks. Typically, the ability to comprehend longer texts is associated with CEFR B1+ whilst the lower levels focus on short, simple texts. Nevertheless, the volume of information contained in the text is also relevant – a short text seeking to convey a complex message may be more difficult to understand than a longer, but less dense text conveying the same information. Accordingly, the length of text must be considered in conjunction with factors such as the content (outlined above) as well as the structure, organisation and coherence of the text. For example, the sequencing of ideas and information; whether or not the main points are clearly identifiable in the text; and whether the information in the text is *explicit* rather than *implicit*, all have an impact on the complexity of the text for the reader.

2.3.1.2 Review of assessment tasks in Paper 1

When considering the CEFR levels tested by the IB DP courses, it was important not only to consider the texts presented to candidates, but also the ways in which candidates’ understanding of the texts was assessed and marked. This was to account for the possibility of having (i) a complex text but with low demand questions – for example, by allowing English B candidates to select the correct answer by matching the key words in the question and the text; or where understanding of the more complex words or phrases is not required in order to successfully answer the questions, or (ii) for a comparatively straightforward text but with more demanding questions – for example, where the individual must infer the answers from the text as none of the required information is explicitly stated within the text.

For the English B (language acquisition courses), the study sought to identify the following information:

- The number, length and type of texts and questions in the exam, considered in conjunction with the overall amount of time available to complete the exam
- Whether the questions required global or selective comprehension, and similarly whether the tasks were summative (where students must answer the questions from the full text) or whether the questions divided the text into sections, or directed students to the particular paragraph or lines where they may find the answer
- Whether the answers to the questions
 - were provided in the text, using the same key words (i.e. the individual could correctly answer by matching key words in the question and text)
 - were provided in the text, using synonyms of the words used in the question
 - required inferencing skills, where the answers are not explicitly stated.

As with the English B courses, both the English A: Literature and English A: Language and Literature courses include unseen texts within one of the final examinations – Paper 1. Accordingly, for these courses, the project team reviewed the unseen texts following the

¹⁷ Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*, p.69.

approach set out in section 2.3.1.1 (*Review of unseen texts*). The tasks however differ, providing an integrated assessment of reading and writing through the use of essay-based questions rather than the text-handling exercises found in the language acquisition courses (English B).

2.3.1.3 Writing

DP English students' written production skills are assessed via Paper 1 (English A courses only), Paper 2 (a timed written examination) and the Written Assignment / written tasks (untimed).

In reviewing the assessment of students' writing skills, the following aspects were first considered, drawn from Form A14 Written Production (from the CEFR Manual) and based on the skills tested through both Paper 2 and the Written Assignment:

- The context(s) in which students need to show ability – i.e. the domains (personal / occupational / educational) and situations involved with reference to the aforementioned External Context of Use table in the CEFR Manual
- The communication themes students are expected to be able to handle
- The communicative strategies, activities and tasks students are expected to be able to handle
- The types of texts students are expected to be able to produce (e.g. brochures, magazine/newspaper articles, business letters, essays etc.)
- A provisional view on the CEFR level(s) the assessments are evaluating, with reference to relevant written production scales (overall and sub-scales as appropriate).

A detailed review of Paper 2 and its accompanying assessment criteria was then conducted drawing on the information requirements set out in the CEFR writing grids. Particular consideration was given to:

- The total test time and number of tasks within the paper, noting any suggestions on time per section/task, where given
- The format of the paper
- Tasks set, and expected response including:
 - the wording of the question (CEFR level(s) needed to understand the question)
 - the type and length (word count) of response required
 - the extent to which the content of the response is specified, for example whether the task indicates the type of text the student should produce; the imagined audience it's for and the rhetorical function(s) expected¹⁸; the text purpose¹⁹; register (informal, formal or not stated); and domain

¹⁸ For example, the CEFR writing grid seeks to identify which of the following is expected in the response: arguing; commentating; comparing and contrasting; demonstrating; describing (events); describing (processes); evaluating; events; exemplifying; explaining; expositing; expressing; possibility; expressing probability; giving opinions; instructing; making complaints; narrating; persuading; reporting; suggesting; summarising; other (specify).

¹⁹ Whether "referential (to give 'objective' facts about the world), emotive (to describe the emotional state of the writer), conative (to persuade the reader(s)), phatic (to establish or maintain social contact with the reader(s)), metalingual (to clarify or verify understanding), poetic (writing for aesthetic purposes)" (CEFR Writing Grid).

- Rating of the tasks with reference to the rating methods, mark schemes²⁰ (where produced), assessment criteria and marking bands. This enabled a qualitative comparative analysis of the skills assessed with those expected at each level of the CEFR through reference to relevant CEFR scales²¹. Accordingly, the project team completed tables as follows:

Table 5: Example of a project mapping table comparing marking bands and CEFR levels

Mark	Descriptor	Indicative of CEFR Level(s)	Relevant expectations of CEFR at this/these levels
0			
1-2	<i>IB assessment criteria drawn from the subject guide</i>	<i>Suggested CEFR level for specific grade(s) where applicable²²</i>	<i>Summary of key areas of similarity, drawn from relevant scales in the CEFR, acknowledging that CEFR level descriptors are intended as indicative, rather than prescriptive (i.e. they are not intended as a checklist)</i>
3-4			
5-6			

The key findings from these mapping tables are presented in the comparative analysis sections for each course.

In reviewing the assessment criteria, it was possible to also give consideration more widely to the aspects of language competence in written production (Form A21, Aspects of Language Competence in Production, CEFR Manual) in terms of the:

- Linguistic competence (range of lexical, grammatical and phonological competence expected) with reference to CEFR scales for range and accuracy
- Socio-linguistic competence (e.g. conventions, expressions – e.g. use of idioms, expressions of belief, attitudes and values; register differences, accent) with reference to the CEFR scale for socio-linguistic competence
- Pragmatic competence (e.g. how students organise/sequence sentences and ideas to produce coherent written English).

2.3.1.4 Written assignments

All IB DP English courses include an integrated assessment of receptive and written production skills through the Written Assignment. In the case of English B SL this may involve aural and reading reception since the “inter-textual reading” sources on which the student writes about may include one audio or audio-visual source. By contrast the remaining courses would usually focus on reading and writing. For all courses, the project team analysis focussed on comparing the assessment criteria to CEFR before cross-

²⁰ Mark schemes typically defined an ‘adequate to good’ answer, and a ‘very good to excellent’ answer for each task.

²¹ A summary of the CEFR scales and sub-scales used is provided in Appendix 2.

²² It is important to note that it would not always be appropriate to assign an indicative CEFR level to each marking band, noting that for some assessment criteria, a number of marks may correspond to a single CEFR level and/or that the bands may reflect some but not all of the CEFR levels.

referencing this with examples of marked student scripts. It should be noted that not all assessment criteria for the Written Assignment are directly relatable to CEFR – where this is the case, this has been noted in the comparative analysis section with focus placed on the remaining assessment criteria.

2.3.2 Speaking and listening

All students must demonstrate their English spoken production and interaction skills through internal assessment. As with the other skills facets, the project team sought to establish, for both production and interaction, the expectations of the students' ability in terms of:

- Context(s) – i.e. the domains (personal / occupational / educational) and situations involved with reference to the aforementioned External Context of Use table in the CEFR Manual
- Communication themes
- Communicative strategies, activities and tasks
- Producing different types of “texts” – in the context of spoken production, this might include public announcements; speeches and presentations; drama / readings; telephone conversations; and job interviews²³.

This informed a provisional view on the CEFR level(s) the assessments were evaluating, with reference to relevant spoken production and interaction scales (overall and sub-scales as appropriate).

Consideration was also given more widely to the aspects of language competence in spoken production (Form A21, Aspects of Language Competence in Production, CEFR Manual) in terms of the:

- Linguistic competence (range of lexical, grammatical and phonological competence expected) with reference to CEFR scales for range and accuracy
- Socio-linguistic competence (e.g. politeness conventions, expressions – e.g. use of idioms, expressions of belief, attitudes and values; register differences, accent) with reference to the CEFR scale for socio-linguistic competence
- Pragmatic competence (comprising discourse competence, i.e. how students organise/sequence sentences and ideas to produce coherent spoken English; and functional competence).

Reference was made both to the description of internal assessment tasks and assessment criteria within the relevant subject guides, with a view to comparing the relevant mark bands with levels of the CEFR, through comparative analysis with relevant scales (using the same approach outlined in Table 5 for written production).

To support this, the project team reviewed student samples, including: the visual stimuli given to students; mp3 files of the Individual Presentations and follow up discussions; examiner feedback; and grading of the students. Using these and the subject guides, it was

²³ Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, 2009. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - A Manual*. [pdf] Published by: Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, p.95.

possible to complete the CEFR Speaking Grid which examines aspects including but not limited to:

- Test content – whether for general language proficiency or for a specific purpose – and the topic(s) covered
- Intended use of the test
- Type and level of instruction – i.e. whether the questions posed are at the same level, lower or higher than the test target level(s) and whether instructions are written, spoken or pictorial
- The prompt(s) given to students (e.g. audio, picture, text, question from the examiner)
- Control and guidance – meaning (i) the extent to which the task guides or limits the student's response; and (ii) the extent to which examiner input determines the nature and content of the interaction. For example, a rigidly controlled exam would be one where the examiner asks a list of pre-determined questions in contrast to an open oral exam which would be an undirected interview/conversation
- The discourse type(s), e.g. discussion, conversation, interview, presentation/monologue, question and answer; expected register (formal, informal, or neutral); and the expected rhetorical functions (such as argument, description or explanation)
- The method of and criteria for rating performance:
 - Whether examiners rate student performance with a checklist/mark scheme; using band descriptors (both analytic²⁴); an overall judgement on performance (holistic approach)
 - What students are rated on.

2.4 Review of standard setting, marking and grading

As highlighted in the CEFR Manual, “Linking of a test to the CEFR cannot be valid unless the examination or test that is the subject of the linking can demonstrate validity in its own right”²⁵. Whilst acknowledging that not all of the IB DP language courses are specifically designed to develop and assess language acquisition, consideration was given to the measures in place for the design and quality assurance of the language courses.

Drawing on forms A2-A7 from the CEFR Manual, the review considered:

- Test development
- Marking
- Grading and results.

2.4.1 Test development

Under this section, IB DP materials on assessment were reviewed to identify, where applicable:

²⁴ Analytic rating is where examiners score students individually against different criteria, such as fluency, grammatical control, vocabulary range, rather than a single score based on an overall (holistic) judgement of the individual's performance.

²⁵ Council of Europe, 2009. *Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR): A Manual*, p.9.

- Factors determining the design and development of the assessment
- Factors considered in the production of assessment tasks (including but not limited to: age; educational level; linguistic and language learning background of students; socio-cultural background of students)
- Any guidance and training in place for test/item writers
- The review process for test tasks, including those involved; whether tasks are pre-tested and how
- Whether test reliability and validity are estimated, and if so the means for doing so.

2.4.2 Marking

This sought to establish:

- How and where tests are marked
- Criteria for selecting markers
- Measures in place to support accuracy of marking
- How productive and integrative test tasks are marked (e.g. single or double-marked).

2.4.3 Grading and results

This examined:

- The grading scale in place
- How grade boundaries are decided
- Measures in place to maintain consistency
- How results are reported to students - e.g. do the students receive a single (“global”) grade for the subject only, or additionally a grade per sub-test (e.g. for Paper 1, Paper 2, Written Assignment and so on) or by skills-facet (e.g. reading, writing, speaking).

A summary of the quality assurance processes in place, together with the completed forms can be found in Appendix 3.

2.5 Evaluation and synthesis

Having objectively reviewed the specifications, assessments, marked student work, rating criteria and processes, the final stage was to summarise the English language competency developed and assessed through each course across the different skills facets and where possible, link the comparison of marking bands to the overall IB DP grades of 1-7, with reference to grade boundaries from the previous two years/four sittings²⁶, so that final grades could be linked to relevant CEFR level(s) as appropriate.

Overall grade descriptors were also separately comparatively analysed with relevant CEFR scales as a quality control measure, however in the event of any differing outcomes, greater weight was placed on the grade boundaries since these are course-specific whereas the grade descriptors are defined at group level for English A courses.

²⁶ Three for Literature and Performance.

2.6 Caveats and limitations

It was acknowledged from the outset that there is an inherent challenge in trying to compare courses which are not specifically designed for language acquisition to the CEFR. As such, one limitation in this study is that whilst all IB language courses would undoubtedly either develop or require a certain level of English language proficiency, there are aspects which are difficult to reliably link to a CEFR level.

For example, some assessment criteria evaluate a student's subject knowledge or skills rather than their ability to comprehend or produce texts in English. In these instances, two approaches have been undertaken. Firstly, for criteria focussing on students' understanding of the text, as demonstrated in a textual analysis or literary commentary, it was difficult to link lower marks to CEFR since a low score could be reflective of a low level of subject knowledge and ability, rather than an indication of their language proficiency level. By contrast, achieving high marks in these criteria would not be possible without a sufficient level of reading comprehension in English, since these marks required students to be able to infer information and meaning from texts (rather than summarising or paraphrasing information which was explicitly given). As outlined in the CEFR, at B2+, learners would be expected to be able to "Understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or views"²⁷; whilst at CEFR C1, learners would be able to:

- Use "contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to infer attitude, moods and intentions"
- Understand "implied as well as stated opinions"
- "Recognise sub-themes and points of emphasis"²⁸ in elaborate or complex texts.

As such, comparisons have been drawn between the DP marks to B2+ and above, wherever possible.

Secondly, where criteria focus on aspects such as performance and other elements which are not relatable to CEFR, this has been flagged within the respective comparative analysis sections of the report, and focus has instead been placed on those criteria which do link to CEFR, such as those on language use (overall command in speaking/writing, vocabulary range and control, accuracy) and the ability to construct, substantiate and organise ideas and arguments, for which relevant scales and sub-scales can be found within the CEFR or the CEFR Manual.

It is also acknowledged that there is, within all but one of the IB English courses reviewed, an expectation to read authentic literature in English²⁹ and that students would be assessed on their ability to understand and interpret and analyse the texts. It is not possible to directly factor these texts into the evaluation of students' reading comprehension due to the variety

²⁷ Reading for Information and Argument. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. [pdf] Published by: Cambridge University Press, p.70.

²⁸ Qualitative Factors for Reception [Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, 2009. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - A Manual*. [pdf] Published by: Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, p.143.

²⁹ For the English A courses, these would be chosen from the Prescribed List of Authors (PLA) and the Prescribed List in Translation (PLT).

of texts that might be studied and the resources that may be available to support them. As such, the main focus was placed on review of the unseen texts in Paper 1 (all courses except for Literature and Performance) to determine the level of receptive competence (reading ability) expected in the IB courses. Nevertheless, the qualification profiles and analyses, where applicable, make reference to the types of texts that would be studied in terms of type and length.

Despite these limitations, it was noted that the English A courses seek to “provide an opportunity for students to develop and refine their [English] language skills”³⁰ and that the assessment criteria and related level descriptors include several aspects of language competence that can be found on the CEFR such as students’ grammatical accuracy, vocabulary range, register, sentence construction, coherence of spoken and written responses.

³⁰ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: language and literature guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document, p.16.

3. English B

3.1 Profile of English B

3.1.1 Overview and aims of English B

The English B course is one of two English courses offered as part of the IB DP's Language Acquisition group; the other being English ab initio. The Language Acquisition courses aim to support the acquisition of a second language (receptive, productive and interactive skills), reflecting the IB's wider goal of supporting bilingualism, whilst also increasing students' intercultural understanding, examining cultural values and behaviours through the study of authentic texts. The prescribed aims are shared across all of the Language Acquisition courses, namely that each course should:

- “Develop students’ intercultural understanding.
- Enable students to understand and use the language they have studied in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes.
- Encourage, through the study of texts and through social interaction, an awareness and appreciation of the different perspectives of people from other cultures.
- Develop students’ awareness of the role of language in relation to other areas of knowledge.
- Develop students’ awareness of the relationship between the languages and cultures with which they are familiar.
- Provide students with a basis for further study, work and leisure through the use of an additional language.
- Provide the opportunity for enjoyment, creativity and intellectual stimulation through knowledge of an additional language.”³¹

Teachers are encouraged to provide a monolingual environment.

Whilst there are no formal language requirements for entry, the English B course is designed for students with some previous study or knowledge of the language. Guidance is given to teachers to assist them in placing students on the most appropriate course:

³¹ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language B guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

Table 6: Guidance for teachers on student placement for IB DP language acquisition courses

Learning outcomes associated with a Grade 4 or above			
By the end of the course, students should be able to demonstrate			
	Receptive skills	Productive	Interactive skills
B SL	<p>Understand <i>straightforward</i> recorded or spoken information on the topics studied.</p> <p>Understand authentic written texts related to the topics studied <i>and that use mostly everyday language</i>.</p>	<p>Communicate orally in order to explain a point of view <i>on a designated topic</i>.</p> <p>Describe with some detail and accuracy experiences, events and concepts.</p> <p>Produce texts where the use of register, style, rhetorical devices and structural elements are generally appropriate to the audience and purpose.</p>	<p>Demonstrate interaction that <i>usually</i> flows coherently, <i>but with occasional limitations</i>.</p> <p>Engage in conversations <i>on the topics studied, as well as related ideas</i>.</p> <p>Demonstrate some intercultural engagement with the target language and culture(s).</p>
B HL	<p>Understand <i>complex</i> recorded or spoken information on the topics studied.</p> <p><i>Appreciate literary works in the target language</i>.</p> <p>Understand <i>complex</i> authentic written texts related to the topics studied.</p>	<p>Communicate orally in order to explain in detail a point of view.</p> <p>Describe in detail and accurately experiences and events, <i>as well as abstract ideas and concepts</i>.</p> <p>Produce <i>clear</i> texts where the use of register, style, rhetorical devices and structural elements are appropriate to the audience and purpose.</p> <p><i>Produce clear and convincing arguments in support of a point of view</i>.</p>	<p>Demonstrate interaction that flows coherently <i>with a degree of fluency and spontaneity</i>.</p> <p>Engage <i>coherently</i> in conversations <i>in most situations</i>.</p> <p>Demonstrate some intercultural engagement with the target language and culture(s).</p>

Source: Adapted from *Diploma Programme Language B Guide* (IB, 2013), p.6

As shown in the table above, the English B course is available at two levels (SL and HL) for most languages, with the differences pertaining to the recommended teaching hours, the depth of coverage, the addition of literature in the HL curriculum and the level and demand of the assessment. These differences are outlined in further detail below.

3.1.2 Content and duration

All students study a core syllabus, as detailed below, together with two further options selected by the teacher from a choice of five:

Table 7: Content of English B SL and HL

Topics	Potential sub-topics (non-prescriptive)
Communication and media [Core]	Advertising; bias in media; censorship; internet; mail; press; radio and television; sensationalism in media; telephone.
Global issues [Core]	Drugs; energy reserves; food and water; global warming, climate change, natural disasters; globalization; international economy; migration (rural–urban, or international); poverty and famine; racism, prejudice, discrimination; the effect of man on nature; the environment and sustainability.
Social relationships [Core]	Celebrations, social and religious events; educational system; language and cultural identity, or self-identity; linguistic dominance; minorities; multilingualism; nationalism, patriotism, fanaticism; relationships (friendship, work, family); social and/or political structures; social behaviours and stances; taboos versus what is socially acceptable.
Cultural diversity [Optional]	Beliefs, values and norms; culinary heritage; how culture is learned; intercultural assimilation; inter-linguistic influence; language diversity; migration; population diversity; subcultures; the concepts of human beauty; verbal and non-verbal communication.
Customs and traditions [Optional]	Celebrations, social and religious events; dress codes, uniforms; etiquette and protocols; fashion; food; historical events; national costumes; the arts.
Health [Optional]	Concepts of beauty and health; diet and nutrition; drug abuse; epidemics; health services; hygiene; illnesses, symptoms of good/ill health; mental health; physical exercise; surgery; traditional and alternative medicine.
Leisure [Optional]	Entertainment; exhibitions and shows; games; hobbies; recreation; social interaction through leisure; sports; travelling.
Science and technology [Optional]	Entertainment; ethics and science; ethics and technology; impact of information technology on society; natural sciences; renewable energy; scientific research; social sciences.
English B HL only: Two works of literature in the target language (free choice, chosen by the teacher)	

As shown in the table above, SL and HL study the same core and optional syllabus but the courses are differentiated by the number of teaching hours (150 and 240 hours respectively), the depth of syllabus coverage and the inclusion of literature for HL students.

The skills referenced in the course specifications have been drawn from the definitions made by the Council of Europe (2001), that:

“Receptive activities include silent reading and following the media. They are also of importance in many forms of learning (understanding course content, consulting textbooks, works of reference and documents).

Productive activities have an important function in many academic and professional fields (oral presentations, written studies and reports) and particular social value is attached to them (judgments made of what has been submitted in writing or of fluency in speaking and delivering oral presentations).

In interaction at least two individuals participate in an oral and/or written exchange in which production and reception alternate and may in fact overlap in oral communication. Not only may two interlocutors be speaking and yet listening to each other simultaneously. Even where turn-taking is strictly respected, the listener is generally already forecasting the remainder of the speaker's message and preparing a response. Learning to interact thus involves more than learning to receive and to produce utterances. High importance is generally attributed to interaction in language use and learning in view of its central role in communication.”³²

3.1.3 Summative assessment

Objectives

There are six assessment objectives for English B, of which the first five apply to both the SL and HL courses:

1. “Communicate clearly and effectively in a range of situations, demonstrating linguistic competence and intercultural understanding.
2. Use language appropriate to a range of interpersonal and/or cultural contexts.
3. Understand and use language to express and respond to a range of ideas with accuracy and fluency.
4. Organize ideas on a range of topics, in a clear, coherent and convincing manner.
5. Understand, analyse and respond to a range of written and spoken texts.
6. Understand and use works of literature written in the target language of study.”³³

The final assessment objective, related to the study of literature, is for students taking the HL course only.

Methods

The above assessment objectives are all assessed through a combination of external and internal assessment, with the total weighting of external and internal assessment as follows:

³² Council of Europe (2001) as cited in the *Diploma Programme Language B Guide* (IB, 2013).

³³ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language B guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document, p.10.

Table 8: English B assessment methods and weighting

IB English B SL / HL	
External assessment	
Weighting	70%
Methods	Written exams, written assignment
Internal assessment	
Weighting	30%
Methods	Individual oral, interactive classroom oral activities

Whilst the overall methods employed are the same for both the SL and HL courses, there are some differences in the assessment at each level, as outlined in the following two tables:

Table 9: English B SL assessment format

IB English B SL Assessments					
Number and type of assessments each examination series	External Paper 1: Receptive skills	External Paper 2: Written productive skills	External Written Assignment: Receptive and written productive skills	Internal Individual Oral presentation and discussion	Internal Interactive Oral Activities
Duration	1½ hours	1½ hours	Untimed	8-10 minutes + 15 minutes' preparation	Not specified
Type(s) of question	Various question types including multiple-choice, gap fill and matching exercises ³⁴ designed to test students' comprehension of four unseen texts	One essay question, of 250-400 words	Essay question, student selected topic in line with teacher/IB guidance Rationale – max 150-200 words; task of 200-400 words	Monologue in response to a photo stimulus followed by open questions and discussion in relation to the topic of the presentation	n/a
Weighting toward overall qualification	25%	25%	20%	20%	10%

³⁴ According to the Language B subject guide, question types in Paper 1 testing reading comprehension may include: "Gap-filling exercises based on comprehension of the text; Identifying precise references of key phrases or structures (for example, "In line x, to whom does the word 'they' refer?"); Identifying related ideas that are in different parts of the text; Identifying specific content items; Identifying true sentences according to the text; Identifying whether an explanation or definition is true or false, and finding the evidence for this in the text; Identifying who says what in a text or a series of short texts; Matching summary sentences with different paragraphs of the text; Matching words or phrases from the text with definitions; Multiple-choice questions; Short-answer questions." IB (2013). *Diploma Programme Language B Guide*, p.30.

Table 10: English B HL assessment format

	IB English B HL Assessments				
Number and type of assessments each examination series	External Paper 1: Receptive skills	External Paper 2: Written productive skills	External Written Assignment: Receptive and written productive skills	Internal Individual Oral presentation and discussion	Internal Interactive Oral Activities
Duration	1½ hours	1½ hours	Untimed	8-10 minutes + 15 minutes' preparation	Not specified
Type(s) of question	Various question types ³⁵ designed to test students' comprehension of five unseen texts	Two writing exercises: one essay question of 250-400 words, one of 150-250 words	Creative writing task of 500-600 words, plus a rationale of 150-250 words	Monologue in response to a photo stimulus followed by open questions and discussion in relation to the topic of the presentation	n/a
Weighting toward overall qualification	25%	25%	20%	20%	10%

As shown above, the methods and format of assessment are the same for both the SL and HL, but with the number of unseen texts and word counts for essay responses expected to differ between SL and HL students.

3.2 Comparative analysis of English B SL with CEFR

3.2.1 Reading

Learners' English reading comprehension skills are tested in Paper 1, a 1½ hour written examination where students are asked questions on a selection of unseen texts. Receptive skills are also tested through the Written Assignment, where students select texts to write about. Since the latter also seeks to test written productive skills, analysis of the Written Assignment is provided in Section 3.2.3, *Integrated Skills – Reading and Writing*.

3.2.1.1 Analysis of unseen texts in Paper 1

Text length, structure and presentation

Paper 1 comprises four texts, of 315-400 words each, taken from the internet with articles drawn from international sources in countries such as the UK, the USA, Australia, South Africa and Singapore. In line with the Language B Subject Guide, text types might include an article, blog, brochure, leaflet, advertisement, essay, interview, news report, review, report,

³⁵ Same question types as for SL, as above.

set of instructions, or written correspondence³⁶. In the papers reviewed, a mixture of blogs, written interviews and website articles were used.

Text domain, style and content

Overall, English B SL test takers are expected to show ability in the personal, public and educational domains. This was observed in both the course guide and the past papers reviewed.

The texts used in the past papers were typically either expository or transactional in nature and relatively concrete, falling in the public (e.g. explaining regulations or civil duties), personal (reading for interest or reading for information) or educational domains. In terms of communication themes, students are expected to be able to handle *Services*, *Travel*, the *Environment* and *Relations with other people*. Specifically, the texts tended to deal with cultural and environmental issues facing people from a variety of English-speaking countries, thereby focussing on topics likely to be reasonably familiar to the student. This is in line with the Language B Subject Guide, which states that the texts used in Paper 1 are to reflect the core topics studied by all students, namely Communication and Media; Global Issues; and Social Relationships. Examples from the past papers reviewed include:

- A blog article on giving handshakes
- A blog article on a teenager's invention of a new app
- A written interview on current environmental issues and climate change
- An article on cyberbullying written for a teenage audience.

Linguistic complexity

In terms of text authenticity, six of the eight texts were mostly authentic, with some modification through, for example, the removal of more difficult words³⁷ (such as “outlandish”, “membrane”); the reduction in length of selected passages to meet the target word count; and in one case, the addition of a sentence to explain a vocabulary item (“cyberbully”). Nevertheless, in the papers reviewed almost all original grammar and phraseology had been retained. Two of the texts had been adapted further to remove several complex terms or phrases such as colloquialisms, parenthetical clauses and selected words such as “to lessen” (a C1 verb) and “comprehensive” (a C1 adjective).

The texts set in each paper provided a good range of vocabulary and grammar, with some more informal in nature, using colloquialisms and similes (e.g. “like a dead fish”), and others more formal, and using more subject-specific vocabulary on topics such as the environment and technology/the internet.

As shown in the table below, the texts include vocabulary across all levels of CEFR:

³⁶ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language B guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document, p.30.

³⁷ No dictionaries are permitted in the exam.

Table 11: Vocabulary items from English B SL, Paper 1 unseen texts

Items comprehensible to a learner/user at CEFR level				
	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4
A1	47% sleep, important, place, travel, waiting, website, asked, minutes	49% water, rain, years, four, rivers, world, before, countries, safe	53% says, cell phones, cameras, people, young, adults, because, live, world	50% trains, short, many, families, parents, mobile phones, dining, easy, eat, used
	learn, was, different	every, day	with, after, summer, now, too, world	word, any, look at, photo
A2	23% free, country, airport, comfortable, flight, improve, company, as well as, already, however, building, popular	10% early, when, supply, built, drinking, storm, large, few, national	11% include, among, center, teens, believes, really, nothing, growing up, should, types	20% popular, passengers, types, instead, crowded, including, food, should, prefer, save for
	finally, nearly, probably, someone, enough, hey, types	teenager, international, science, during, between , project	another, becoming, explains, ago, happened	probably, describe, nothing, means, someone
B1	13% travellers, delayed, options, could, facilities, gyms, suggested, transport, according to, choice, demanded	17% land, collect, floods, challenges, technology, through, separate, systems, success, produced, advanced	10% scientists, trend, common, just, experts, research, director, experiences, mood, provide, mean (~ that), behaviours, limits	15% travellers, essential, option, whether...or..., in order to, pregnant, reserved, silence, volume, whenever, on board, service, special, dining, preparation
	shake hands, properly, until, in fact, spoiled, before, generous, point (idea), awful	fair (event), emergency, vehicles, cases, speed, mean	interview, challenge, urgent, programme-maker	bullying, technology, hurt, others, whenever, comment , posted (on website), embarrassing, link, huge
B2	10% shows (proves), survey, conducted, features, sufficient, catch, wish	13% strength, faced, inspired, store, nation, weakness, network, treated, harvest, urban, scale, further, high- grade	15% that (adverb), like (typical of), social, self-importance, self-portraits, arguing, social media, expression, extension, images, even though	6% altogether (completely), disabilities, appreciate, occupied, technological, limit, levels, devices, altogether, waste
	that's, thousands, impression, idiot, initial	rely on, response, genuine, need, implemented, reaction , application, ensure	distinguished, mankind, concern, global, climate change, ambassador, convinced, declared	heard, used (word), those who, witness, physical, threaten, content, designed (to do sth), play (a role), role

Items comprehensible to a learner/user at CEFR level				
	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4
C1	3% comprehensive, participants, commuters, nap	4% innovate, capabilities, strategic, agency, diversified, makes (~ sth. one of the...)	7% how (~ aware), allow (make possible), self-absorption, over-analyzing, widespread, reflections of, self-exploration, acceptable, guidelines, clinical, allow, publicly, happens to	5% allow (make possible), car (carriage), transportation, commute, itinerary, raising their voices, minimized, employed, disposed of, accomplished, allow
	Angle	regulating, scholarship, funding,	intense , modification , vegetation	put a stop to
C2	4% <u>trump</u> , <u>mandatory</u> , <u>wellness</u> , <u>grooming</u> , <u>allotment</u> , <u>snooze</u> , <u>spas</u>	7% vulnerability, drought, drains, sustainability, disinfection, <u>pillar</u> , <u>reclaimed</u> , <u>ultra-violet</u> , <u>catchment</u> , <u>reservoirs</u>	4% view (~ sth. as), leave (~ an impression), adolescents, outlet, <u>developmentally</u> , <u>affiliating</u> , <u>fellow</u> (research ~)	4% cross-continental, infants, odour, emit, <u>etiquette</u> , <u>mobility</u> , <u>headphones</u> , <u>well-versed</u>
	palm (of hand), perception, dominant, perpendicular, open (not secret)		Irreversible, combating, unprecedented, over (control)	abusive, embarrass [verb]

Note: Underlined text is used to denote those words which are not considered critical to understanding of the main points of the text.

Taking into consideration the above factors, the level of reading comprehension needed for each text varied, but typically fell at levels B1 and B2. For example, one text presented the findings of a survey on people's perspectives on airport facilities. This contained a significant amount of vocabulary but where the meaning of new words could in many cases be inferred so that a CEFR B2 level learner would be comfortable with this text, whilst a learner at CEFR B1 level may be able to grasp the key points. Another text, whilst descriptive in nature, had a high percentage of lexical items at levels B2 or above, where readers at lower levels would likely struggle to understand the text as a whole.

3.2.1.2 Review of assessment tasks in Paper 1

As well as considering the level of reading comprehension needed to understand the texts as a whole, consideration was given to the level of comprehension, and specific reading skills required to answer the examination tasks correctly.

In terms of communicative tasks within Paper 1, students would be expected to be able to read for general orientation and information and to read for pleasure. They are expected to understand regulations and customs; to learn how to use public facilities; and to find out about the culture and natural environment of the English-speaking country they are travelling to.

Students have 1½ hours to read the four 300-400 word texts and answer approximately 40 questions of the following types:

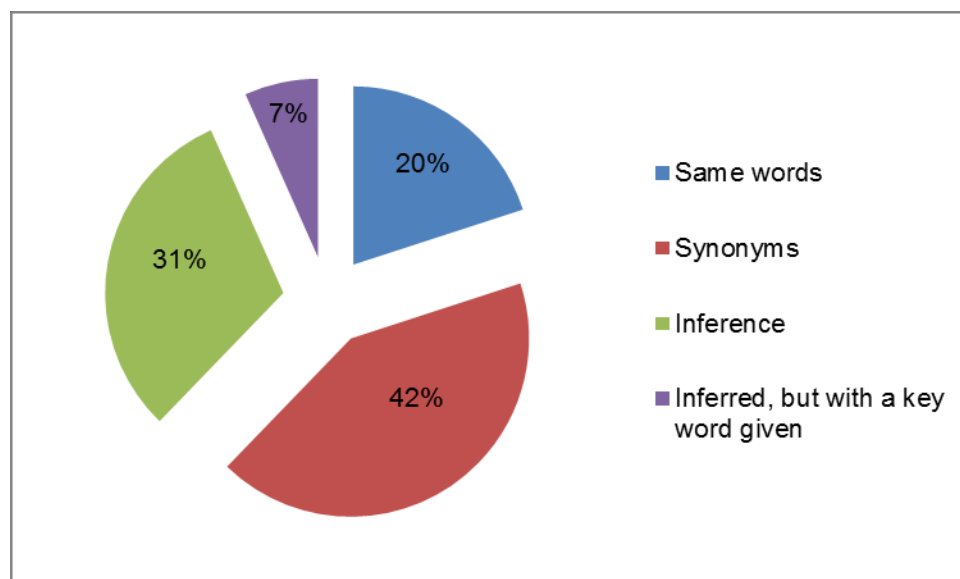
- Matching
- True or false
- Short answer
- Multiple choice
- Gapped text – cloze.

In terms of specific tasks, students have to be able to answer general questions on the main points of informative texts; understand specific nuances of the text (for questions where there is more than one plausible answer); identify synonyms of specific CEFR Level B1 to C2 words; and summarise paragraphs (by choosing an appropriate paragraph title).

Task instructions are likely to be understood by all test takers, since there are a limited number of task-types and vocabulary used reflects a similar range as the texts themselves.

For all questions, the project team considered whether the information needed to answer the question was given using: (i) the same word(s); (ii) synonyms or (iii) neither, thereby requiring students to infer from the text. The chart below shows the number of marks available for each as a proportion of the total marks available for Paper 1:

Figure 5: Distribution of marks for reading skills in English B SL Paper 1



As shown in the chart above, a fifth of the marks can be attained by readers able to identify and match key words at CEFR levels A2-B1³⁸. Over 40% of the marks are available only to those students with a wider vocabulary, able to understand synonyms, with the level of vocabulary and grammar required ranging considerably (from CEFR B1-C2³⁹), whilst just under a third of the marks are reserved for those able to infer information from the text which is implicit rather than explicit. This indicates that the exam tests across a range of achievement levels.

Tasks require a mixture of global comprehension and understanding points of detail. For example, some tasks direct students to particular sections of the text, e.g. “Which word between lines 8 and 13 is closest in meaning to travellers?”, but questions of this nature are typically worth a small proportion of the total marks (6-20%) for Paper 1, with many more tasks summative in nature, requiring students to answer from one of the four full texts.

The vast majority of questions require comprehension of vocabulary at either CEFR B1 or CEFR B2 levels. Whilst it was observed that some texts may have a considerable amount of complex vocabulary exceeding that level (indicative more of C1), in many instances this level of vocabulary was not critical for comprehension of the text or to answer the majority of the questions. Similarly, the grammatical structures employed could feasibly be handled by a level B2 learner.

Lastly, the texts were relatively concrete in nature. By contrast at C1 readers are described as being able to “Understand in detail a wide range of lengthy, complex texts likely to be

³⁸ Examples include “least” (A2); “has been” (A2) and referential clauses at B1.

³⁹ “Built” (A2); “completed” (A2); “achieved” (answer) (B1); “comfortable” (B1); “followed” (question/text) (B1); “taken” (answer) (B1); “travellers” (B1); “critical” (B2); “natural” (B2); “occupied” (question/text) (B2); “peculiar” (B2); “regarded by” (B2); “respected” (answer) (B2); “share” / “joint” (B2); “sociologists” (B2); “survey” (B2); “accomplished” (question/text) (C1); “boundaries” (C1); “insufficient” (C1); “good practices” (C2).

encountered in social, professional or academic life;⁴⁰. It is therefore accepted that the questions requiring knowledge of C1 words would support testing of higher levels of achievement but as a whole the test is best designed to test achievement in reading up to CEFR level B2.

3.2.2 Writing

Students' written production skills are assessed through Paper 2, a 1½ hour examination requiring students to answer one essay question from a choice of five, which accounts for the full 25 marks available for the paper.

All questions are related to the optional subjects (Cultural Diversity; Customs and Traditions; Health; Leisure; Science and Technology), with one option per question. In response to a given scenario, students are asked to produce a specific type of text, such as a/an:

- Article
- Blog/diary entry
- Brochure, leaflet, flyer, pamphlet, advertisement
- Essay
- Interview
- Introduction to debate, speech, talk, presentation
- News report
- Official report
- Review
- Set of instructions, guidelines
- Written correspondence⁴¹.

In some questions, students are asked to write from a particular perspective or with a particular opinion, whilst in others they are free to give their own opinion. The phrasing of the questions is clear and should be comprehensible to most students. The vocabulary within the questions varies depending on the selected questions, some ranging from A1-B2, others from A1-C1 but since the questions are linked to the aforementioned optional topics, it is anticipated that much of the vocabulary will be familiar to students, or that the gist of the question will be understood by most learners.

Students' written responses are assessed on three criteria as follows:

⁴⁰ Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment*, p.70.

⁴¹ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language B guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document, p.31.

Table 12: Assessment criteria for English B SL Paper 2

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall component
A	Language	10	40%
B	Message	10	40%
C	Format	5	20%

For each of the above three criterion, students are assessed against a series of level (band) descriptors. Using the most relevant tables and scales in the CEFR, the project team conducted a comparative analysis of the band descriptors against the level and range of skills expected at each CEFR level.

Criterion A

Criterion A seeks to evaluate how “effectively and accurately” the student uses language in their written response – in effect marking students’ use of vocabulary, grammar, sentence construction and general command of the language.

Criterion A is marked on a scale of 0-10, with a mark deducted where students fail to write the minimum number of words. The level descriptor for a mark of 1-2 typically reflects a borderline level A1/A2 on the different scales. At this level, it would be expected that students would have a limited command of the language and a basic repertoire of vocabulary. At the next marking band, 3-4, overall command of the language remains limited but with learners demonstrating a comparably greater ability to construct simple sentence structures, reflecting more fully the level of achievement associated with A2 where a learner “uses some simple structures correctly but still systematically makes basis errors”⁴². To achieve a grade of 5-6, students would typically have a general linguistic range at A2+, borderline B1 in that students would generally have enough language to get by (adequate), indicative of B1, but with evident limitations in terms of formulating and employing vocabulary and grammar correctly, which may still reflect expectations of a good A2 learner.

At the highest marking band, 9-10, the expectations that learners will be able to demonstrate a “good and effective” command of the language, with “few significant errors” and be able to use more complex sentence structures are indicative of achievement at B2. The selected CEFR scales demonstrate that learners at B2 are able to express themselves clearly, demonstrating good grammatical control and a good range of vocabulary for matters connected to the field/common topics.

Criterion B

Criterion B, entitled “Message”, evaluates the extent to which students have been able to effectively communicate the key message in their extended response. Each level descriptor for Criterion B comments on how well the message has been communicated, ranging from

⁴² Grammatical Accuracy Scale. [Council of Europe – Modern Languages Division, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. [pdf] p.114].

“not communicated” to “communicated well”; the relevance of ideas put forward; and the extent to which these ideas have been developed and substantiated by supporting information.

As with Criterion A, Criterion B is also marked on a scale of 0-10. The top mark band, 9-10, awarded to those who have communicated well, demonstrates clear links with a strong performance at CEFR B2 level with students achieving these marks expected to be able to write essays or reports with:

- Clear, coherent development of an argument, description or narrative
- Effective use of relevant details and examples to support their arguments
- Effective use of linking words to clearly show the links between different ideas or key points in their response.

A mark of 7-8 is awarded to those that have communicated fairly well, with coherent development of ideas and where supporting details are considered to be mostly appropriate. The expectations at this level exceed that of a typical B1 learner, and reflect skills associated more with B2, albeit at a lower level than those achieving a mark of 9-10.

Comparing the lower mark bands to the CEFR scales is more challenging because the CEFR scales reflect more on the type of texts that learners *can* produce at each level, whereas the IB marking bands, particularly for marks of 1-2 and 3-4 reflect on what the learner *has not* demonstrated in relation to the question. For example a mark of 3-4 is awarded where “the message has barely been communicated”, whereas the descriptors at B1 and below reference the ability to write short simple essays/accounts (B1) or very short, basic descriptions (A2); neither of which reflect the type of task put to students of the English B course. Nevertheless, on the basis of the overall written production, some links can be drawn between the two scales: the ability to partially communicate the message associated with a mark of 5-6 would indicate that, in line with CEFR B1, students are able to link a series of ideas and that “Texts are understandable but occasional unclear expressions...may cause a break-up in reading...” while the errors still mean that “the reader usually can interpret correctly on the basis of the context”⁴³.

Similarly, a CEFR A2 learner, when producing longer texts, such as that required by Paper 2, may demonstrate errors that impact meaning, or cause coherence issues making the response difficult to follow: this would be most closely reflected by the mark band for 3-4 where, as mentioned above, “The message has barely been communicated... the development of ideas is confusing...”⁴⁴.

⁴³ Written Assessment Criteria Grid. [Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, 2009. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - A Manual*. [pdf] Published by: Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, p.187.]

⁴⁴ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language B guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document, p.35.

Criterion C

Criterion C centres on the format of the response, reflecting that each question asks the student to produce a particular type of text, as listed earlier in this section. As such the marks, on a scale of 0-5, consider whether the text produced by the student is recognisable as the type of text required by the question attempted. In the case of the papers reviewed, this included a newspaper article, a leaflet for a school noticeboard, a blog article, an article for a school magazine / newspaper, a speech for a school-age audience or an essay set by a teacher on a given topic. The CEFR does not have specific sub-scales for different text types but rather only guidance on the ability to structure discourse (already considered as part of the Criterion B comparative analysis) and the ability to design text including knowledge of design conventions for different types of text (such as stories and anecdotes versus debates and essays or formal letters) which would be developed as a learner progresses through the levels on the framework.

The project team viewed three samples of marked Paper 2 scripts. The first, graded at 11/25 (A5, B2, C4), demonstrated a range of vocabulary but with some noticeable errors, for example in describing a past conversation. Reported speech is a grammatical criterial feature of English associated with CEFR B2⁴⁵. Overall, the text is generally understandable but at times, unclear expressions or errors interrupt the flow of the text for the reader, indicative of B2 and the general message – relative to the question – has not been communicated that well. The text type is generally recognisable, enabling a higher score against Criterion C but overall this score would indicate a borderline A2/B1 performance.

The second, graded at 19/25 (A7, B7, C5), is an article for a school magazine in relation to a claim that “All cars will run on electricity in 15 years’ time”. The text type is clearly recognisable, resulting in full marks for Criterion C. The other criteria score the second highest marking band (7-8). Overall the text provides a solid performance at CEFR B2 with:

- A relatively high degree of grammatical control, albeit with some errors
- Demonstration of a good vocabulary, including both specialist vocabulary and phrases such as “extracting fossil fuels” and “mother nature” relevant to the topic (science and technology) as well as attempts at idioms such as “at our fingertips”, which are mostly used appropriately
- Arguments substantiated, albeit with scope in place for this to be done to a greater extent.

The final sample, graded at 24/25 (A10, B9, C5), is a leaflet for a school noticeboard to suggest ways of incorporating exercise into students’ daily lives. The response demonstrates:

- A clear focus on the audience and text type, with evident and effective use of relevant conventions for these
- A very high level of grammatical control and lexical accuracy with only very occasional errors, none of which affect the flow or coherence of the text.

⁴⁵ Council for Europe/European Union Lifelong Learning Programme/University of Cambridge, 2011. *English Profile - Introducing the CEFR for English - Information Booklet*. [pdf] Published by: Cambridge University Press.

The review of student work also illustrates that English B SL tests students up to CEFR level B2.

3.2.3 Integrated skills – reading and writing

The Written Assignment provides an integrated assessment of receptive and written productive skills in the final year of study. Students are required to select and read across three to four different texts in English (one of which may be audio/audio-visual) linked to the core⁴⁶.

The Written Assignment must be word-processed and provided in English. It should include:

- a 150-200 word rationale detailing the subject in question; a brief description of the texts used; the aims of the essay; and the rationale for selecting the texts relative to the student's stated aims
- a 250-400 word essay.

The specific format and topic of the assignment can vary. For example, the marked student assignments reviewed by the project team included:

- A magazine article on the importance of climate change as part of the topic, Global Issues. This referenced three texts - two from the Guardian newspaper, and the third from a website article
- An article on tattoos, under the Customs and Tradition topic
- An open letter for a newspaper relating to the decision not to indict a police officer involved in the killing of an unarmed teenager under the Global Issues topic.

Written assignments are assessed on three criteria as follows:

Table 13: Assessment criteria for the English B SL written assignment

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall paper
A	Rationale and task	10	42%
B	Organization and development	6	25%
C	Language	8	33%

Criterion A

Criterion A, "Rationale and task", centres on how well the student has met the requirements of the assignment, taking into consideration:

- The extent to which the student has explained his/her aim(s) and how he/she intends to achieve the aim(s)
- The relevance of the chosen texts to the subject matter
- The use and referencing of the chosen texts within the answer.

⁴⁶ As mentioned above, the core includes Communication and Media, Global Issues and Social Relationships.

The specific skills assessed by this criterion are not reflected in the CEFR scales, and there is no reference to the use of language in the response (covered more in Criterion C) to enable comparison of these marks.

Criterion B

Criterion B is marked on a scale of 0-6, and is used to evaluate the extent to which the student has organised and developed their ideas. Whilst the ability to develop and organise ideas is covered to some extent in the CEFR (Thematic Development; and Reports and Essays sub-scales), the individual level descriptors for Criterion B are more concise, thereby not providing a reliable basis for comparison and differentiation with the more nuanced CEFR level descriptors.

Criterion C

Criterion C focusses on the student's use of language. Included within this is consideration of:

- The range and appropriateness of vocabulary employed
- Sentence construction
- The use of rhetorical devices.

The expectations associated with each marking band for language are similar to those for Paper 2, with some differences in the expectations for each marking band. For example a mark of 1-2 would be awarded where the use of language is mostly limited and "Simple sentence structures are rarely clear", whereas in the Paper 2, the expectation at this level would be that "Simple structures are *sometimes* clear". At the top band (7-8), the expectations are reflective of achievement at level B2. Although the overall score varied (8, 16 and 24 out of a possible 24 marks), the first and third marked student assignments both scored in the same band for Criterion C, Language, thereby highlighting the challenge in using achievement in the Written Assignment as an indicator of CEFR level(s).

3.2.4 Speaking and listening

Speaking is assessed through internal assessment, with two separate components. The first is an Individual Oral where students are provided with visual stimuli (two unseen photographs with a title or caption) selected by the teacher. Students choose one photograph and have 15 minutes to prepare a three- to four-minute presentation describing what the photograph shows and how it relates to the option they've studied⁴⁷ and English-speaking cultures. This is followed by a five- to six-minute teacher-student discussion of the presentation, designed to test students' ability to converse coherently and naturally; their understanding of the culture(s) depicted in the photograph; and linkages to their own; and their ability to express their opinions. Discussion of other topics beyond that of the photograph may also be introduced.

⁴⁷ Cultural Diversity; Customs and Traditions; Health; Leisure; Science and Technology.

In addition to this assessment, which takes place in the final year of study, three interactive classroom activities will be conducted during the course, for which students' highest mark is put forward. Such activities might include:

- Debates on different issues
- Whole-class, group or pair discussions
- Presentations followed by discussion
- Role plays.

These would typically be in relation to authentic material in the target language, such as a written or audio/audio-visual advertisement; film; TV programme; music video; photographs; podcasts; speeches; or presentations.

For both components, students are evaluated against a series of assessment criteria by teachers using a best-fit approach.

Table 14: Assessment criteria for the English B SL internal assessment

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards each component
Individual Oral			
A	Productive skills	10	33%
B	Interactive and receptive skills	10	33%
Interactive Oral Activity			
A	Productive skills	5	17%
B	Interactive and receptive skills	5	17%

The same descriptors are used for both the Individual Oral Presentation and Oral Activity, but with different marks attached. Using the most relevant tables and scales in the CEFR, the project team conducted a comparative analysis of the level descriptors against the level and range of skills expected at each CEFR level.

Criterion A

Criterion A evaluates the student's use and command of the language in spoken production, with the bands varying from "very limited" to "very good". Within these bands, markers should give consideration to the overall production (to what extent is the student comprehensible); the accuracy of language used; and whether the student's intonation either supports or hinders understanding.

Criterion A is marked on a scale of 0-10 (for Individual Oral) or 0-5 (Interactive Oral Activity), with the same five marking bands in each. The level descriptor at 1-2 (Individual Oral) / 1 (Interactive Oral Activity) reflects A1 on the different scales, with very limited command of the language and pronunciation of a very limited vocabulary. At the next marking band, 3-4; 2, the IB descriptors relate best to the A2 descriptors that the speaker's intonation may disrupt the flow of the conversation; "Conversational partners will need to ask for repetition

from time to time”⁴⁸; and that errors may interfere with the amount that can be comprehensible. In the next marking band (5-6; 3), production of language is sometimes fluent with less interference from intonation as seen in the last band. The B1 descriptors across the grids best reflect this with one stating that “Pronunciation is clearly intelligible even if a foreign accent is sometimes evident”⁴⁹

In the second highest IB band (7-8; 4), the speaker produces mostly fluent language with no interference from intonation. These reflect the B2 descriptors. In the highest marking band for Criterion A the descriptors relate to B2/B2+ in that some errors still occur but without disrupting the speaker’s message. The B2 descriptors state that “Errors are rare” and there is a high degree of accuracy. However B2+ descriptors for overall spoken interaction state that speakers “can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively”⁵⁰.

Criterion B

Criterion B focusses on spoken interactive and aural receptive skills with the marking bands designed to reflect how well the student can interact in a conversation, expressing ideas and maintaining the flow of the conversation.

Similar to Criterion A, Criterion B is marked on a scale of 0-10 (for Individual Oral) or 0-5 (Interactive Oral Activity). The level descriptor for a mark of 1-2 for Criterion B demonstrates some similarities with A1 descriptors in that only simple interactions take place. Further, both describe communication that is disjointed. The second marking band (3-4; 2) for the IB indicates that interaction is still limited with simple ideas and opinions presented with difficulty or sometimes incoherently. The speaker also has difficulty understanding simple ideas. At A2 it is expected that the speaker can “Understand what is said clearly, slowly and directly to him/her in simple everyday conversation”⁵¹. The IB band seems to fall slightly below this at A1/A2 with limited interactions, and the emphasis on difficulty with the language.

In the next band, the descriptors reflect better understanding of simple ideas and coherent conversation with only some lapses, however the interaction is described as being ‘acceptable’. This sits well with A2 where the speaker can make themselves understood using basic sentences and simple communication. At band 7-8 (or 4 for the Interactive Oral Activity) the speaker is understood well with difficulty only occurring with complex ideas rather than simple ideas. Additionally the conversation generally flows. This aligns with B1 where the conversation can occur with routine formal discussion of familiar subjects, with simple language and where the speaker is reasonably accurate with their language. At the highest IB band (9-10; 5), speakers are able to understand complex ideas and present them clearly, coherently, and effectively. Additionally the conversation flows coherently. This

⁴⁸ Phonological control grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁴⁹ Phonological control grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁵⁰ Overall spoken interaction grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁵¹ Understanding a Native Speaker Interlocutor. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

aligns with B2 where a conversation with a native speaker does not impose strain on either party during the interaction. Both routine and non-routine discussions can take place.

The project team reviewed a number of sample internal oral assessments, with the stimulus given to the student together with an mp3 of their Individual Oral Presentation and discussion with the examiner.

As is indicated by the assessment criteria and marking bands, there is considerable variation in the level of speaking assessed by the English B SL. Each speaking sample was compared across the profile for oral assessment (range; accuracy; fluency; interaction and cohesion).

One Individual Oral presentation scoring 6/20 (A3, B3) was focussed on a photograph of a man crying with the caption, "If I don't talk to someone, I'm going to go mad". The test taker delivered a monologue of approximately three minutes on the visual stimuli. Overall this demonstrated a limited command of the language, producing short sentences which were sometimes, but not always, comprehensible. There were many errors in vocabulary and grammar and at times pronunciation and intonation interfered with communication. After the monologue, the examiner posed a number of questions to assess the individual's ability to maintain a conversation. Whilst early questions were understood, as the exam continued there were a number of answers that did not relate to the questions posed and the examiner on many occasions had to find ways to rephrase the question. Reviewing this performance across the CEFR oral profile, the individual demonstrated an overall spoken production and interaction around level A2. The level of accuracy was typically fairly low, with a considerable number of errors but with evidence that the test taker was able to use some simple structures correctly. During the monologue, the test taker was able to make themselves mostly understood in terms of individual sentences but coherence in the overall presentation was more limited. The test taker could answer simple questions but the conversation was very disjointed, with the test taker reliant on questions and prompting from the examiner, reflecting the A2 descriptor for interaction, "Answer questions and respond to simple statements...but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord"⁵².

Another Individual Oral Presentation reviewed scored 19/20 (A10, B9). In it the student was discussing a photograph of a woman holding a Barbie doll, where the woman was made up to resemble Barbie in terms of hair style and make up. The three-minute presentation (see "Sustained Monologue" scale) was well paced, demonstrating a very good and varied range of vocabulary with no indication of needing to search for the best word. Grammatical accuracy and control were also strong, with few identifiable errors in speech, certainly none which impacted meaning or effort on the part of the listener. In the follow-up discussion, the test taker demonstrated a strong ability to maintain the conversation, with the examiner needing to ask comparatively fewer questions and instead making statements to which the test taker would agree or disagree without prompt, therefore maintaining a considerably more natural conversation.

⁵² Oral Assessment Criteria Grid. [Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, 2009. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - A Manual*. [pdf] Published by: Council of Europe - Language Policy Division. p. 185.]

A second high-scoring example (18, with A9, B9) was similarly able to describe the stimulus with ease, making observations and giving opinions, often substantiating views with a few pauses by comparison to the other test taker, but with a strong degree of fluency and coherence. Comparing these performances against the overall oral assessment profile, it is clear that performance at this level is reflective of CEFR B2/ B2+. For example, in terms of range, neither test taker showed signs of having to restrict what they wanted to say, demonstrating a good command of the language and similarly demonstrating a high level of accuracy, both in terms of grammar and vocabulary, with few errors. These aspects can be indicative of both C1 and B2, since at B2, it would be expected that the learner could use the language “Fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general, academic and vocational or leisure topics”⁵³ and be able to “Communicate spontaneously with good grammatical control without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say, adopting a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances”⁵⁴. At C1 by contrast, as well as demonstrating good fluency, range, accuracy and coherence, it would be expected that learners would understand and be able to respond to speech on abstract and complex topics. Noting that the Individual Oral presentations and Individual Oral Activities are linked to topics studied by the students and relatively concrete in nature, it is felt that the oral assessments give scope to fully assess up to level B2+, whilst acknowledging that those achieving top grades may be *capable* of engaging at a level C1.

The final sample reviewed scored 15/20 (A7, B8) illustrated overall spoken production and interaction skills associated with CEFR level of B2, somewhat higher (in CEFR terms) than was indicated by the assessment criteria alone. For this mark, the student demonstrates a sufficient range of vocabulary and grammar to be able to give clear descriptions and express viewpoints, explaining around terms when the specific word was not known. The test taker was able to converse with an even tempo, with some hesitation evident whilst searching for the right words, but as these pauses were very short they did not noticeably impact the overall flow of the conversation.

3.2.5 Summary of English language competency assessment in English B SL

As shown in the table below, the English B SL aims to test students’ receptive, productive and interactive skills in English. Whilst listening comprehension is not formally assessed, it would be a component part of the programme and inevitably developed throughout the course. The ability to comprehend questions in the internal assessment (through the discussion with the examiner and the interactive oral activities) is included in the spoken interaction assessment.

⁵³ Overall Spoken Interaction. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁵⁴ Overall Spoken Interaction. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

Table 15: Skills facets assessed in the English B SL course

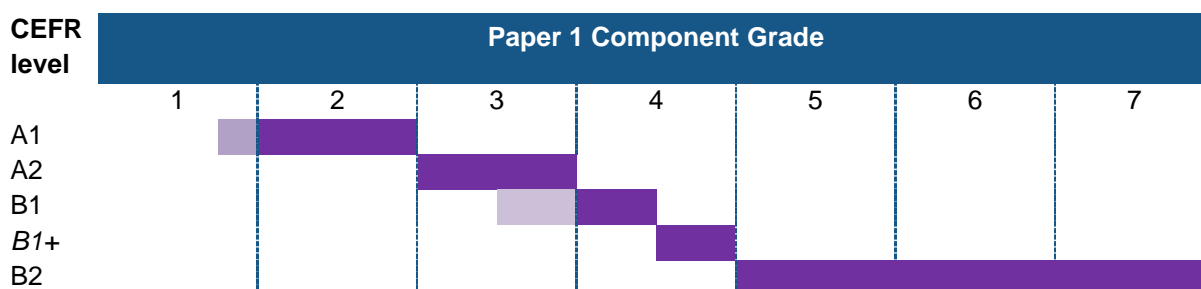
	Receptive		Production		Interaction	
Skill facet	Reading comp.	Listening comp.	Written production	Spoken production	Written interaction	Spoken interaction
Assessed?	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes
Relevant assessment	Paper 1 Written Assignment	<i>Interactive Oral Activity based on a listening activity</i>	Paper 2 Written Assignment	Individual Oral		Individual Oral Interactive Oral Activity

Reading

A detailed review of Paper 1 demonstrated that English B SL students should be able to “read with a large degree of independence”, dealing with a variety of different texts, some of which the student may not be familiar with; and possess a broad, active reading vocabulary. With reference to the CEFR scale for Overall Reading Comprehension, and relevant subscales for reading comprehension, together with the level of understanding required by the assessment tasks, Paper 1 can be viewed to test across a range of CEFR levels, up to CEFR B2.

Taking into consideration the levels of the unseen texts, the distribution of marks by task difficulty, and the component grade boundaries, the following comparison is proposed for the reading component:

Figure 6: English B SL reading component and corresponding CEFR levels



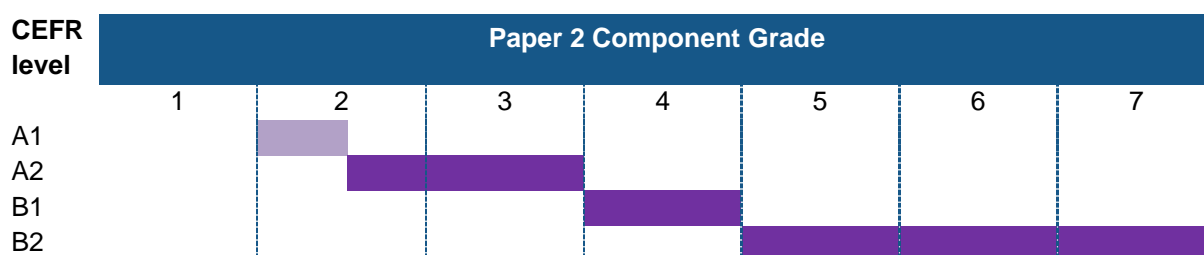
Writing

Analysis of the assessment tasks for Paper 2 demonstrates that the English B SL questions and assessment criteria provide a solid assessment of productive competence in writing up to CEFR B2. The findings from the comparative analysis of the assessment criteria to relevant CEFR scales were further supported by an analysis of marked student work. It is acknowledged that the Written Assignment offers a further opportunity to develop and assess students' writing ability in English.

Based on the comparison of assessment criteria, their relative weighting (in terms of the proportion of marks available for each) and further supported by the review of marked

scripts, the following threshold scores are recommended for comparability to the respective CEFR levels:

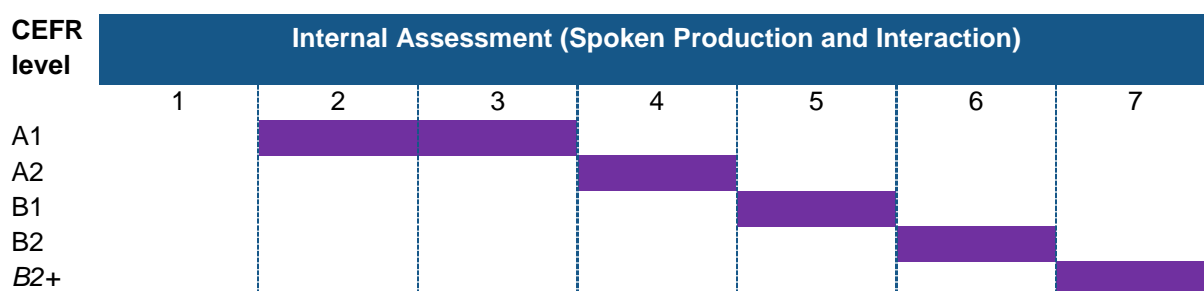
Figure 7: English B SL writing component and corresponding CEFR levels



Speaking

Students' spoken production and interaction skills are tested through the Individual Oral and Interactive Oral Activities. Based on the comparison of the assessment criteria, their relative weighting and further supported the review of marked audio scripts, the following threshold scores are recommended for comparability to the respective CEFR levels for speaking.

Figure 8: English B SL internal assessment and corresponding CEFR levels



Drawing on the comparability of the different components and their relative weighting to the overall grade, the overall grade boundaries (drawn from three sittings) and the grade descriptors as appropriate, the overall comparability to CEFR of the English B SL is recommended as follows:

Figure 9: Comparability of the English B SL to the CEFR

CEFR Level	English B SL
C2	
C1	
B2+	7
	6
B2	5
B1	4
A2	3
A1	2

3.3 Comparative analysis of English B HL with CEFR

3.3.1 Reading

3.3.1.1 Analysis of unseen texts in Paper 1

Text length, structure and presentation

Paper 1 includes five unseen texts; one more than is included in the SL Paper 1, with the same timeframe available for both exams (1½ hours). The texts are also slightly longer, 400-500 words (compared with the 300-400 word texts included in the SL exam), thereby adding to the demand of the paper in terms of the reading speed required.

Students are expected to be able to handle a range of text types including but not limited to:

- Advertisements
- Blogs
- Brochures and leaflets
- Essays and reports
- Instructions or guidelines
- Interviews
- Letters and other written correspondence
- Newspaper or magazine articles and columns
- Poems
- Reviews
- Short stories and novels.⁵⁵

In the exam papers reviewed, the texts were drawn from newspaper and magazine articles, business literature/brochures, information websites and novels. As was observed in the SL paper, the texts are drawn from a variety of countries reflecting the international nature of the DP as a whole. Countries of origin for the texts included the UK, the USA, Australia, Pakistan, Singapore and Ireland.

Text domain, style and content

Students are expected to be able to handle a range of domains (public, personal, occupational) although the texts largely fall into the personal domain. The texts in the papers reviewed included in-depth interviews, discussion of contemporary issues, descriptions of aspects of culture, literary narratives and intellectual argument. They also covered a wide variety of communicative themes and topics likely to be familiar to the students, including relations with other people, free time, environment, daily life, politics and education.

A variety of discourse types are presented including transactional, argumentative, expository, narrative and poetic. Examples observed in the papers reviewed include:

- A website article on a members' club (under the topic of free-time, leisure)

⁵⁵ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language B guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document. p.38-39.

- A website article providing a critical explanation of soap operas as a genre
- A newspaper article arguing the benefits of sharing experiences
- A website article summarising a project on wind power, written by an engineering company
- A piece of prose reminiscing about the past and about making resolution.

Linguistic complexity

In terms of authenticity, the texts appear mostly authentic but with some signs of minor adaptation, for example by removing certain words or replacing with synonyms, acknowledging that students will not have access to a dictionary during the exam. In others the original text may have been reduced in length to fit the word limit in the HL specifications.

All texts include a wide range of vocabulary, although the level and range varies between the texts, enabling the paper to assess a range of reading comprehension levels. For example, one text used primarily everyday language which was pitched at CEFR level B1 or below. On the other hand, two of the texts used a higher level of vocabulary: one using vocabulary of a specialist nature related to geography and engineering; the other employing general but high level vocabulary which was critical for the understanding of the text, e.g. “loneliness”, “obesity”, “contrary to...”, all at C1, and “profound”, “elders”, “ethic”, “fragmenting”, all at C2.

The table below shows the range and type of vocabulary used in the texts in a given exam paper:

Table 16: Vocabulary items from English B HL Paper 1 unseen texts

Items comprehensible to a learner/user at CEFR level					
	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4	Text 5
A1	45% wear, children, sporting, jacket, all, with	47% TV, other, often, camera, faces, close, show	50% something, older, people, animals, young, learn, can	50% wind, years, farm, between, sea	68% father, knew, really, wanted, university, chair, breakfast, homework, sometimes
	or, each, food, young, people	meet, world, drawing, young	some, people, when, ask, problems, start (by), its	there (was), new, closer, until, bank, eleven, years, good, window, place	last night
A2	21% club, golf, members, guests, order, picking up, must, use (noun), areas	15% might, programmes, story, perhaps, ends, most, how, actor, which	13% which (relative), explains, twice, health, almost, sell, sounds, odd, should	18% kept, long, which, early, electricity, computer, modern, single, temperature, desert, lake	9% history, arrived, could, perhaps, as ... as, read, time, last
	hall, shopping centre, motorway, cafeteria, most, immediately	latest, comic, part (of), cartoon, most (of), simple, decided., drawings	discuss, heard, turning off, office, unfortunately, exercise	post office, crowd, had (to), in front, next to, usually, telephone, finally	such as, too much
B1	9% wide range, offers, harbour, neat, styled, takeaway, required, whose	19% show up, filmed, soap opera, hours, quick thinking, in addition, humans, normally, rather	12% recent, effects, ideas, technology, really, encourage, shared, offer, just	13% traditional, technology, developments, seriously, connected, site, reliable, geographical	15% blind, whenever, articles, professor, paragraphs, couple, mostly, forgotten, feed
	counter, self-service, despite, appearances, in fact, design, heart (at its), taken, carried out, research, skills, personal, development, obvious	trend, local, childhood	thought, head (mind), announce, culture, wonder, habits, surrounded (by), piles, stuff, urgent, imagination	step (through), fortunately, twin, come on, grabbing, I bet (you), shiny, look, reserved	generation, future, top (best), education, event, particularly, guided
B2	16% elegant, facilities, stunning, committee,	8% while (although), reveal, episode, tie-up, skilled,	14% with (cause), lead to, reveal, poverty, social, basically,	6% concept, generating, efficiency, not only, source, unique,	6% hopefully, would (always), read out, casually, rush, tease,

Items comprehensible to a learner/user at CEFR level					
	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4	Text 5
	informal, regulations, dress, denied	occur, emotions, relevant to, unnatural	precious, traditions	predictable, level	bothered, renew, standard, ignore
	at first sight, combination, public, scene, place (v), approach, academic, study, unlike, impact, examine, affects, general	emerge, growing (adj), virtual (computer), community, logical, while (although), plot, predictable, represent, tackle	mental, talks, in response to, fixed (pre-decided), stated, decent, system, intentions, operate, intellectual, stimulates, thought, questions	gathered, fixed (to), as if, wire, fence, slid through, honour, took over	faces (v), crisis, sort out, climate change, global, conflict, presentation (of awards), awards, depression, affected, realistic, pessimistic, figure out, consumer, getting (sb to do sth)
C1	3% state of the art, dress code, conservatively, conditions	6% material (information), shoot (a film), blocking (cannot see), way (manner), day-to-day, blocking, unforeseen, unconventional, immense	6% type (person), loneliness, obesity, when it comes to, isolating, exaggerated, gadgets, contrary to	5% horizontal, vertical, in turn, right-angle, phenomenon, accelerate, towards (time)	0% journals
	easily (likely), random, to the contrary, innovative, deprived, focus (of sth),	claim (statement), amateur, passion (for sth), somewhat, alternate	slavery, boundaries, formally, principles, power, context	just the same	concluded, overwhelmed, self-esteem, lost
C2	6% (including underlined words) standards, consistent with, observe, meet (requirements), attire, ambience, backdrop	3% (including underlined words) relentless, scenarios, trait, <u>memorize</u> , <u>tilt</u>	5% (including underlined words) isolation, profound, yet more, elders, ethic, <u>fragmenting</u> , <u>dehumanizing</u> , <u>ageing</u>	8% (including underlined words) whereby, fluctuations, incorporated, transmission, <u>windmill</u> , <u>vanes</u> , <u>hinterland</u> , <u>turbines</u> , <u>optimize</u> , <u>utilization</u>	2% trail off, resolution, twist
		print (n), dispute (v), paved? (pave the way – C2), conceived (idea), armed with, route	dulls the mind, propaganda, explicitly, future (of sth), legendary, get through	come in handy, slip through, only (conjunction), itching (to do sth), cracks	Future (of education), spiralled (based on downward spiral – C2), discipline

The texts employed a range of grammatical structures and features reflective of both B1 and B2, including but not limited to:

- B1
 - Modals for advice/permission
 - Simple relative clauses
 - Present perfect tense
 - Past perfect tense
 - Future continuous tense
- B2
 - Passives / passive voice
 - Modals in relative clauses
 - Lexically specific verbs + object + infinitive
 - Phrasal verbs and idioms.

3.3.1.2 Review of assessment tasks in Paper 1

In terms of communicative activities in Paper 1, test takers would be expected to be able to:

- Read information in order to understand regulations and protocols
- Read in order to follow arguments and debate about contemporary issues, including complex abstract ideas
- Read to gain knowledge required in a business context
- Read in order to appreciate aesthetic uses of language in literary works.

Students have 1½ hours to answer 50-60 questions, with each linked to one of the five unseen texts. The questions are a combination of the following questions types:

- Gapped text / cloze
- Matching
- Multiple choice or true/false questions
- Short answer, open questions
- Others, such as identifying precise references of key phrases or structures.

In terms of specific tasks, students are expected to be able to:

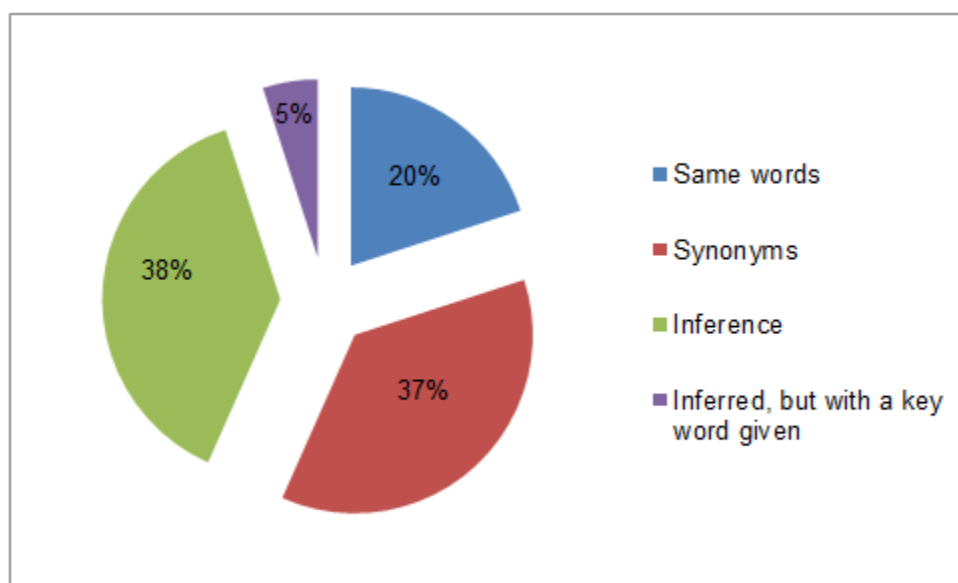
- Answer general questions on the main points of informative texts
- Understand specific nuances of the text (for questions where there is more than one plausible answer) – review of the tasks found that for all multiple-choice questions, the most or all of the distractors were plausible
- Identify synonyms of specific CEFR Level B1 to C2 words
- Summarise paragraphs (by choosing an appropriate paragraph title)
- Understand complex discourse by identifying antecedents of referential determiners that are not always clearly marked.

Task instructions are set at approximately the same level as the test and should be comprehensible to students at the range of achievement levels tested by the paper.

In line with the methodology for English B courses, the project team considered for each task whether the information needed to answer the question was given using: (i) the same word(s); (ii) synonyms or (iii) neither, thereby requiring students to infer from the text. The

chart below shows the number of marks available for each as a proportion of the total marks available for Paper 1.

Figure 10: Distribution of marks for reading skills in English B HL Paper 1



Similar to the SL paper, a fifth of the marks can be attained by readers able to identify and match key words at CEFR levels A2-B2⁵⁶. A little under 40% of the marks are reserved for those students able to demonstrate a wider vocabulary in order to identify synonyms of words in the questions, so as to select the correct answer. The level of these synonyms ranges considerably from CEFR A2-C2⁵⁷ but with the vast majority placed at B2, several at levels B1, C1 and C2. A total of 42% of the marks require students to be able to infer information or meaning from the text, either fully (38%) or with a key word given (5%). Thus, as with the SL course, the HL Paper 1 tests across a range of achievement levels.

As with the SL course, Paper 1 tasks require a mixture of global and selective comprehension. A number of questions direct students to a given section of the text, e.g. the first paragraph, or selected lines (e.g. lines 20-29) but there are many more which require students to identify or infer the relevant phrases from the whole text.

3.3.2 Writing

3.3.2.1 Review of tasks in Paper 2

As with English B SL, students' written productive skills are assessed in Paper 2. The structure and the content of the paper differs to SL in that it comprises two distinct sections, A and B. Section A comprises five questions all linked to the optional topics studied during

⁵⁶ Examples include "least" (A2); "has been" (A2) and referential clauses at B1.

⁵⁷ "Built" (A2); "completed" (A2); "achieved" (answer) (B1); "comfortable" (B1); "followed" (question/text) (B1); "taken" (answer) (B1); "travellers" (B1); "critical" (B2); "natural" (B2); "occupied" (question/text) (B2); "peculiar" (B2); "regarded by" (B2); "respected" (answer) (B2); "share" / "joint" (B2); "sociologists" (B2); "survey" (B2); "accomplished" (question/text) (C1); "boundaries" (C1); "insufficient" (C1); "good practices" (C2).

the course, of which the students choose one question to answer. This will require them to produce a particular type of text (same as those required for SL, as listed in section 3.2.2). In the past papers reviewed, examples include:

- A proposal to the city council to create a visitor or research centre at the site of an archaeological discovery (Cultural Diversity)
- A blog on Halloween customs in an Anglophone country for readers in the student's home country (Customs and Traditions)
- A promotional pamphlet to market the student's capital city to English speaking tourists, requiring students to cover both past and present information about the city (Leisure)
- A speech for a class debate agreeing or disagreeing with a statement on the use of robots in the workplace (Science and Technology)
- A proposal to the school board outlining suggestions for an alternative educational programme which emphasises learning through entertainment (Leisure)
- A blog commenting on a recent article on the relative importance of natural sciences and social sciences, where students are expected to discuss the claim and give reasons for their opinion (Science and Technology).

The phrasing of the questions is clear and should be comprehensible to most students although the level of vocabulary is fairly high, ranging from A1-C2, with a number of key words needed to fully comprehend the question pitched at B2 and C1 levels.

Students would be expected to write 250-400 words in response to the question and would be penalised one mark for writing less than this.

The second section, B – unique to English B HL – requires students to write a 150-200 word personal response to a stimulus text or statement on one of the core topics. All students answer the same question but they can choose the text type they use to respond.

3.3.2.2 Review of marking and assessment criteria for Paper 2

Students' written responses in Paper 2 are rated with reference to a mark scheme which describes a "good answer" for each question, one that would be awarded a mark in the highest band; as well as the assessment criteria as detailed in the subject guide.

For English B HL Paper 2, the assessment criteria are as follows:

Table 17: Assessment criteria for English B HL Paper 2

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall component
Section A			
A	Language	10	22%
B	Message	10	22%
C	Format	5	11%
Section B			
A	Language	10	22%
B	Argument	10	22%

The assessment criteria and band descriptors for Section A are very similar to those used in the SL paper but with some differences in the scores assigned to each, enabling parallels to be drawn with the CEFR analysis in section 3.2.2 as follows:

Table 18: Parallels between the English B SL and HL band descriptors and CEFR levels

Criterion	English B SL band	English B HL band	Indicative CEFR level
A: Language	0	0	n/a
	1-2	x	A1+
	3-4	1-2	A2
	5-6	3-4	A2+
	7-8	5-6	B1
	9-10	7-8	B2
	x	9-10	B2/B2+*
B: Message	0	0	n/a
	1-2	x	n/a
	3-4	1-2	A2
	5-6	3-4	B1
	7-8	5-6	B2
	9-10	7-8	B2
	x	9-10	B2/B2+*
C: Format	0	0	n/a
	1	1	n/a
	2	2	n/a
	3	3	n/a
	4	4	n/a
	5	5	n/a

*As shown in the table above, the top marking band (9-10) in Criterion A and B for English B HL exceeds the level assessed in English B SL and is accordingly compared separately to CEFR. As outlined in the English B SL, Section A Criterion C is not fully relatable to CEFR.

Criterion A

Criterion A in both Section A and B of Paper 2 evaluates the student's use of language. As outlined in the SL analysis, level descriptors for Criterion A were compared to CEFR with reference to scales for range, control and accuracy.

A grade of 9-10 is awarded where the student demonstrates a very effective command of the language with accurate and effective use of a wide range of vocabulary, with few errors, even in complex sentence structures. At CEFR B2, it would be expected that learners "Show a relatively high degree of grammatical control", avoiding errors which may cause misunderstanding⁵⁸. At B2+, "Occasional 'slips' or non-systematic errors and minor flaws in sentence structure may still occur but they are rare". This differs slightly from expectations at C1, where mistakes would be rare and hard to spot⁵⁹. As such, in order to fully determine comparability to CEFR for this criterion, reference was made to student samples, observing the number and types of errors present in high-scoring samples, in relation to CEFR (i.e. to what extent are errors difficult to spot).

Criterion B

Criterion B in the first section evaluates how successfully the student has communicated the message; whilst for Section B, the criterion evaluates the extent to which the student has made a convincing argument. Nevertheless, both rate the student's response in term of coherence and organisation and the extent to which they've developed their ideas. In relation to CEFR, these can both be compared together with reference to CEFR scales and sub-scales for written production.

A grade of 9-10 is awarded where the message has been communicated "very well" or, for Section B, where the argument is "convincing", with the ideas or arguments coherent, organised, and thorough and in the case of Section A, substantiated with "highly appropriate" details. This reflects expectations of B2 and C1, with learners at C1 expected to be able to "Expand and support a point of view with some subsidiary points, reasons and examples"⁶⁰. At B2, it is expected that learners will be able to "Write an essay or report that develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of some significant points and relevant supporting detail".

To inform and verify the comparison, reference was made to a sample of marked student papers to observe the application of the assessment criteria and marking bands in practice.

⁵⁸ Grammatical Accuracy Scale. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁵⁹ Grammatical Accuracy Scale. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁶⁰ Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. [pdf].

This included work scoring 35/45 (Section A. Criterion A7, A.B7, A.C5, B.A8, B.A.8) and 43/45 (Section A. Criterion A10, A.B9, A.C5, B.A10, B.A.9).

For Section A, the first was a blog responding to a statement on the relative value of natural sciences to social sciences. The student showed good command of the language with few errors, and a couple of unnatural phrases, none of which affected meaning, and with a good range of vocabulary demonstrated. This reflected achievement at level B2, where “Lexical accuracy is generally high, though some confusion and incorrect word choice does occur without hindering communication”⁶¹ and shows “A good range of vocabulary for matters connected to his/her field and most general topics. Can vary formulation to avoid frequent repetition”⁶².

For Section B, the first student wrote a diary extract in response to a stimulus on happiness. Again the student demonstrated a good and effective command of the language, reflecting the B2/B2+ level in that they are “Able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints and develop arguments...using some complex sentence forms to do so”⁶³ (B2) and “Without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say” (B2+)⁶⁴. This was similarly true for the second student who attempted some more complex structures and tried to include idioms but had a higher number of spelling mistakes and some missing words, which again did not hinder communication.

Across both sections, the students demonstrated an ability to develop coherent texts with effective use of linking words to show the connection of ideas⁶⁵ and to expand and substantiate their key points with relevant examples and other supporting details⁶⁶, indicative of CEFR B2. The level descriptors used in the English B HL course are more finely differentiated than the CEFR scales meaning that a score of 7-10 (bands 7-8 and 9-10) for Language would correspond with CEFR B2.

3.3.3 Integrated skills – reading and writing

The Written Assignment for English B HL is an integrated assessment of receptive and written productive skills undertaken by students in their final year of study (and accordingly is untimed). Reflecting the inclusion of literature in the English B HL course, the Written Assignment requires students to complete a creative writing task linked to one or two of the literary texts they've read. These texts must have been originally written and studied in English, the target language.

⁶¹ Vocabulary Control Scale. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁶² Vocabulary Control Scale. Ibid. p.112.

⁶³ General Linguistic Range. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁶⁴ General Linguistic Range. Ibid. p.110.

⁶⁵ Coherence and Cohesion Grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁶⁶ Thematic Development. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

The Written Assignment must be word-processed and provided in English. It should include:

- A 150-200 word rationale introducing the literary text(s) chosen and how the task relates to those texts; the student's aims of the essay and their rationale for selecting the texts in light of these aims
- A 500-600 word creative writing piece.

Accordingly, the format and topic of the creative writing piece can vary, but examples reviewed from the marked student assignments included:

- Poem entries to a diary
- A letter written from one character to another from one of the novels studied during the course
- A speech at the funeral of a character from a novel studied.

Students' English B HL Written Assignments are assessed on the same three criteria as those used in the rating of the SL Written Assignment, as follows:

Table 19: Assessment criteria for the English B HL Written Assignment

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall component grade
A	Rationale and task	10	42%
B	Organization and development	6	25%
C	Language	8	33%

Criterion A and B

As outlined in the comparative analysis of the Written Assignment for English B SL, neither Criterion A nor B can be readily compared with the CEFR scales and sub-scales.

Criterion C

Criterion C evaluates the student's use of language on a scale of 0-8. The level descriptors are the same as those used for the English B SL Written Assignment, where the expectations at the top band were reflective of achievement at level B2.

One sample, achieving a score of 8/8 for Criterion C, demonstrated a good range of vocabulary which was employed accurately and effectively. The student was able to make good use of rhetorical devices and construct some effective, complex sentences. There were few errors and none that affected the meaning or coherence of the text. A second, scoring 5/8, used mostly simple sentence structures, with errors apparent when attempting more complex structures; whilst in a third sample, scoring 3/8, there were a considerable number of lexical errors which at times obscured meaning.

3.3.4 Integrated skills – speaking and listening

As with the SL course, speaking in the English B HL course is assessed through the internal assessment component, with two separate elements. The first is an Individual Oral where students are provided with visual stimuli (two unseen photographs with a title or caption) selected by the teacher. Students choose one photograph and have 15 minutes to prepare a three- to four-minute presentation describing what the photograph shows and how it relates to the option they've studied⁶⁷ and English-speaking cultures. This is followed by a five- to six-minute teacher-student discussion of the presentation, designed to test a student's ability to converse coherently and naturally; their understanding of the culture(s) depicted in the photograph and linkages to their own; and their ability to express their opinions. Discussion of other topics beyond that of the photograph may also be introduced.

In addition to this assessment, which takes place in the final year of study, three interactive classroom activities will be conducted during the course, for which the student's highest mark is put forward. Such activities might include:

- Debates on different issues
- Whole-class, group or pair discussions
- Presentations followed by discussion
- Role plays.

These would typically be in relation to authentic material in the target language, such as a written or audio/audio-visual advertisement; film; TV programme; music video; photographs; podcasts; speeches; or presentations.

For both components, the student is evaluated against a series of assessment criteria by teachers using a best-fit approach:

Table 20: Assessment criteria for the English B HL internal assessment

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards each component
Individual Oral			
A	Productive skills	10	33.3%
B	Interactive and receptive skills	10	33.3%
Interactive Oral Activity			
A	Productive skills	5	16.7%
B	Interactive and receptive skills	5	16.7%

The same descriptors are used for both the Individual Oral Presentation and Oral Activity, but with different marks attached. Using the most relevant tables and scales in the CEFR, the project team conducted a comparative analysis of the level descriptors against the level and range of skills expected at each CEFR level.

⁶⁷ Cultural Diversity, Customs and Traditions, Health, Leisure, Science and Technology.

Criterion A

Criterion A evaluates the student's use and command of the language in spoken production, with the bands varying from "limited" to "excellent". Within these bands, marks should give consideration to the overall production (to what extent is the student comprehensible); the accuracy of language used; and whether the student's intonation either supports or hinders understanding.

Criterion A is marked on a scale of 0-10 (for Individual Oral) or 0-5 (Interactive Oral Activity), with the same five marking bands in each. The level descriptors at 1-2 (1 mark in the Interactive Oral Activity), describe the student as having limited command of the language which relates well to A2. At this level, the speaker shows hesitation, pauses and false starts when speaking.

To be awarded 3-4 marks (or 2 for the Interactive Oral Activity) the student's command of the language must be fairly good with some fluency. The descriptors reflect those at B1 in that the speaking is comprehensible and reasonably accurate with some pausing, mispronunciation and difficulty with formulation still present.

The next marking band, 5-6; 3, requires a good command of, and generally correct, spoken language. Overall, this level of fluency relates to B2 descriptors. Intonation is clear, a range of language is used and a degree of fluency is present.

The second highest marking band (7-8; 4) descriptors emphasise fluent, slightly authentic and accurate language. This level is clearly more advanced than the last marking band, with no mention of errors, or language impediments, making it difficult to distinguish the exact level. Focussing on the IB descriptor that the speaker only has a "touch of authenticity"⁶⁸, it is clear that the level is at least below C2 (where a speaker should be able to demonstrate authentic English), however, C1 requires the speaker to speak effortlessly with a high degree of accuracy, so the mark band more likely reflects the descriptors of B2+/C1.

To receive 9-10 marks (or 5 in the Interactive Oral Activity) the speaker must demonstrate a fluent production of language that is "generally authentic"⁶⁹ with excellent spoken language and intonation. At C1 the speaker "can vary intonation"⁷⁰. Accuracy, fluency and good command of a broad range of language are described across the speaking grids for C1.

Criterion B

Criterion B focusses on spoken interactive and aural receptive skills with the marking bands designed to reflect how well the student can interact in a conversation, expressing ideas and maintaining the flow of the conversation.

⁶⁸ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language B guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

⁶⁹ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language B guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

⁷⁰ Phonological control grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

Similar to Criterion A, Criterion B is marked on a scale of 0-10 (for Individual Oral) or 0-5 (Interactive Oral Activity). To be awarded the 1-2 (1 in the case of the Interactive Oral Activity), students engage in a limited interaction with difficulty in understanding and presenting simple ideas. Similar to the descriptors for A2, the speaker can only communicate limited information and with pauses/hesitations. However, at this level the speaker should be generally understood, whereas the IB descriptors imply that understanding may be more difficult. This level may better reflect A1/A2.

The next marking band (3-4; 2), describes an acceptable interaction with generally clear presentation of simple ideas. The conversation still includes some lapses in the flow, however. This reflects the descriptors of A2 where communication is simple, with pauses evident, but the student “Can understand what is said clearly, slowly and directly to him/her in simple everyday conversation; can be made to understand, if the speaker can take the trouble”⁷¹.

At the next band (5-6; 3), the student is expected to have better presentation, understanding and generally coherent conversations. These reflect performance at B1 where the speaker can infer meaning of some unfamiliar words and understand a clear articulated speaker, with the ability to engage in a “Routine formal discussion of familiar subjects”⁷².

To receive marks at the second highest band, students must meet higher expectations to understand and present complex ideas. The level of the interaction should also be “very good”. These descriptors sit best at B2+ where the speaker can “Express his/her ideas and opinions with precision, present and respond to complex lines of argument convincingly”⁷³. Accurate and effective use of the language is also seen at this level.

At the highest IB band (9-10; 5), the conversation flows naturally and an excellent interaction takes place. Overall, the descriptors imply no errors made and a near fluent understanding and presentation. These align well with C1 where the speaker can keep up with and understand complex topics. At this level, errors are rare and the speaker “Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech”⁷⁴.

The project team reviewed a number of sample internal oral assessments including the stimulus material and a recording of the student’s Individual Oral Presentation and their discussion with the examiner.

One Individual Oral assessment marked the student at 7/20 (A3, B4). The stimulus for the assessment is a photograph of seven children sitting in front of a Christmas tree with other Christmas presents and decorations located in the picture. The caption states “Traditions

⁷¹ Understanding a Native Speaker Interlocutor. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁷² Formal discussion and meetings. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁷³ Formal discussion and meetings. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁷⁴ Oral Assessment Criteria Grid. [Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, 2009. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - A Manual*. [pdf] Published by: Council of Europe - Language Policy Division. p. 185].

and customs that we practise in our free time help preserve our culture". For the first 3-4 minutes of the assignment the student describes what they see in the photograph and makes continuous simple comments using generally clear pronunciation, but with a noticeable foreign accent. Although the student demonstrates a generally good flow to the dialogue, which reflects performance at B1, they are occasionally incoherent and difficult to understand. Some phrases are repeated, and overall the student demonstrates skills that also fall at A2. During the discussion section of the assignment, the teacher asks the student a series of questions related to the previous presentation: the student takes a while to respond to these questions. He is able to keep the conversation going of his own accord (B1), but his pronunciation is only sometimes clear. When talking about simple ideas with confidence, his presentation and discussion is at level B1, but there are moments in-between where the speaker pauses, makes errors in speech or is incomprehensible, which reflects an A2 speaker.

In another Oral Activity, the student was marked at 17/20 (A8, B9). The stimulus photograph is a picture of a group eating a meal outside. The caption states 'Singapore's food culture is a reflection of its ethnic diversity'. The student speaks fluently with excellent pronunciation, good descriptions and range of vocabulary. Clear well-structured speech is used. She consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy and errors are rare. Expressions are also effortless. Minor pauses and breaks in the flow of the language are heard, however the speaker appears nervous, as may be expected in a test setting. The speaker is likely capable of speaking at C2 level, but rare errors make the level more at C1. She consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy and expresses complex ideas well.

Listening to a student who scored full marks in the oral assessment, the level of fluency is high, and more appropriate for level C1/C2. She makes no noticeable errors and only pauses when she has finished a long dialogue. Despite speaking clearly and quickly, making many accurate points and observations (and excellent inferences from the photograph, almost telling a story), the assignment relies on creativity rather than language skills, in order for the student to have the opportunity to speak about detailed and complex ideas with no pauses or hesitations as found at C2. The discussion gives this opportunity more, as the student can answer more complex questions asked by the teacher.

In the final student sample, marked at 13/20 (A7, B6), the stimulus is a photograph of four girls on mobile phones. The caption states 'I use technology for communication, but I don't have a Blackberry or an iPhone'. In the presentation section, the student speaks fluently with very good pronunciation. The dialogue flows, with only a few pauses and hesitations in between the speakers statements. The student struggles to link the shorter points into a linear sequence of points. Only a few grammatical or vocabulary errors are made. Overall the performance reflects B2 where a speaker "Can give clear, detailed description and presentations on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples,"⁷⁵. During the discussion, the student seems to understand the questions and respond quickly. There is some hesitation, and mostly simple statements are given in return. Through this she also reflects the B2

⁷⁵ Overall Oral Production. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

descriptor, that a speaker at this level “Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although he/she can be hesitant as he or she searches for patterns and expressions, there are few noticeably long pauses”.⁷⁶

3.3.5 Summary of English language competency assessment in English B HL

The table below summarises the receptive, productive and interactive skills set out in CEFR which are summatively assessed within the English B HL programme. Listening comprehension is not formally assessed, but is nonetheless developed throughout the course as a component part of the programme. The Individual Oral and Interactive Oral Activity would both require the student to comprehend questions or comments (either during the discussion with the examiner, or with classmates during the interactive activity).

Table 21: Skills facets assessed in the English B HL course

Skill facet	Receptive		Production		Interaction	
	Reading comp.	Listening comp.	Written production	Spoken production	Written Interaction	Spoken Interaction
Assessed?	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes
Relevant assessment	Paper 1 Written Assignment	<i>Interactive Oral Activity, one of which must be based on a listening activity</i>	Paper 2 Written Assignment	Individual Oral		Individual Oral Interactive Oral Activity

Reading

English B HL allows students to develop a high level of English reading ability, through reading both concrete texts of various types, to more abstract, literary texts. Paper 1, assesses students’ comprehension of five unseen and predominantly authentic texts (retaining almost all grammatical structures and vocabulary from the original sources), of which at least two were found to be typical of CEFR Level C1. This demonstrates that English B HL requires students to “understand in detail lengthy, complex texts, whether or not they relate to his/her own area of specialty” (CEFR 4.4.2.2)⁷⁷.

Compared with the Standard Level paper, there are significantly more questions that require knowledge of at least CEFR level C1 language in order to be answered correctly. For some questions, candidates are required to identify nuances of detail in complex texts.

⁷⁶ Oral Assessment Criteria Grid. [Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, 2009. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - A Manual*. [pdf] Published by: Council of Europe - Language Policy Division. p. 185.]

⁷⁷ Overall Reading Comprehension Scale. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

Taking into account the range of questions and text complexity, this test should be able to reliably differentiate between candidates who are below CEFR level B2, at CEFR level B2, and at CEFR level C1. When considered in conjunction with the distribution of marks by task type and difficulty and the component grade boundaries, the following comparison is proposed:

Figure 11: English B HL reading component and corresponding CEFR levels

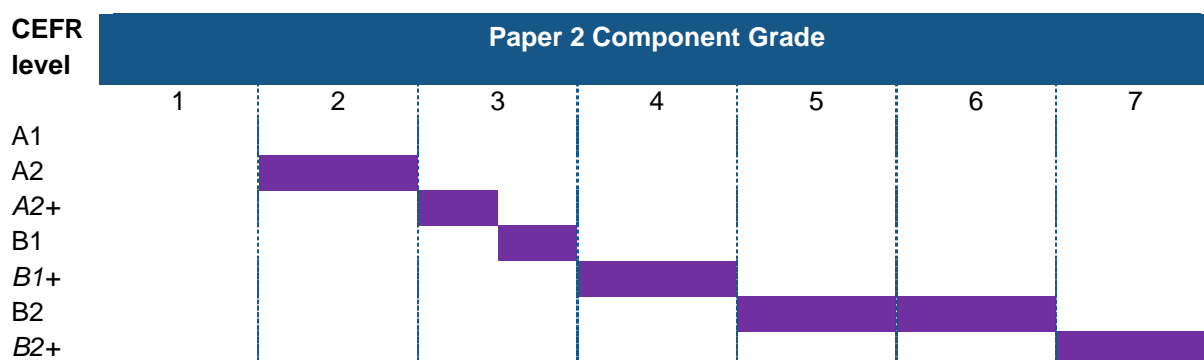
CEFR level	Paper 1 (Reading) Component Grade						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A1							
A2							
B1							
B2							
B2+							
C1							

Writing

Students' written production skills are tested both under exam conditions (Paper 2) and the Written Assignment completed in the final year of study. The proportion of marks for language use and other criterion that are relatable to CEFR makes it difficult to compare the requirements and grading of the Written Assignment to CEFR, nonetheless the project team recognises the value the Written Assignment holds in further developing and testing students' ability to write organised and coherent essays in English whilst also providing a further opportunity for them to develop their reading skills through this integrated skills assessment. Through review of the assessment tasks, assessment criteria and marked student work for Paper 2, it was observed that those scoring the highest marks for language and the development and communication of ideas and arguments in their essay will have displayed a high B2 (B2+) level, where they are able to demonstrate a good command of language and organise ideas effectively and coherently. Errors in vocabulary and grammar may be evident but there are typically few of these and they do not impact the reader's understanding.

Acknowledging the both SL and HL employ the same level descriptors but associated with different marks, the following threshold scores are recommended for comparability of the English B HL Paper 2 to the respective CEFR levels:

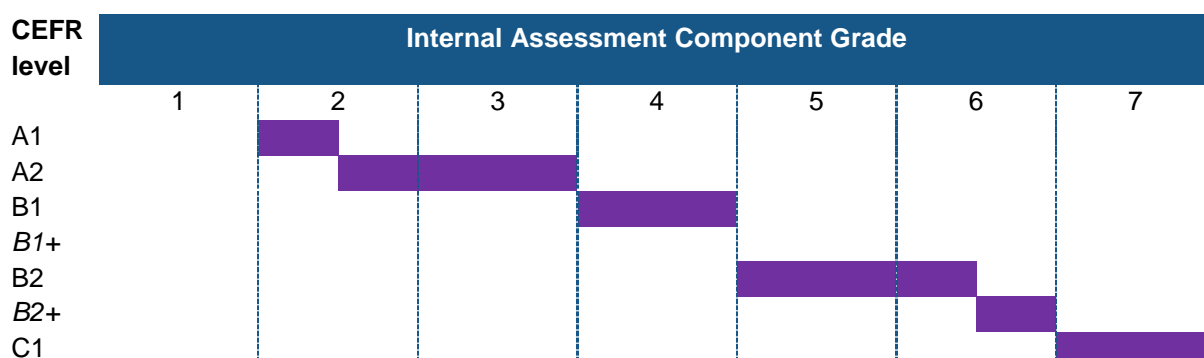
Figure 12: English B HL writing component and corresponding CEFR levels



Speaking

The English B HL course assesses students' spoken production and interaction skills through a formal presentation and discussion, together with interactive oral activities in a classroom setting. Based on the comparison of the assessment criteria and the associated level descriptors, further supported by the review of marked audio scripts, the following threshold scores are recommended for comparability to the respective CEFR levels for speaking (production and interaction):

Figure 13: English B HL speaking component and corresponding CEFR levels



Overall it is clear that the English B HL develops and assesses across a range of CEFR levels with the reading comprehension testing up to C1 level through the inclusion of literary and complex texts that require a high level of understanding in order to attain the highest marks in the reading assessment (Paper 1).

Drawing on the comparability of the different components and their relative weighting to the overall grade, the overall grade boundaries (drawn from four sittings) and the grade descriptors as appropriate, the overall comparability to CEFR of the English B HL is recommended as follows:

Figure 14: Comparability of the English B HL to the CEFR

CEFR Level	English B
	HL
C2	
C1	7
B2+	6
	5
B2	4
	3
B1	2
A2	
A1	

4. English A: Language and Literature

4.1 Profile of the English A: Language and Literature courses

4.1.1 Overview and aims of English A: Language and Literature

The English A: Language and Literature course is part of Group 1 (Studies in Language and Literature) and is designed for students with experience of using English in an academic context. It is acknowledged that the language background of students is likely to vary considerably with some students proficient only in the target language, English, and others competent in multiple languages, however, it is expected that students entering the course are highly competent in the target language, whether or not it is their mother tongue. The decision to undertake the course will depend on the students' interests and future study plans and there are no formal prior learning requirements. Group 1 courses are designed to support future academic study by developing high levels of language competence and communication skills, as well as social aesthetic and cultural literacy.

The course is available at SL and HL, the model being the same for both but with significant quantitative and qualitative differences in course content, teaching hours and assessment criteria. Subjects at HL are studied in greater depth and breadth than at SL. Where applicable, the differences between the levels are highlighted in this profile.

The course aims to develop textual analysis skills as well as encouraging critical thinking and the ability to question meanings generated by language and text while recognising and understanding the role and effects of culturally defined reading practices. The aims of the Group 1 courses as a whole (with the final two aims being specific to the Language and Literature course) are the same at both HL and SL and are as follows, to:

- “Introduce students to a range of texts from different periods, styles and genres.
- Develop in students the ability to engage in close, detailed analysis of individual texts and make relevant connections.
- Develop the students' powers of expression, both in oral and written communication.
- Encourage students to recognize the importance of the contexts in which texts are written and received.
- Encourage an appreciation of the different perspectives of other cultures, and how these perspectives construct meaning.
- Encourage students to appreciate the formal, stylistic and aesthetic qualities of texts.
- Promote in students an enjoyment of, and lifelong interest in, language and literature.
- Develop in students an understanding of how language, culture and context determine the ways in which meaning is constructed in texts.
- Encourage students to think critically about the different interactions between text, audience and purpose”⁷⁸.

⁷⁸ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Language and Literature guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

4.1.2 Content and duration

The course is organised into four parts (the first two being language-based and the second two focussing on the study of literature), with each part requiring the study of literary or non-literary texts chosen from a variety of sources, genres and media. In line with the international nature of the IB, the study of literature in translation from other cultures is considered to be especially important and the study of texts is therefore not limited to one culture. Literary texts are primarily selected in accordance with two lists: the Prescribed Literature in Translation (PLT) list and the Prescribed List of Authors (PLA). Authors or texts studied in parts 1 and 2 of the course cannot be repeated in parts 3 and 4. The requirements for SL and HL texts are as follows:

Table 22: Text requirements for English A: Language and Literature

SL	HL
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two texts from the PLA for English• One text in translation from the PLT list• One free choice from the PLA or elsewhere	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Four texts from the PLA for English• One text in translation chosen from the PLT list• One free choice, from either list or elsewhere⁷⁹.

The wide range of text types studied across the course is intended to help students with analysis and production and, in parts 1 and 2 of the course, may include any of the following types:

- Advertisement
- Appeal
- Blog
- Cartoon
- Diary
- Editorial
- Essay
- Guide book
- Letter (informal and formal)
- Magazine article
- News report
- Instructions
- Song lyrics
- Speech
- Travel writing.

⁷⁹ Any text chosen freely must be of suitable literary quality and appropriately challenging and complex.

Literary genres may also be used to complement the study of a topic: these may be in the form of short texts or extracts⁸⁰. In parts 3 and 4 of the course, the chosen texts must comply with requirements relating to literary genres, periods and places.

The four main parts of this course total a minimum of 240 recommended teaching hours at HL and 150 hours at SL. Teachers are given the flexibility to structure courses to best suit the differing interests, linguistic backgrounds and skills of the students, as well as the interests and areas of expertise of the teachers themselves. With this in mind, there is no requirement for the four parts of the course to be taught in a particular order. The following table shows the course break down in more detail along with the associated learning outcomes for each course component:

Table 23: English A: Language and Literature (HL/SL) content and learning outcomes

IB English A: Language and Literature – HL/SL		
Part	Description	Learning Outcomes
Part 1: Language in Cultural Context (HL 60 hours, SL 40 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effect of audience and purpose on the structure and contents of texts Impact of language changes Effect of culture and context on language and meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse how audience and purpose affect the structure and content of texts Analyse the impact of language changes Demonstrate an awareness of how language and meaning are shaped by culture and context.
Part 2: Language and mass communication (HL 60 hours, SL 40 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forms of communication within the media Educational, political or ideological influence of the media Ways in which mass media use language and image to inform, persuade and entertain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine different forms of communication within the media Show awareness of the potential for educational, political or ideological influence of the media Show the way mass media use language and image to inform, persuade or entertain.
Part 3: Literature – texts and contexts (HL 70 hours, SL 40 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical, cultural and social contexts in which texts are written and received Relationship between context and formal elements of text, genre and structure Attitudes and values expressed by literary texts and their impact on readers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the changing historical, cultural and social contexts in which particular texts are written and received Demonstrate how the formal elements of the text, genre and structure can not only be seen to influence meaning but can also be influenced by context Understand the attitudes and values expressed by literary texts and their impact on readers.
Part 4: Literature – critical study (HL 50 hours, SL 30 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed exploration of literary works Elements such as theme and the ethical stance or moral values of literary texts Appropriate use of literary terms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore literary works in detail Analyse elements such as theme and the ethical stance or moral values of literary texts Understand and make appropriate use of literary terms.

⁸⁰ The DP Language A: Language and Literature guide (IB, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Language and Literature guide - First examinations 2015*. p.16) defines what is considered a text in the context of the Language and Literature courses.

In order to meet these learning outcomes, students will be expected to have a strong grasp of a range of specific skills. Language skills are of particular importance as, despite English A: Language and Literature not being a language acquisition course, it does provide the opportunity for language skills to be developed and refined as the course progresses. This includes: the acquisition of vocabulary appropriate to analyse texts; the ability to express ideas clearly and unambiguously; and the effective use of register and style when producing texts aimed at different audiences and for different purposes. Other key skills include the ability to undertake detailed critical analysis of texts and also visual skills, necessary for understanding and interpreting visual images used in conjunction with texts.

4.1.3 Summative assessment

Objectives

The different assessment areas for this particular course are listed below, along with the objectives for each:

Table 24: English A: Language and Literature (HL/SL) assessment objectives

IB English A: Language and Literature – HL/SL	
Assessment area:	Objective: <i>Students must demonstrate:</i>
Knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding of a range of texts • Understanding of the use of language, structure, technique and style • Critical understanding of the ways in which readers construct meaning and the influence of context • Understanding of how different perspectives influence the reading of a text.
Application and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to choose a text type appropriate to the purpose required • Ability to use terminology relevant to the various text types studied • Ability to analyse the effects of language, structure, technique and style on the reader • Awareness of the ways in which the production and reception of texts contribute to their meanings • Ability to substantiate and justify ideas with relevant examples.
Synthesis and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to compare and contrast the formal elements, content and context of texts • Ability to discuss the ways in which language and image may be used in a range of texts • Ability to evaluate conflicting viewpoints within and about a text • Ability to produce a critical response evaluating some aspects of text, context and meaning (<i>HL only</i>).
Selection and use of appropriate presentation and language skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to express ideas clearly and with fluency, both written and orally • Ability to use the oral and written forms of the language, in a range of styles, registers and situations • Ability to discuss and analyse texts in a focused and logical manner • Ability to write a balanced, comparative analysis (<i>HL only</i>).

Methods

Both external and internal assessment are used in the English A: Language and Literature course, with work produced for external assessment marked by IB examiners, and work produced for internal assessment marked by teachers before being externally moderated by the IB. The split between the two is shown in the table below:

Table 25: English A: Language and Literature (HL/SL) assessment methods and weighting

English A: Language and Literature HL / SL	
External assessment	
Weighting	70%
Methods	Written Exam / Written Tasks
Internal assessment	
Weighting	30%
Methods	Presentation and discussion

Summative assessment for the English A: Language and Literature programme consists of a range of written and speaking tasks based on texts studied during the course. Further details of the examinations, including the weighting of each and types of task are provided in the following tables. HL and SL examinations have been detailed separately to allow for the differences in requirements and duration.

Table 26: English A: Language and Literature SL assessment format

English A: Language and Literature SL					
Number and type of assessments each examination series	<i>External: Paper 1</i>	<i>External: Paper 2</i>	<i>External: Written Tasks</i>	<i>Internal: Individual oral commentary</i>	<i>Internal: Further oral activity</i>
Duration	1 hour 30 mins	1 hour 30 mins	n/a	15 minutes (20 minutes preparation time)	Not specified
Type(s) of question	Essay (textual analysis of an unseen text)	Essay	Written tasks ⁸¹	Oral commentary on an literary extract	At least two further oral activities (types as per the SL course)
Total marks available	20	25	20	30	30

⁸¹ Examples of possible written tasks include: a newspaper article, letter from a fictional character to another, opinion column.

English A: Language and Literature SL					
Weighting toward overall qualification	25%	25%	20%	15%	15%

Table 27: English A: Language and Literature HL assessment format

English A: Language and Literature HL					
Number and type of assessments each examination series	<i>External: Paper 1</i>	<i>External: Paper 2</i>	<i>External: Written Tasks</i>	<i>Internal: Individual oral commentary</i>	<i>Internal: Further oral activity</i>
Duration	2 hours	2 hours	Not specified	15 minutes (20 minutes preparation time)	Not specified
Type(s) of question	Essay (comparative analysis of unseen texts)	Essay	Extended writing tasks	An oral commentary on a literary extract	At least two further oral activities ⁸²
Total marks available	20	25	40 (20 for each task)	30	30
Weighting toward overall qualification	25%	25%	20%	15%	15%

4.2 Comparative analysis of English A: Language and Literature SL with CEFR

4.2.1 Reading and writing

The English A: Language and Literature SL provides an integrated assessment of students' receptive and written productive skills through two written examinations and a series of written tasks. In the first exam, Paper 1, students are presented with previously unseen texts, which are analysed below.

Additionally students would study a number of literary texts during the course as noted above, which requires a good level of receptive competence and exposes students to a greater number of authentic texts in English.

⁸² Activities could include a group discussion, role play, dramatic presentation, oral presentation (formal speech / commentary).

4.2.1.1 Analysis of unseen texts in Paper 1

Text length, structure and presentation

As stated in the Subject Guide⁸³, Paper 1 contains two previously unseen texts of a variety of text types, including:

- Advertisement
- Opinion column
- Essay extract
- Online blogs
- Brochure
- Diary extract or other autobiographical text.

The papers reviewed included texts of various lengths, ranging from a 120-word cartoon strip to a 600-word letter, drawn from various sources including newspaper and magazine articles and personal letters.

Text domain, style and content

In the papers that were analysed, all texts fitted into the personal domain (reading for interest or information) with a variety of discourse types, including exposition, expressive and transactional. A range of communication themes were also covered by the texts reviewed such as *House and Home*, *Education and Daily life*. In line with the Subject Guide, Paper 1 contains two previously unseen passages from non-literary texts, and in this case the examples from the papers that were reviewed include:

- A magazine article written from the perspective of a dog on training dog owners
- A newspaper cartoon with three characters discussing mathematics and their maths teacher
- A newspaper opinion article regarding language learning in schools
- A letter written by a soldier to his wife during WW1.

Linguistic complexity

In terms of text authenticity, the texts were mostly authentic but with some signs of modification and definitions provided for selected words, acknowledging that students will not have access to bilingual or monolingual English dictionaries in the exam. The words defined were typically colloquial in nature, including: “a doss”; “to schmooze”; and “dead fagged”.

Overall, the texts set in each paper provided a good range of vocabulary (as shown in the table below) and grammar, including:

- Modal verbs such as “should” (for advice, A2)
- Simple present, present perfect and present perfect continuous (all at B1)
- Relative clauses and Verb/Adjective + infinitive constructions (at B1/B2).

⁸³ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Language and Literature guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document, p. 28-29.

As shown in the table below, the texts provide vocabulary across all levels of CEFR:

Table 28: Vocabulary items from English A: Language and Literature SL, Paper 1 unseen texts

Items comprehensible to a learner/user at CEFR level		
	Text 1	Text 2
A1	76% Question, dog, man, together, any, chair, train, living room	85% Test, teacher, number, know, buy, apple, take, shop, I'd like to, only
	Speak, how (quantity), languages, schools, grammar	Week, first, end
A2	7% Next, should, prefer, take time, suitcase, pick up, floor	8% National, maths, explain, everybody, if, mean, think about, simple
	Foreign, schoolchildren	Over, have (to do sth), to make (perform action), traffic, poor
B1	4% Whether, start, move, reward, (a) look, chin, cancel	6% Guys, scored, unlucky, show up, out of, career, education
	Fancy (v), punctuation, modern, awful, on your own, education, others	Indeed, opportunity, since (conj. time), rather, attack, passing, direction, meanwhile
B2	5% Respond, sensitive, lose one temper's, entirety, run away, habit, gaze at, sadly	n/a
	Failure, economical, call (v. describe), respect, requiring (sb to do sth), loss, possibility, as if, species, settled, so-called	Thrilling, direction, far, streams (of traffic), latter, dawn, entire, firing
C1	1% Sparingly, accomplished, cured	n/a
	Shame, awareness	March (up), probability, recruit, withdrawn, untrue
C2	5% Make allowances, put oneself in sb's place, reproachful, sanitary, kennel, mete out, apt to	1% Get it (e.g. to understand)
	Sniff (out), narrowness (limited), condemned, case (argument)	Strenuous, troops, all the more, devils; weary, die down, blended, crumbling

Note: Underlined text is used to denote those words which are not considered critical to understanding of the main points of the text.

It should be noted however that whilst some texts were indicative of B1, as was the case in the cartoon strip, the questions posed on the text may require a deeper level of understanding than simply understanding what's written.

4.2.1.2 Review of Assessment Tasks and Rating for Paper 1

Paper 1 is a textual analysis paper where students have 1½ hours to read the aforementioned two previously unseen (non-literary) texts, and provide a written analysis of

one, discussing aspects such as content, style, structure, audience, themes and language, with the support of two guiding questions. These questions were phrased clearly, with language and grammar ranging from mostly at B2, but advised students to comment on aspects such as the use of humour and irony; the ways in which the text may challenge reader perceptions; techniques used to entertain the audience; and the tone of the text.

No specific guidance is given to students on the length of text they should produce but from a sample of marked student scripts, the length varied from 800-1800 words. Responses are graded using the following criteria:

Table 29: Assessment criteria for English A: Language and Literature SL Paper 1

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall paper
A	Understanding of the text	5	25%
B	Understanding of the use and effect of stylistic features	5	25%
C	Organization	5	25%
D	Language	5	25%

Criterion A and B

Criterion A reflects on the level of understanding of the text, as demonstrated within the student's analysis. The level descriptors also reference whether arguments are substantiated with references to the text. Criterion B rates students' understanding of the use and effects of stylistic features, thereby primarily assessing students' analytical skills rather than their English language skills.

At face value, these can be complex to compare to CEFR since low scores on both criteria could be indicative of low subject knowledge and skills (textual analysis) rather than a reflection of language proficiency. As such the lower level marks are difficult to link to CEFR, but to achieve a higher score for both Criterion A and B will require a high level of receptive competence in English. In short, a high score would not be obtainable without a sufficient level of English to enable students to be able to infer information and meaning from texts where they are not explicitly given. At B2, learners "Can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or views"⁸⁴; or "Understand articles outside his/her field"⁸⁵, albeit with the support of a dictionary (which students would not have access to in the exam). The ability to understand "implied as well as stated opinions" is associated with C1, where learners would typically be "Skilled at using contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to infer attitude, moods and intentions" and to "Recognise sub-themes and points of emphasis"⁸⁶ in elaborate or complex texts.

⁸⁴ Reading for Information and Argument. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 70.

⁸⁶ Qualitative Factors for Reception [Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, 2009. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - A Manual*. [pdf] Published by: Council of Europe - Language Policy Division. p.143].

The expectation for a mark of 3 in Criterion A and B (on the 0-5 scale) that a student would have an adequate understanding of the text and context; the use of stylistic features with some ideas of their effects; and that the student's ideas would be "mostly supported" by references from the text, is indicative of a CEFR B2+ where learners are expected to be able to, as outlined above, understand where writers are adopting particular stances, and obtain information from sources and understand specialised articles⁸⁷. At B2+, they'd also be expected be able to draw on sources, and "Write an essay...with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail"⁸⁸. A mark of 4 best reflects CEFR C1 where students would be able to identify some implied opinions or sub-themes and be able to "Support points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples"⁸⁹. To have a very good understanding and be able to make "perceptive comments" with "consistently well-chosen references" (associated with a mark of 5) is indicative of CEFR C1 and above in line with the aforementioned skills in recognising cues and sub-themes, and the ability to "understand precisely finer shades of meaning"⁹⁰.

Criterion C

Criterion C assesses organisation of the work, but with a specific emphasis on the student's level of analysis making it difficult to link on a per-grade basis. However, when considering the expectations at B2, of being able to develop an argument systematically, a mark of 4 on the 0-5 scale for Criterion C would indicate this ability since students would be able to produce well organised, mostly coherent analysis and adequately developed argument. A mark of 5, awarded for coherent, effectively organised analysis and well-developed arguments, is indicative of a good performance at CEFR C1 level where students should be able to produce clear, well-structured texts, developing their argument and drawing an appropriate conclusion⁹¹.

Criterion D

Criterion D focusses on the student's use of language, assessing the clarity, variety and accuracy of the language on a 0-5 scale. For a mark of 2, the student's response would be "sometimes clear" with "carefully chosen grammar, vocab and sentence construction though error and inconsistencies are apparent". Acknowledging the essay nature of the task and the level descriptors, a mark of 2 would be reflective of CEFR B1 where students can show good control and range of vocabulary but with errors which may impact the reader's understanding. The level descriptor for a mark of 3 is indicative of CEFR B1+/B2 since the degree of accuracy is considered "adequate" but with only some lapses in accuracy evident.

⁸⁷ Reading for Information and Argument. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁸⁸ Reports and Essays subscale [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁸⁹ Reports and Essays subscale [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁹⁰ Qualitative Factors for Reception [Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, 2009. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - A Manual*. [pdf] Published by: Council of Europe - Language Policy Division. p.143].

⁹¹ Overall Written Production. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

For a mark of 4, students would need to demonstrate a good degree of accuracy and sentence construction, which is more indicative of B2+ where lexical accuracy is generally high and errors do not hinder communication. It would be expected that a B2+ learner would be able to write clear descriptions, express opinions and develop arguments without much evidence of restrictions in what they want to say due to language competence⁹². The high degree of accuracy, effective register and style expected for a mark of 5 is consistent with expectations at CEFR C1 level and above.

To support the analysis, a range of marked student scripts were reviewed from a three year period, with a summary of three of these (across a range of achievement levels) provided below.

One sample reviewed scored 19/20 (A5, B5, C5, D4). When comparing with CEFR, the text overall reflected CEFR C1, demonstrating that the student is able to produce well-structured, fluid and clear text, “Showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices”⁹³, producing complex sentence structures with a high degree of accuracy and with effective use of idiomatic phrases. Errors as such are rare, and a wide range of vocabulary is used with a similarly high degree of accuracy, although some phrases are less natural than might be otherwise expected from a native speaker for example. The student also shows a clear ability to infer and analyse beyond what is explicitly stated in the text and is able to round off the text with a clear and reasoned conclusion.

The next, scoring 14/20 (A4, B3, C3, D4) also displays a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures, employed with a good degrees of accuracy, typically only faltering on more complex sentences. The ideas are well developed and make clear references to the text, with some degree of repetition evident, but overall demonstrating a good understanding of the text. This would best reflect CEFR B2+.

Another sample scored 7/20 (A2, B2, C1, D2). As indicated by the marks awarded, the text lacks clarity in many places and the word choices appear to reflect limitations in the student’s vocabulary, seemingly restricting them in what they want to say. The response also suggests some, albeit limited, understanding of the text beyond what can be directly read in the text; and one of the guiding questions on tone has been misunderstood. The student has made a clear effort to substantiate some comments, but overall there is little coherent organisation of ideas and the argument is often difficult to follow. It is difficult to link this to an overall level, given the complexities mentioned above (that difficulties in analysing text could be a reflection of the subject-specific/textual analysis competency, rather than their English language comprehension). On the basis of the language-related criteria however, the sample supports the earlier analysis that a score of 2 for Criterion D would be indicative of a CEFR B1 level.

⁹² General Linguistic Range. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁹³ Coherence and Cohesion. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

4.2.1.3 Analysis of Paper 2

Students' written productive skills are further assessed through Paper 2, a 1½ hour examination in which students must answer one essay question from a choice of six. These questions are based on the literary texts studied in Part 3 of the course and students must refer to two of these texts in their response. Examples of tasks include essays on:

- The way a work's stylistic features can support or detract from its popularity over time
- How (to what purpose) irony has been used in two texts studied
- Techniques used by writers to evoke an emotional response in the reader
- The presentation of male and females views of the central issues in two texts studied.

The phrasing of the questions is clear with most key words critical to understanding the question placed at CEFR B2 level, with the odd word also at C1.

Student responses are rated on the following criteria:

Table 30: Assessment criteria for English A: Literature and Language SL Paper 2

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall component
A	Knowledge and understanding	5	20%
B	Response to the question	5	20%
C	Understanding of the use and effect of stylistic features	5	20%
D	Organization and development	5	20%
E	Language	5	20%

Criterion A and B

Criterion A is somewhat complex to compare to CEFR in that while it addresses a similar area to Criterion A in Paper 1 (understanding of the text), it evaluates more widely the student's *knowledge* of the texts studied during the course, as opposed to their understanding of an unseen text presented to them in Paper 1. As such, it is more of a reflection of their subject knowledge and extent of exam preparation in reviewing the texts than specifically English language. Some parallels between the level descriptors and CEFR scales can be drawn in terms of the level of understanding of the texts studied in English, as was the case for the aforementioned similarly-focussed criteria (where a mark of 3 reflects B2/B2+, 4 reflects a threshold C1, and a mark of 5 represents a strong C1, borderline C2), but with the caveat that this only reflects part of the level descriptor for each marking band.

Similarly Criterion B considers the extent to which the student has demonstrated an understanding of the question which would undoubtedly require a certain level of English (acknowledging as outlined earlier that the language is typically placed at B2) however a

poor response would not necessarily be indicative of misunderstanding the question from a language perspective, but an inability to answer it (reflecting their subject knowledge).

Criterion C

Criterion C considers the student's understanding of the use and effects of stylistic features in the texts which is very similar to Paper 1 Criterion B in terms of the allocation of marks and accordingly, a mark of 3 on the 0-5 scale would be considered indicative of a threshold CEFR B2+; a mark of 4 reflects competency at CEFR C1 with a top mark of 5 indicating a high CEFR C1 (borderline C2).

Criterion D

Criterion D centres on the organisation and development of the student's response in terms of their ability to demonstrate focus, structure and development of ideas in English. The level descriptors are brief, distinguishing marks of 0-5 in terms of there being "little", "some", "adequate", "good", or "very good" focus, structure and development. Nevertheless, as with Criterion C of Paper 1, a mark of 4 would be awarded to students able to produce a well organised, mostly coherent and adequately developed argument, aspects indicative of CEFR B2⁹⁴. A good performance at CEFR C1 would be similar to achievement of a mark of 5 in this criterion. At both levels, students should be write clear, coherent, well-structured and well-developed texts, drawing an appropriate conclusion⁹⁵.

Criterion E

The last criterion for Paper 2 focusses on language employing the same level descriptors and 0-5 grading scales as was used for Criterion D in Paper 1, the analysis of which demonstrated that a mark of 3 best reflects CEFR B1+/B2, whilst 4 reflects B2+ and 5 reflects CEFR C1.

4.2.1.4 Analysis of the Written Task

A further assessment of written productive skills is provided through the Written Task.

At least three written tasks are completed, with one submitted for external assessment. The task should be 800-1,000 words in length plus a rationale of 200-300 words. Exceeding these limits results in a deduction of marks (one from Criterion A for the rationale, two from Criterion C for the main task). Students are able to decide on the area of study and title of the task, and may then choose to produce any type of text that it is relevant. Examples of possible written tasks include a newspaper article, letter from a fictional character to another, or an opinion column. In the student work observed, the following were seen:

⁹⁴ Coherence and Cohesion. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁹⁵ Overall Written Production. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

- A blog on feminism
- An online newspaper article on the effect of globalisation on the local language and culture
- A letter to the editor on a political poster.

Student responses are evaluated on the following four assessment criteria:

Table 31: Assessment criteria for English A: Language and Literature SL Written Task

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall component
A	Rationale	2	10%
B	Task and content	8	40%
C	Organization	5	25%
D	Language and style	5	25%

Criterion A and B

These criteria – assessing the rationale for the Written Task and the extent to which the content is appropriate to the task – are specific to this task and the student’s ability in the subject as a whole meaning that the level descriptors cannot be reliably linked to CEFR with the exception that Criterion B also considers students’ understanding of the conventions of the text type they’ve chosen for their response. The CEFR Creative Writing sub-scale first sets out an expectation that learners would be able to follow “Established conventions of the genre concerned”⁹⁶ at CEFR B2+, indicating that an adequate understanding of text conventions, as required for a mark of 5 on the 0-8 scale would be sufficient here. C1 is the first level where it would be expected that learners “Can write clear, detailed, well-structured and developed descriptions and imaginative texts in an assured, personal, natural style appropriate to the reader in mind”⁹⁷. The top level descriptor of 7-8 states that a student would have a “good understanding” and therefore may still reflect a B2+ although some students may be able to demonstrate a higher level of C1.

Criterion C

Focussing on the organisation of the response, Criterion C (marked on a 0-5 scale) has some links to CEFR, in relation to scales for coherence and cohesion, although reference to student marked tasks is necessary to further elaborate on the relationship between the CEFR and the marks, given the concise nature of the level descriptors.

⁹⁶ Creative Writing. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁹⁷ Written Assessment Criteria Grid. [Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, 2009. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - A Manual*. [pdf] Published by: Council of Europe - Language Policy Division.p.187.].

Criterion D

Criterion D centres on the use and appropriateness of language and style in student responses. Whilst there are some differences in wording, the essence of the level descriptors and mark allocation corresponds with that of the language criterion in Papers 1 and 2. For example, in Paper 1 and 2, a mark of 1 is awarded where “language is rarely clear” and where “there is little sense of register and style” whilst for the Written Tasks, a mark of 1 is awarded where there is “little clarity”, again with “little sense of register and style”. On the other end of the rating scale, the maximum mark of 5 on the 0-5 scale is awarded in all three assessments for “very clear and effective” use of language and style, consistent with CEFR B2+/C1 level. A grade of 3 would represent B1+/B2 level in written production, whilst a grade of 4 represents a solid B2+.

Among the marked samples reviewed, three examples are described in greater detail below. The first, scoring 20/20 and therefore full marks across each criterion, was a blog on feminism, including a rationale of 261 words and a blog of 999 words, both within the word limits specified for the Written Task. The assignment was a smooth-flowing and well-structured text and demonstrated an excellent range of vocabulary, with many high level words included accurately and with no identifiable errors. The student also demonstrated a very strong understanding of the conventions of a blog, adopting a semi-formal to informal register; using first person narration; showing awareness of the reader through a direct address (“Dear readers”, references to “our” and “we”) and inviting readers to comment at the end. The use of a catchy title, a play-on-words, also demonstrates both what’s needed to draw readers in to an online blog as well as an ability to use idiomatic language correctly. The student also used inverted commas to denote the idea of *so-called*. The student response is in fact indicative of a CEFR C1/C2, supporting the earlier conclusion that the top marking band would reflect a minimum of CEFR C1 but with the possibility that some students would have a level of written production exceeding this.

The second, the online newspaper article, scored 15/20 (A1, B7, C3, D4) and again fell within the specified word counts for both the rationale and the main text (253 and 999 words respectively). The response was organised, following a logical, linear structure, and demonstrating a very good degree of accuracy: errors were mostly typographical, and the word choice was occasionally awkward but did not impact the message. There was also variety evident in both the vocabulary and sentence structures used, hence the grade of 4 on the 0-5 scale. It also showed a good understanding of typical conventions for a news article, through the appropriate use of a relatively formal register, supported by the inclusion of key facts (population figures, survey results), with some consideration for paragraph length evident. The response demonstrated a solid performance at C1.

The final sample scored 10/20, reflecting a low score in Criterion B in particular (A1, B3, C3, D3). The text type chosen was a letter to the editor from an imagined persona. The audience for the text was nonetheless unclear in places, with it initially being addressed to the “ordinary fellow citizen” but later directed toward supporters of a particular political party. Overall the language and style was understandable but errors, particularly in the choice of vocabulary in places, often interrupted reading. Furthermore whilst the text initially showed some structure, it was not sustained throughout. These factors all reflect performance consistent with CEFR B1 level.

4.2.2 Speaking, reading and listening

Speaking is assessed through two separate internal assessments. The first is an individual oral commentary where students are given two questions regarding an extract from a previously studied literary text. From the samples reviewed, the extracts appear authentic, drawn from novels or poems, and ranged from approximately 210 to 450 words in length, in accordance with IB guidelines that extracts should not exceed 40 lines. The teacher chooses the extract for the student, but the extract is not shown to the student until the assessment takes place. Students are given a maximum of 20 minutes to prepare for the task, and 10 minutes to give the commentary. Two questions are given to the student during the preparation time on what is happening or being discussed in the text, and on the language used. The questions are intended to highlight key points in the text, give the student a starting point or guide them toward a type of commentary to give. A five minute discussion with the teacher follows this commentary.

The second assessment is a further oral activity. Students complete a minimum of two oral activities based on the first half of the course, and the activity with the best mark is submitted for the final assessment.

These assessments are the same at SL and HL. For both components, students are evaluated against a series of assessment criteria by teachers using a best-fit approach.

Table 32: Assessment criteria for the English A: Language and Literature SL internal assessment

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards each component
Individual oral			
A	Knowledge and understanding of the text or extract	10	17%
B	Understanding of the use and effects of literary features	10	17%
C	Organization	5	8%
D	Language	5	8%
Interactive oral activity			
A	Knowledge and understanding of the text(s) and subject matter or extract	10	17%
B	Understanding of how language is used	10	17%
C	Organization	5	8%
D	Language	5	8%

The final mark of the individual oral and the further oral activity are averaged to determine a final internal assessment mark (out of 30).

The same level descriptors are used for the Organization and Language (C and D) criteria, and similar descriptors are used for Criterion A in both assessments. Criterion B, however, is different between the assessments. Additionally, the same criteria and descriptors are used at SL and HL.

Using the most relevant scales in the CEFR, the project team conducted a comparative analysis of the level descriptors against the level and range of skills expected at each CEFR level.

Criterion A

In the Individual Oral, Criterion A evaluates the level of knowledge and understanding of the text demonstrated in the commentary (from “limited” to “excellent”) and the frequency and appropriateness of references provided. For the Further Oral Activity, similar descriptors are provided for Criterion A that evaluate the level of knowledge and understanding of the text (“limited” to “excellent”) and the level of awareness of the text in relation to the subject matter. Although there are minor differences between these criteria, they can be evaluated against the CEFR scales together, as the level of knowledge and understanding demonstrated is the same at each marking band. Performance in both assessments is scored on a scale of 0-10 for this criterion.

The level descriptors are relatively similar to those employed for the textual analysis in Paper 1, Criterion A and share some of the challenges in comparing lower grades to CEFR, when low grades may reflect a lack of subject-specific knowledge and skills than a lack of competency in English language. Therefore focus must be placed on comparing the higher bands on the 0-10 scale, acknowledging that in order to be able to provide a commentary showing “adequate”, “very good” or “excellent” knowledge and understanding, the individual must have a sufficient level of receptive and productive competence.

At a mark of 5-6 for the Individual Oral Assessment, the student is generally able to support their commentary with references to the text, reflecting CEFR B2 where, as the Thematic Development grid states, the speaker is able to support “His/her main points with relevant supporting detail and examples”⁹⁸.

To achieve 7-8 marks, a student has good knowledge, well-chosen references or good knowledge of the awareness toward the subject chosen. These descriptors still reflect B2, where the student is able to “Develop a clear description or narrative”⁹⁹. It is only at the next marking band, 9-10, where students must demonstrate excellent knowledge, effective and well-chosen references and excellent awareness. These best reflect the descriptors for C1 where the student “Can give elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points,”¹⁰⁰.

⁹⁸ Thematic development grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

⁹⁹ Thematic development grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹⁰⁰ Thematic development grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

Criterion B

In the Individual Oral Commentary Criterion B evaluates the level of awareness and use of literary features in addition to the effects these have on the reader (from “little” to “excellent”). For the Further Oral Activity, the level descriptors for Criterion B relate to the student’s level of understanding of how language is used (“superficial” to “excellent” understanding) and their level of appreciation for the use and style of language. Both are marked on a 0-10 scale.

Similar to the descriptors for Criterion A, Criterion B is not focussed on the student’s language or speaking ability but rather their level of understanding and awareness of literary features. As outlined for similarly-focussed criteria in the other English A: Language and Literature assessments reviewed above, comparing the low level marks is complex because they may reflect low subject ability as opposed to English language competency. At the two highest mark bands (7-8; and 9-10) however, clear links can be seen between B2(+) and C1 respectively.

Criterion C

Criterion C is the same for the both internal assessments (with each referring to the ‘commentary’ or the ‘oral activity’) as appropriate, and, for both, is marked on a scale of 0-5. The descriptors evaluate the level of organisation and structure to the activity.

To be awarded three marks, the student must present an organised and structured activity or commentary that is generally coherent. This best reflects B2 where clear and descriptive narratives and coherent discourse is presented. The next marking band also falls at B2, as the structure is still only “mostly coherent” and well organised which best reflect the descriptors at B2. For students achieving the highest marks (5), they must be effectively organised, and demonstrate an effective and coherent structure. Similarly, at C1 the speaker “Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices”¹⁰¹.

Criterion D

Criterion D is the same in both internal assessments, with only minor variations to refer to the assessment type (commentary vs oral activity). Both are marked on a scale of 0-5. The criterion evaluates the clarity and appropriateness of the language used in addition to the accuracy and appropriateness of the grammar, register and style.

A mark of 1 is awarded when students are “rarely clear” with their language and many grammatical errors are present. Overall this descriptor best reflects A1 where the language is not yet clear and the speaker “Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorised repertoire”¹⁰².

¹⁰¹ Oral assessment criteria grid [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹⁰² Oral assessment criteria grid [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

At the next marking band (2), the descriptors are similar to those seen at A2/A2+ where the speaker “Uses some simple structures correctly, but may systematically make basic mistakes”¹⁰³.

To receive three marks, students must demonstrate mostly clear language; adequate accuracy in their grammar and sentence construction; and mostly appropriate register and style. This best reflects B1 descriptors across the oral grids that language is clear, reasonably fluent and comprehensible, with some pausing for grammatical repair. The next marking band, where students must produce clear language with good accuracy, effective register and style, reflects B2 where clear descriptions and narratives are given. To receive the highest mark, students are required to demonstrate very clear language and highly accurate grammar. This reflects both B2 for grammatical control, but may also reflect C1 where the speaker “Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices”¹⁰⁴.

To support the findings from the comparative analysis of the assessment criteria to the relevant CEFR scales, the project team reviewed four marked individual oral marked assessments.

In one sample, the student was awarded 7/20 (A2, B2, C1, D2). The extract selected by the teacher for the assessment was from the ‘The Great Gatsby’ by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The two guiding questions provided to the student were:

- 1) “What are the moods of the passage, and how does the author create them?”
- 2) “How does the author shape our understanding of one or more of the characters in the passage?”

The student begins the oral assessment by providing short and simple details on the passage, including who is in it and where it takes place. He explains that the author is demonstrating ‘suspiciousness’ in this passage, and gives examples of this from the passage. He speaks fluently with very clear intonation and pronunciation, and is mostly accurate and coherent. In describing the passage, his arguments are extremely under developed and simple and his understanding of the passage seems to be very limited. In the second part of the assessment, the teacher poses questions to the student. The student provides very simple and somewhat unrelated responses in clear English. He struggles to connect his ideas or produce long responses or arguments. When comparing the student’s performance to the CEFR scales and grids, the student was able to link shorter points, and express his arguments with clear language and relatively high-degree of grammatical control found at B1/B2.

In another sample, the student received a final mark of 28/30 (A9, B10, C4, D5). The passage selected is poems by Wilfred Owen. The questions were:

- 1) “What are the central concerns of this poem?”
- 2) “By what means are they conveyed?”

¹⁰³ Global oral assessment scale [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹⁰⁴ Interaction and production scales [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

The student begins by summarising what the author discusses, where the author wrote the poem and why. The student then introduces the concepts the author discusses in these and what the student will discuss during this commentary. His speech is clear and structured, with very good pronunciation, although a foreign accent is present. He discusses complex ideas and uses a wide range of vocabulary. He produces a clear, smoothly flowing and well-structured speech, as found at C2, and there are no signs that he has had to restrict what he is saying. It is also clear that he has excellent knowledge and understanding of the text, and is able to formulate well-developed and structured analyses with multiple references to the text.

In another sample, the student received 18/30 (A6, B6, C3, D3) regarding their commentary on selected poems by Carol Ann Duffy. The student speaks in clear intonation, and provides a well-structured summary of the poem. The student frequently hesitates in between points, but demonstrates a wide range of vocabulary and high degree of grammatical accuracy. When comparing to the oral CEFR grids, the speaker produces a clear and smoothly flowing speech with good command of a broad range of language that does not restrict what she wants to say, but limitations in subject knowledge prevent a higher score.

In the final sample, marked at 12/30 (A5, B2, C2, D3), the student discusses *Six Feet of the Country (short stories)* by Nadine Gordimer. During his assessment, the student has a noticeable foreign accent, but his pronunciation is very good. He is clear and provides structured sentences on his arguments and key points. He occasionally pauses and hesitates, but overall is able to maintain a flow to the speech, with complex points made. His grammar is mostly accurate, with some errors made. He is able to keep going comprehensibly, and during most of the speech is able to express his point of view without noticeable strain. He has a sufficient range of language to give his arguments and is able to provide supporting details and examples, in line with B2.

4.2.3 Summary of English language competency assessment in English A: Language and Literature SL

As shown in the table below, English A: Language and Literature SL tests students' receptive and productive and interactive skills in English. Although listening comprehension is not formally assessed, it is required during the five-minute discussion with teacher after the commentary section of the Individual Oral component.

Table 33: Skills facets assessed in the English A: Language and Literature SL course

	Receptive		Production		Interaction	
Skill facet	Reading comp.	Listening comp.	Written production	Spoken production	Written Interaction	Spoken Interaction
Assessed?	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes
Relevant assessment	Paper 1 Individual Oral ¹⁰⁵		Paper 2 Written Task	Individual Oral Further Oral Activity		Individual Oral <i>Further Oral Activity</i> ¹⁰⁶

Reading and Writing

Students of the English A: Language and Literature SL are expected to be able to read and comprehend a wide variety of text types, both literary and non-literary in nature, both concrete and more abstract in nature, covering a range of discourse types including narrative, expository, expressive and poetic texts. Their ability to do so is assessed through both written and oral examination, with the latter also placing an added demand of time, since the Individual Oral Commentary allows a maximum of 20 minutes preparation time to review the literary extract and develop a commentary of approximately 10 minutes.

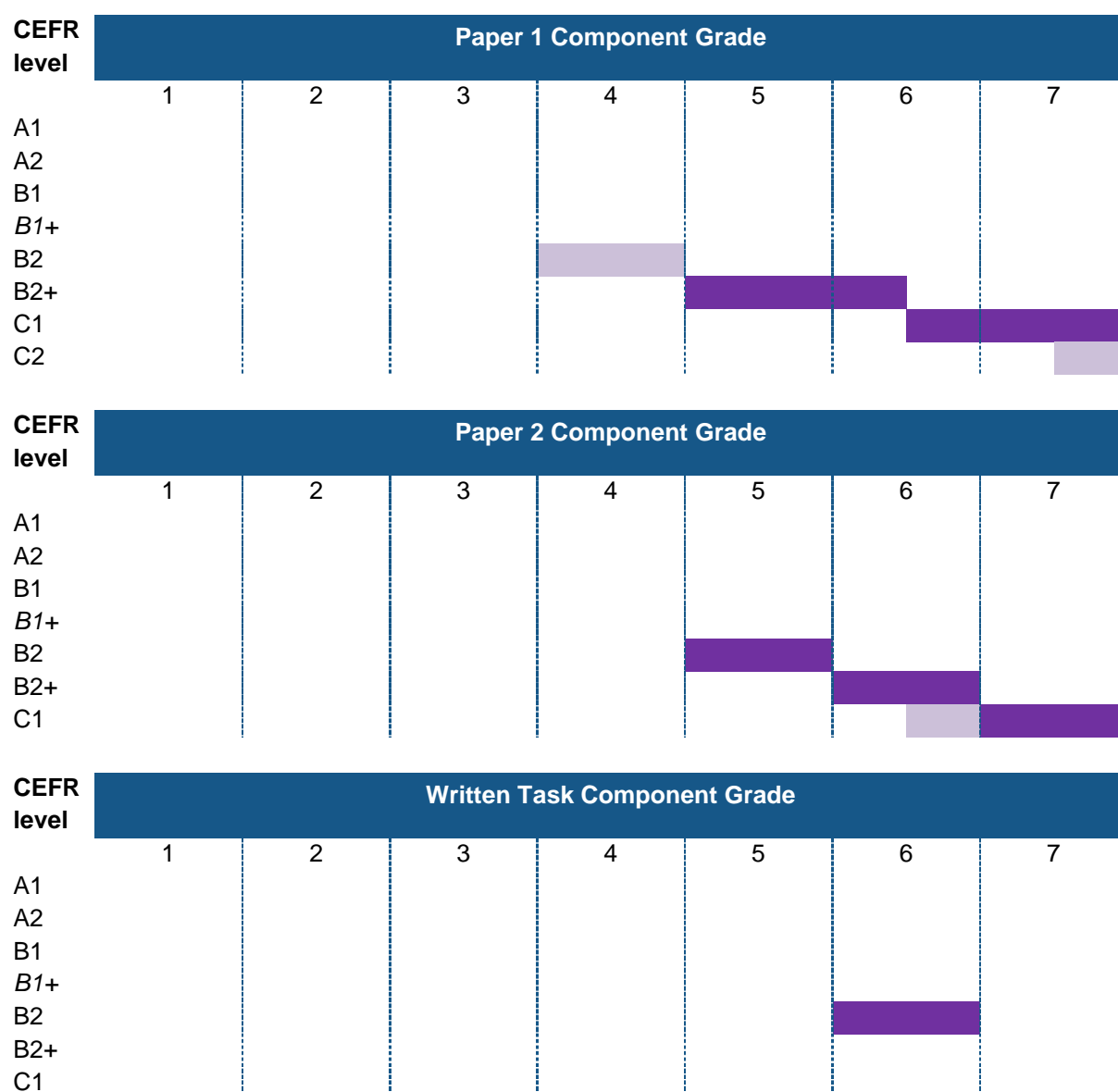
The texts themselves encompass a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical features and are pitched at varying levels, with some having a high proportion of vocabulary and grammar at CEFR levels A1-B2 but requiring a deeper level of understanding given the demands of the assessment tasks to infer meaning and identify areas such as irony, humour and protest.

Taking into consideration the referencing of the level descriptors to CEFR, the weighting of the components and the component grade boundaries (as outlined in Section 2, the Methodology), the following comparison is proposed for the three reading and writing components:

¹⁰⁵ Paper 2 also tests reading comprehension in a broader sense since students should reference works they've studied during the course within their written response. Paper 1 and the Individual Oral by contrast assess students' understanding of texts presented to them under examination conditions, thereby providing a more direct assessment of reading comprehension.

¹⁰⁶ The Further Oral Activity can be (but is not required to be) interactive in nature.

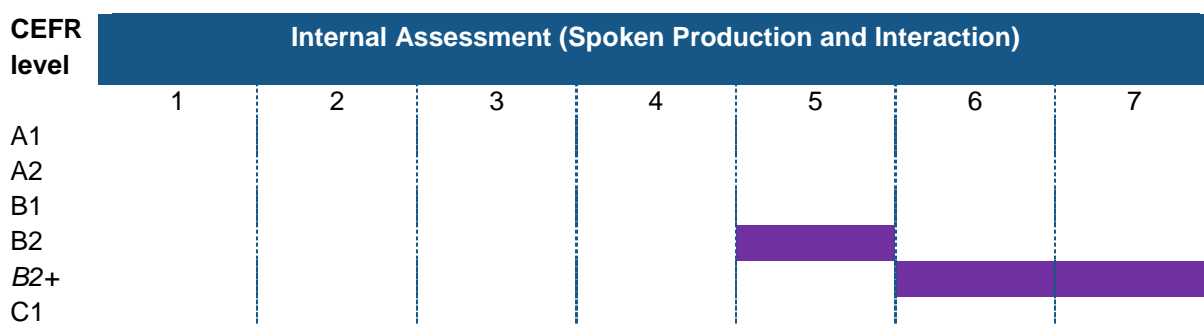
Figure 15: English A: Language and Literature SL reading and writing components and corresponding CEFR levels



Speaking

Based on the comparison of the assessment criteria, their relative weighting (in terms of the proportion of marks available for each) and further supported the review of marked audio scripts, the following threshold scores are recommended for comparability to the respective CEFR levels for speaking.

Figure 16: English A: Language and Literature SL Internal Assessment and Corresponding CEFR levels



Drawing on the comparability of the different components and their relative weighting to the overall grade, the overall grade boundaries (drawn from three sittings) and the grade descriptors as appropriate, the overall comparability to CEFR of the English A: Language and Literature SL is recommended as follows:

Figure 17: Comparability of the English A: Language and Literature SL to the CEFR

CEFR Level	English A: Language and Literature SL
C2	
C1	7
B2+	6
B2	5
B1	
A2	
A1	

4.3 Comparative analysis of English A: Language and Literature HL with CEFR

4.3.1 Reading and writing

As with the SL course, the English A: Language and Literature HL includes several integrated assessments of receptive and written productive skills.

4.3.1.1 Analysis of unseen texts in Paper 1

Text length, structure and presentation

Paper 1 comprises four texts (presented in pairs), of varying lengths and text types. As stated in the Subject Guide, the texts in the exam papers are not necessarily related to specific parts of the syllabus and a pair of texts will include one literary and one non-literary text or two non-literary texts¹⁰⁷. As with the SL paper, different text types are included, such as advertisement, opinion column, essay extract, online blogs, brochure and diary extract or other autobiographical text as well as poems and extracts from a screenplay or novel or short story. In the past papers reviewed the texts ranged from 80-word advertisements to 730-word short stories, along with other fiction and non-fiction texts including a literary diary extract, a blog and song lyrics.

Text domain, style and content

In the papers that were analysed, the texts fitted into either the personal, public, educational or occupational domains and the discourse type varied, ranging from narration, argument, exposition, description, expressive and transactional, as well as poetic. In terms of the communication themes, three of the texts cover the topic *Environment* with the others being either *Education*, *Entertainment*, *Daily life* or *Other (folk tale)*. Examples of texts in the past papers reviewed include:

- A diary extract written by a US naturalist in the early 1900s
- Film poster (advertisement) from the 1950s
- An extract from an online blog for jobseekers
- Song lyrics from an R&B singer about being watched
- A South African folk story from the early 20th century
- Journal article presenting arguments for the importance of teaching music at school
- Explanation of the stages of a thunderstorm written for the general public.

Linguistic complexity

In terms of text authenticity, five of the eight texts were authentic, with the other three being adapted. In some cases, a glossary was provided at the end of the text with definitions given either for some colloquial terms and expressions such as “jocking” and “scoping”, or for more complex vocabulary such as “sagacious”.

¹⁰⁷ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Language and Literature guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

The style of each text is very varied, ranging from being short and snappy, to detailed and descriptive with the use of figurative language and imagery, for example “forest of grass”, and “thickly peopled with buttercups”. One of the texts also uses very colloquial and informal language such as “gotta” and “ain’t”. Others contain more formal language and specialist or technical terminology. Test takers will encounter a range of grammatical structures, some more complex than others and not always at the same level of difficulty as the vocabulary in the text. For example, verb + infinitive (A1) and present continuous tense (A1) used in a text where the overall CEFR level is C1, and conditional with modal (C1) in a text with an overall CEFR level of B2.

As shown in the table below, the texts provide vocabulary across all levels of CEFR:

Table 34: Vocabulary items from English A: Language and Literature HL, Paper 1 unseen texts

Items comprehensible to a learner/user at CEFR level				
	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4
A1	60% show, carry, ready, meal, dance	47% music, child, year, school, language, important	60% small, winter, minutes, world, year, weather, rain, hot, cold, each, sun, all	50% happy, gardens, beautiful, find, windows, grass, work, love, small
	after, breakfast, from, below, watched, together	(the) most, science, screen, ever		watching, me, wake up, close (eyes), think, feel, night, dollars, doing, excuse me, every
A2	13% work, receive, insect, back, return, steal, safe	5% brain, change, nationally, whole, instrument	15% thunderstorm, cloud, warm, size, dangerous, stronger, usually, around, during, mountains	13% fall, fair, single, song, washing, mountain, great, woods, gold, heavy, kissing, star, way
	be able to do, like (similar), field, could, machine, activities, insects	(the) most, science, screen, ever	online, make sure, almost, these days	finding (out)
B1	7% hunger, exhausted, fortunately, attempt, refuse, pass by	15% effects, education, development, performance, benefits, internationally, research	11% typical, average, despite, breeze, produce, heat, guide, rise, inch, percent	13% smooth, fountains, stores, hiding, drops, depths, valley, landscape, angel, join in , peaks
	ambition, experience, valley, enormous, love (noun), if only, thickly, whole (of sth), right, tiny, seemed	monster, story	research, employer, worth (doing sth), plenty, certain, applying, recently, checks, quite a bit, wondering, common, industries, search , expect, pretty (quite)	security, right (before), some kind of, over (my head), checking, may (I have?)
B2	11% force, seek, elsewhere, threaten, cause, propose, declare	17% evidence, involvement, play a role, intelligence, pay-off, social, creativity, conduct, psychological	10% compared to, service, tornado, consider, occur, cycle, developing, rapidly, relatively, affects	7% silently, spray, whispering, descending, ridiculous, display, power, cells, seeking, sight, fail to, spot, eager

Items comprehensible to a learner/user at CEFR level				
	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4
	fascinating, in the distance , here and there	victim, weird, shrinks, incredible (not believe), terror, deadly, by (moment by moment), mist	essentially, potential, run (a background check), background, idea (not a bad idea), point out, public, guaranteed, profile, mention, impression, potential, images, records	democracy, community, decline, satellite, see (find out), with whom, make (money)
C1	3% desire, lay before, in vain, thankful, jealousy, settle, unqualified. acknowledge, withdraw	7% relate to, claim, accumulative, therapeutic, literacy, motivational, sensitive, teamwork, overwhelming, notable, enhance	2% classified, unstable, indicates, dominate, downward	2% scarce, shining, grassy, bubbles, appointed
	luxuriously, sacrifice, foot (of sth), working (operate sth), follow (be interested)		network, opt / opting, formal (public / official), clean up,	scoped
C2	6% (including underlined words) overmaster, fiddle, take possession of, charmed, slaughter, master (adj.), struck, <u>wonders</u> , <u>fellow</u> , <u>bring it down</u> , <u>bulbs</u> , <u>scorpions</u> , <u>forsake</u> , <u>thereupon</u>	10% (including underlined words) empirical, compelling, fine (~ motor coordination), champion (~ of change), present (~ evidence), circulation, secretion, sustained, crisp, profound, <u>motor</u> , <u>coordination</u> , <u>substantiates</u>	2% (including underlined words) hail, diameter, cumulus, intensity, <u>front</u> (weather), <u>diameter</u>	15% (including underlined words) wilderness, patting, yet, finer, creep, nest, cheer, crystals, grain, blunt, way-worn, <u>lilies</u> , <u>dimpled</u> , <u>cascades</u> , <u>glinting</u> , <u>nuggets</u> , <u>blessed</u> , <u>throng</u> , <u>majesty</u> , <u>pomp</u> , <u>replenished</u> , <u>messenger</u> , <u>needles</u>
	Electric (adj – exciting), away (continuous action – “chattered away”, filter in, long for, idly, crawling	fury, mounts		tracking, sense (v), transmitter, scrutinising

Note: Underlined text is used to denote those words which are not considered critical to understanding of the main points of the text.

Taking into consideration the above factors, the level of reading comprehension needed for each text varied, ranging from B1 to C1. This judgement was based not only on the type of vocabulary included in the text, but also the style and tone of writing and language used. For example, one of the texts, an advertisement for a film, contained short and snappy sentences with simple grammatical structures. Although there were a few words at C2 level, these were not deemed to be critical for the comprehension of the whole text, which was considered overall to be at B1 level. This was in contrast to another text which was a detailed and descriptive diary extract with long sentence clauses and varied grammatical structures and tenses. Some of the language was quite old-fashioned and the tone and style of the text therefore required the reader to be competent in understanding the context of the vocabulary as well as just the meaning of individual words, and also be able to interpret the use of imagery throughout the text. This text was considered to be of a higher level overall and pitched at C1 accordingly.

4.3.1.2 Review of assessment tasks and rating in Paper 1

Paper 1 is a comparative textual analysis in which students have two hours to read and compare two previously unseen texts. It is expected that students will “Analyse, compare and comment on the texts in light of their understanding of audience and purpose...analyse structure, language and style in addition to aspects such as text type, context, bias and/or ideological positions”¹⁰⁸.

While the length of expected response is not specified in either the exam paper or the assessment criteria; review of marked student scripts found the length of text produced within the two hours to be around 1200-1500 words. These responses are graded on four criteria, as outlined in the table below:

Table 35: Assessment criteria for English A: Language and Literature HL Paper 1

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall component
A	Understanding and comparison of the texts	5	25%
B	Understanding of the use and effects of stylistic features	5	25%
C	Organization and development	5	25%
D	Language	5	25%

Criterion A and B

Criterion A evaluates the extent to which the response identifies the similarities and differences between the texts; demonstrates an understanding of the texts, purpose, types and possible contexts; and makes appropriate references to the texts in support of the analysis. Criterion B also evaluates students' understanding of the text, focussing instead on

¹⁰⁸ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Language and Literature guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document, p.40.

the extent to which the analysis demonstrates understanding of the use of stylistic features in constructing meaning, and appreciation of the effects of these. As outlined in the Methodology (section 2), where criteria assess textual analysis skills, it is not appropriate to link lower grades to CEFR. As with the SL Paper 1 however, links are evident between the ability to infer meaning or identify implied as well as stated opinions using contextual, grammatical and lexical cues in the texts and CEFR, levels B2 and C1. A grade of 4 (on a 0-5 scale) for both Criterion A and B is awarded where students can demonstrate a good understanding of texts; “mostly support” comments with “well-chosen” references to the text; and demonstrate a good awareness of the use and effect of stylistic features. This can be seen to reflect a C1, Achievement of 5 marks in both criteria, reflecting an “excellent understanding” with comments “fully supported”, would also reflect a good CEFR C1. The ability to “understand precisely finer shades of meaning” and have “awareness of connotative levels of meaning”¹⁰⁹ is typically associated with CEFR C2; therefore full marks are reflective of C1 and above.

Criterion C

As was the case for the SL Paper 1, Criterion C assesses the organisation and development of the student’s written response, but this time with the added consideration of the balance the individual has demonstrated between analyses of the two texts. With the emphasis both on the student’s level of analysis, and the extent to which they’ve analysed each text in equal depth, it is particularly difficult to reference achievement in the marking bands to CEFR. Reflecting on the expectation at B2 for a coherent structure with a systematically developed argument, it is clear that a mark of 4 would be indicative of a solid B2. A grade of 3 may reflect a threshold B2, since the response should still be “Organised and structured in a generally coherent way”¹¹⁰. The expectation for a mark of 5 that the essay would be effectively organised with a “coherent and effective” structure and development, reflects performance of at least C1.

Criterion D

Marked on a 0-5 scale, Criterion D relates to the clarity, variety and accuracy of English in the student’s response. The level descriptors are consistent with those used in the SL paper, as described in Section 4.2.1.2, and with the same allocation of marks. The analysis of these level descriptors found that a mark of 2 could be considered to reflect CEFR B1, a mark of 3 reflected performance at B1+/B2 level, 4 reflecting B2+, whilst a mark of 5 reflected CEFR C1.

Reference to student samples, achieving a range of marks¹¹¹, also supported these findings.

¹⁰⁹ Qualitative Factors for Reception. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹¹⁰ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Language and Literature guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document. p.49.

¹¹¹ This included a sample achieving 19/20 (A5, B5, C4, D5); 12/20 (A2, B3, C4, D3); and 6/20 (A1, B1, C1, D3).

4.3.1.3 Analysis of Paper 2

Paper 2, another two-hour examination, provides a further assessment of students' written productive skills, with students this time referring to at least two texts they have studied during Part 3 of the course. The questions used are identical to those used in the SL Paper 2, with the key differences being the time permitted (1½ hours for the SL) and the assessment criteria linked to the differing expectations for the depth and complexity of the answers. The assessment criteria for HL are as follows:

Table 36: Assessment criteria for English A: Language and Literature HL Paper 2

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall paper
A	Knowledge and understanding	5	20%
B	Response to the question	5	20%
C	Understanding of the use and effects of stylistic features	5	20%
D	Organization and development	5	20%
E	Language	5	20%

As can be seen from the table above, the actual assessment criteria are the same as those used at SL; however, the level descriptors emphasise different areas in places.

Criterion A and B

For Criterion A, reflecting the student's knowledge and understanding of the Part 3 works, there is an expectation for a mark of 5, that the student should possess a perceptive understanding, with the way in which context affects meaning in the text being "thoroughly and persuasively demonstrated", reflecting competence at a high CEFR C1, and approaching C2. A mark of 4 reflects a "good understanding" in the SL and HL descriptors alike, reflecting CEFR C1.

Criterion B evaluates the extent to which the response demonstrates an understanding of the question and the ability to construct a relevant response, as was the case with SL Paper 2. The HL assessment criteria additionally consider the extent to which the response provides a critical analysis. It is acknowledged that a high level of receptive and productive English language competency would likely be needed to achieve scores of 4 and above in both criteria, although it is difficult to link the level descriptors and CEFR scales directly since the main focus of both is primarily a reflection of their skills in literary analysis.

Criterion C

Criterion C evaluates the response in terms of its commentary on and analysis of stylistic features used in the chosen texts. The level descriptors are very similar to those used at SL, with some differences in the allocation of marks, for example with a mark of 4 awarded to an SL student being comparable to a mark of 3 awarded under the HL assessment criteria. The

expectations for a mark of 5 are that there would be an “excellent” awareness of stylistic features (compared to a “very good” awareness, as required in the SL course). As identified in the SL analysis, a mark of 3 on the 0-5 scale would for both courses be indicative of CEFR B2. Whilst acknowledging the slightly higher expectations for the HL course, in comparison to CEFR, a mark of 4 in the SL/HL would both reflect competency at CEFR B2+/borderline C1. A mark of 5 reflects a strong CEFR C1 performance, with some students potentially able to demonstrate a higher level still.

Criterion D

Criterion D evaluates the logic and development of the argument in the student’s response together with the overall coherence and structure of the response, reflecting more at HL on the sequencing of ideas. A mark of 4 on the 0-5 scale is considered to meet level B2+/C1, with the expected systematic development of an argument, with well-organised, structured and coherent text. A mark of 5, awarded for a precise focus, coherent structure and thoroughly developed arguments is indicative of performance at least of C1 level, approaching C2. Students should be able to write clear, well-structured expositions of complex subjects at C1 whilst the ability to write smoothly-flowing essays with an effective and logical structure to highlight the main points for the reader is associated with CEFR C2¹¹².

Criterion E

Criterion E, titled “Language”, evaluates the level of clarity and grammatical accuracy demonstrated in the assessment. To receive two marks, a student demonstrates “sometimes clear” language and “fairly accurate” grammar and vocabulary reflective of CEFR B1. The level descriptor for a mark of 3 refers to “adequate” grammar and vocabulary which relates to CEFR B1+/B2. A mark of 4, where students are expected to demonstrate a good degree of accuracy with few obvious limitations on what they are able to say, and without errors that impact meaning, compares well with expectations at CEFR B2+, whilst the high level of accuracy, style and register expected at CEFR C1 level can be considered met by those achieving a mark of 5 in this criterion.

4.3.1.4 Analysis of the Written Tasks

Students of the English A: Language and Literature HL course, must complete four written tasks, two of which will be sent for external assessment and contribute towards the overall course grade (20% combined).

Each task has separate requirements and assessment criteria, but students receive a single component grade based on their performance in each and accordingly, these are reviewed together in this section.

For Written Task 1, students are expected to produce a text type of their choosing in relation to a particular topic or text. Examples from the reviewed student work include:

¹¹² Reports and Essays [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

- A political manifesto
- A diary entry, inspired by A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens
- A magazine article intended for a female, teenage audience.

For Written Task 2, students should produce a critical response to a literary text they have studied during their course, responding to one of six questions presented to them. This critical response should take the form of an essay. These would typically be linked to:

- Reader, culture and text – factors influencing the interpretation of a text by the reader
- Power and privilege – the representation of social groups in texts
- Text and genre – how texts conform or deviate from expected conventions.

Examples of question topics from the reviewed student work include:

- An analysis of a poem linked to the Power and Privilege theme above
- An analysis of a novella by Ernest Hemingway exploring the effect of timing, geographical contextual, language or audience on the text
- An essay linked to Part 1 of the course (Language in Cultural Context) with reference to the concept of taboo language in US adult cartoons.

For each task, it is expected that students produce 800-1000 words, with Written Task 1 additionally allowing 200-300 words for the rationale. Marks will be deducted for exceeding the word limit however examiners are instructed to only rate responses on the first 1000 words of the response (or first 300 in the case of the rationale).

Student texts are assessed using the following criteria:

Table 37: Assessment criteria for English A: Language and Literature HL Written Tasks

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall component
Written task 1			
A	Rationale	5	12.5%
B	Task and content	5	12.5%
C	Organization	5	12.5%
D	Language and style	5	12.5%
Written task 2			
A	Outline	2	5%
B	Response to the question	8	20%
C	Organization and argument	5	12.5%
D	Language and style	5	12.5%

Criterion A – Rationale / Outline

Criterion A for Written Task 1 considers how well the rationale explains the main text produced for the task, on a scale of 0-2. It should explain how the task is linked to aspects of the course (since their response must link to something they have studied within the course) and the intended audience for, purpose of and context in which the text is set.

For Written Task 2, Criterion A considers how well the outline produced highlights the focus of the main text, also on a scale of 0-2. In both cases, Criterion A is very specific to the IB DP assessment and is not relatable to CEFR scales.

Criterion B – Task and content / Response to the question

Criterion B for Written Task 1, rated on a 0-8 scale considers how well the student's response demonstrates understanding of the topic(s) or text(s) it's referring to and the conventions of the text type chosen. The level descriptors address the same key areas as observed for the SL assessment of the Written Task, but with differences evident in the wording and, in particular, in the expectations for the uppermost band (7-8) where students are expected to demonstrate an "excellent" rather than "good" understanding (as seen at SL) in relation to the topic(s) or text(s) in question and the conventions of those text types. Within the CEFR, it would be expected that Criterion B also considers students' understanding of the conventions of the text type they've chosen for their response. As outlined for the SL Written Assignment, adequate understanding of text conventions, as required for a mark of 3-4 on the 0-8 scale should be sufficient to reflect CEFR B2+. C1 is the first level where it would be expected that learners would be able to "Write clear, detailed, well-structured and developed descriptions and imaginative texts...appropriate to the reader in mind"¹¹³. The level descriptor of 5-6 states that a student would have a "good understanding" and therefore may reflect a B2+/C1, whilst the "excellent understanding" required for the top band (7-8) would reflect a solid performance at CEFR C1.

Criterion B for Written Task 2, also rated on a scale of 0-8, considers the level of understanding of the question and the relevance of the response in relation to the expectations of the question, an aspect which cannot be reliably compared to CEFR scales. Consideration is also given to how well the student has used references to the text which *does* touch on CEFR written production scales where students should be able to support their essays through integrated references to the text. The expectation at level B2+, where students would incorporate relevant supporting information into their essays, would be met by a mark of 3-4, where the student's response would generally be supported by references. At C1 level, students should be able to support their points at length. This level is reflected by descriptors for marks of 5-6 and 7-8, both of which expect that essays would be supported (either "mostly" or "fully") by well-chosen references.

¹¹³ Written Assessment Criteria Grid. [Council of Europe - Language Policy Division, 2009. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - A Manual*. [pdf] Published by: Council of Europe - Language Policy Division. p.187].

Criterion C – Organization / Organization and argument

Criterion C for Task 1 considers the level of organisation in the student's response, in effect the extent to which they have appropriately structured their essay, evaluating this on a scale of 0-5. The broad nature of the descriptors makes it difficult to compare to CEFR and it is also acknowledged that poor structure could stem from either a lack of subject knowledge, the level of English written productive competence or both. Some parallels can be drawn between the higher marks and CEFR B2+ / C1 where the student's response for a mark of 5 would need to be "effectively organised" and with a "coherent and effective" structure. Criterion C for the second Written Task also evaluates this, employing very similar level descriptors and mark allocation as for Written Task 1, with the difference being that Written Task 2 would also be assessed on the extent to which the student has developed the argument in their response. For a mark of 5, students must be able to develop an effective argument, also reflecting B2+/C1 where students should be able to "Develop an argument systematically," (B2+) or "Write clear well-structured expositions of complex subjects," expanding and supporting points of view at some length (C1)¹¹⁴.

Criterion D – Language and style

Criterion D for both tasks considers the effectiveness of the language and style in the student's response. The level descriptors and mark allocation are identical between the two tasks. For a mark of 3, students would need to be able to produce generally clear and effective text in terms of language style, albeit with some inaccuracies, therefore reflecting the expectations at CEFR B2 where such inaccuracies would not result in the reader misunderstanding. A mark of 4 is awarded to those using language and style clearly and effectively with a good degree of accuracy, varied vocabulary and sentence construction and appropriate register. Comparing both the assessment criteria alone, and cross-referencing with the marked student work, it is clear that a mark of 4 would be indicative of borderline C1 where a good-high degree of accuracy is expected, and none of these errors would impact meaning. To write in a register appropriate to the task would require students to "Select an appropriate formulation from a broad range of language"¹¹⁵, a skill associated with CEFR C1.

The high level of accuracy, effective and confident register and style expected for a mark of 5 is consistent with expectations at CEFR C1 level and above.

Reviewing marked student samples enabled the project team to see how the marks were applied in practice which served to further reinforce the findings. The sample outlined below achieved a high score (33/40)¹¹⁶, illustrating achievement in typically the top two marking bands, with the exception of one criterion.

¹¹⁴ Reports and Essays [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹¹⁵ General Linguistic Range. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. [pdf] p.110].

¹¹⁶ The component scores were as follows for Written Task 1: A2, B4, C5, D4. For Written Task 2, the student attained the following: A2, B7, C5, D4).

In one sample, the student scored 33/40. This student produced a political manifesto of around 860 words, introduced by a 300-word rationale for Written Task 1; and an essay relating to the Social Groups question for Written Task 2, keeping just within the 1000-word limit. Written Task 1 demonstrated an adequate understanding of the conventions for a manifesto, with the use of emotive and persuasive language designed to rally people against the opposition. There are few errors identifiable in the language and the student uses a varied and advanced vocabulary that would be more typically associated with a CEFR C2 level or a native speaker although this is not a specific expectation of the level descriptor. In fact, the individual, whilst demonstrating excellent accuracy and control, scores 4 out of a possible of 5 because the register in which the text is written is adequate, as opposed to effective, which is what would be needed to achieve full marks.

For Written Task 2, the same individual refers to a poem under the prescribed question relating to social groups, choosing to focus their response on the marginalisation and/or silencing of men in the poem. The response shows an excellent understanding of the text, with themes and stances inferred from the text through a clear understanding of vocabulary and grammatical cues. The score of 4 for language (on a scale of 0-5) reflects some occasional slips in punctuation and syntax.

4.3.2 Speaking and listening

The assessment and task format, assessment criteria and mark allocation for the HL Internal Assessment are the same as those employed at SL. Please see section 4.2.2 for more detail.

4.3.3 Summary of English language competency assessment in English A: Language and Literature HL

English A: Language and Literature HL tests students' receptive, productive and interactive skills in English. Through the discussions that take place during the internal assessments, listening comprehension is also required but not formally assessed. Students also have the opportunity to relate their written tasks to a TV programme, which would also place emphasis on listening rather than reading comprehension.

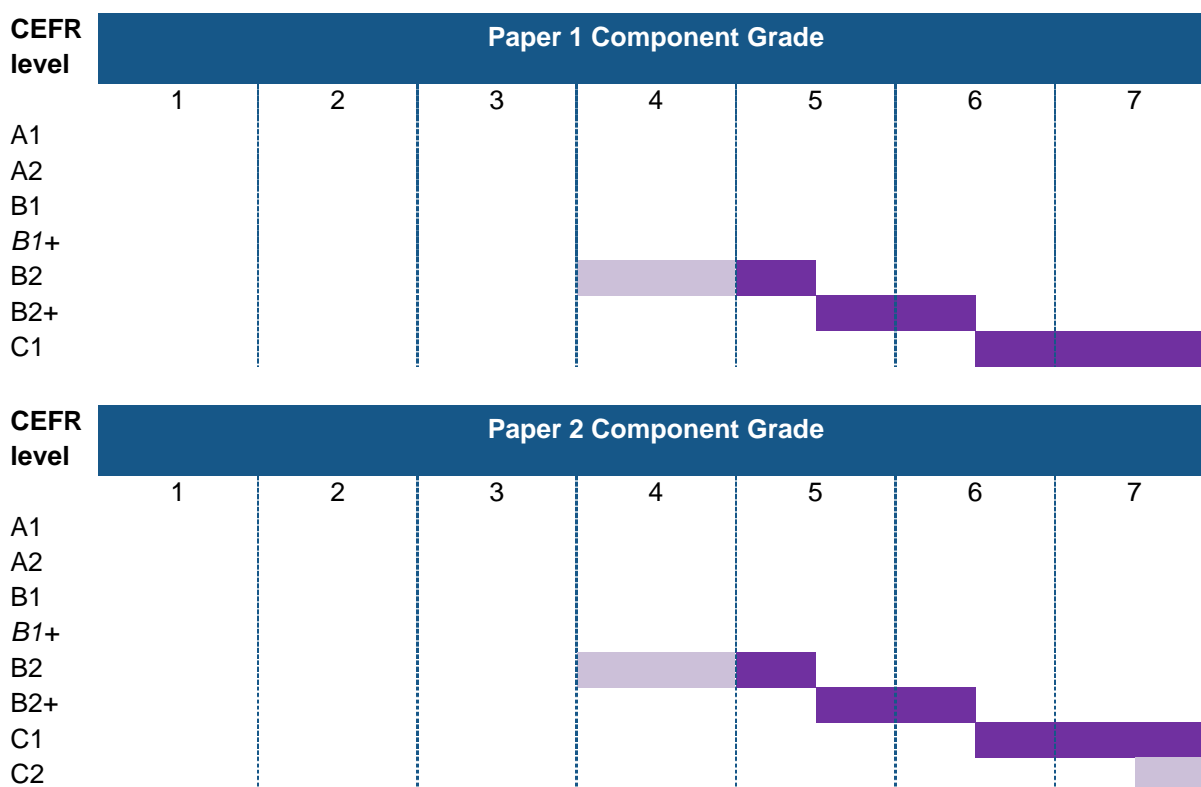
Table 38: Skills facets assessed in the English A: Language and Literature HL course

	Receptive		Production		Interaction	
Skill facet	Reading comp.	Listening comp.	Written production	Spoken production	Written Interaction	Spoken Interaction
Assessed?	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes
Relevant assessment	Paper 1 Individual Oral ¹¹⁷ Written Task 2		Paper 2 Written Task 1 and 2	Individual oral Further oral activity		Individual oral <i>Further oral activity</i> ¹¹⁸

Reading and Writing

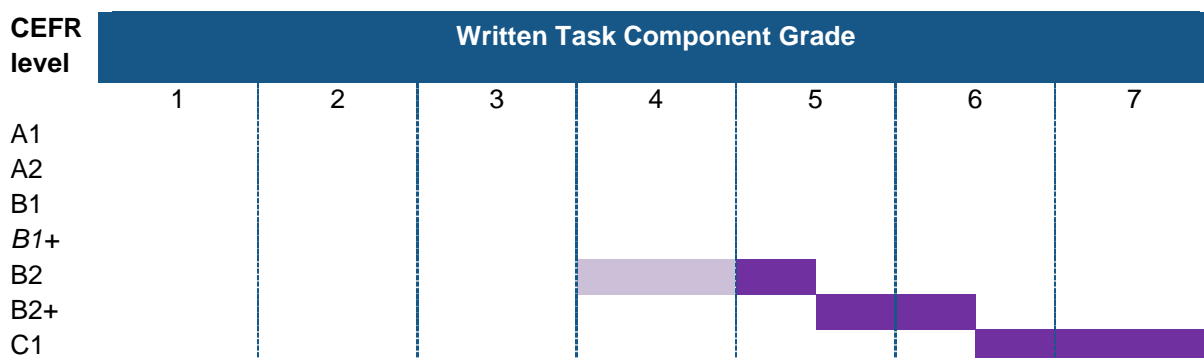
Taking into consideration the referencing of the level descriptors to CEFR, the weighting of the components and the component grade boundaries (as outlined in Section 2, the Methodology), the following comparison is proposed for the three reading and writing components:

Figure 18: English A: Language and Literature HL reading and writing components and corresponding CEFR levels



¹¹⁷ Paper 2 also tests reading comprehension in a broader sense since students should reference works they have studied during the course within their written response. Paper 1 and the Individual Oral by contrast assess students' understanding of texts presented to them under examination conditions, thereby providing a more direct assessment of reading comprehension.

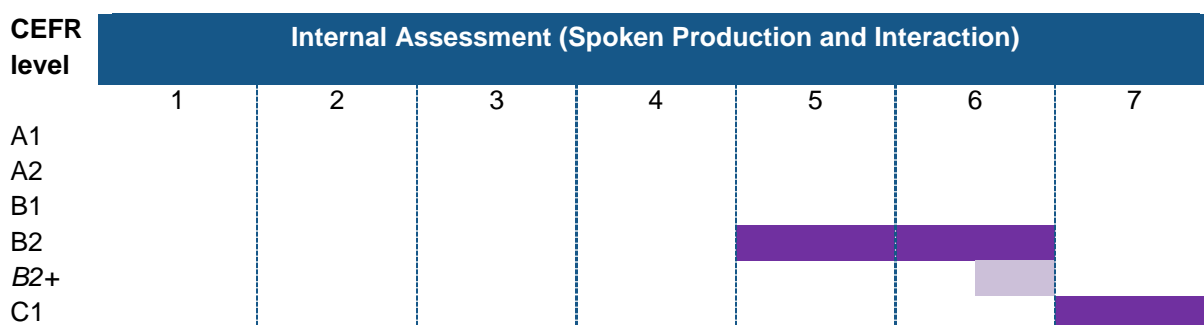
¹¹⁸ The Further Oral Activity can be (but is not required to be) interactive in nature.



Speaking

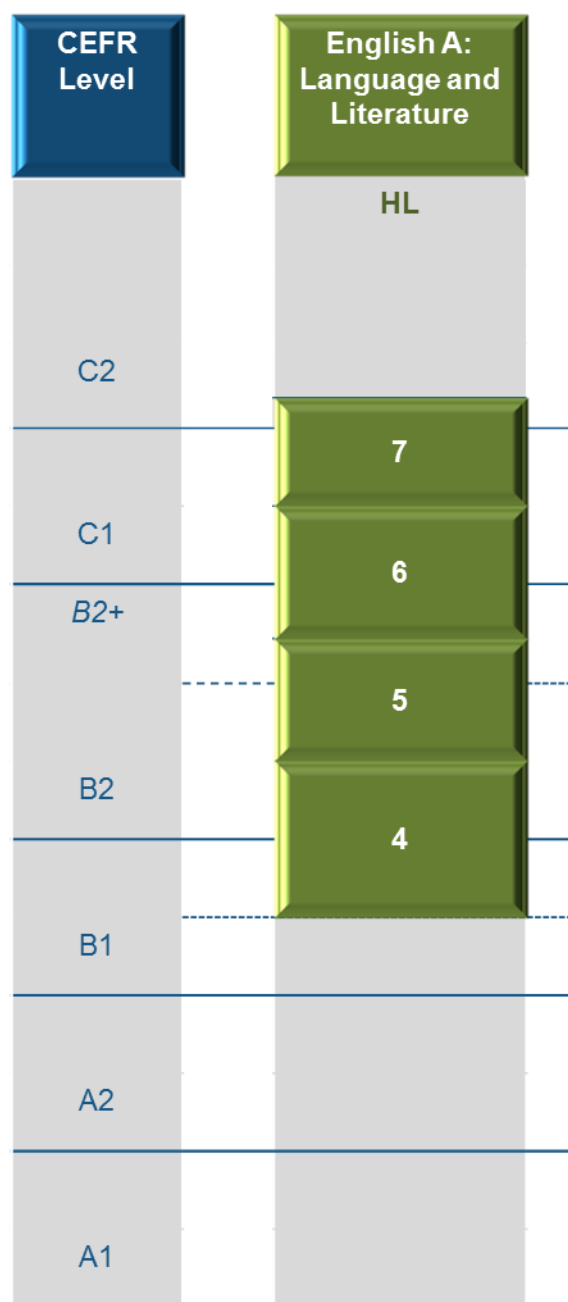
Based on the comparison of the assessment criteria, their relative weighting (in terms of the proportion of marks available for each) and further supported the review of marked audio scripts, the following threshold scores are recommended for comparability to the respective CEFR levels for speaking.

Figure 19: English A: Language and Literature HL internal assessment and corresponding CEFR levels



Drawing on the comparability of the different components and their relative weighting to the overall grade, the overall grade boundaries (drawn from three sittings) and the grade descriptors as appropriate, the overall comparability to CEFR of the English A: Language and Literature HL is recommended as follows:

Figure 20: Comparability of the English A: Language and Literature HL to the CEFR



5. English A: Literature

5.1 Profile of the English A: Literature courses

5.1.1 Overview and aims of English A: Literature

The English A: Literature course is a Group 1 course available to students with varied language profiles. As is the case for all Group 1 courses, students will come from a variety of linguistic backgrounds, however, it is assumed that all students studying a Group 1 course will be highly competent in the target language. The decision to undertake this particular course is often based on students' interests and future study plans and, as with other Group 1 courses, there are no formal prior learning requirements. Previous experience of writing critical essays about texts is recommended although not essential for entry onto the course.

The course is available at both SL and HL and although the structure of the course at these two levels is the same, there are significant quantitative and qualitative differences in content, teaching hours and assessment criteria. Where applicable, the differences between the levels are highlighted in this profile.

As with other Group 1 courses, the English A: Literature programme is “designed to support future academic study by developing a high social, aesthetic and cultural literacy, as well as effective communication skills”¹¹⁹.

The full list of aims that extends across all Group 1 courses (the final two being specific to the Language A: Literature course), is as follows:

1. “Introduce students to a range of texts from different periods, styles and genres
2. Develop in students the ability to engage in close, detailed analysis of individual texts and make relevant connections
3. Develop the students' powers of expression, both in oral and written communication
4. Encourage students to recognize the importance of the contexts in which texts are written and received
5. Encourage, through the study of texts, an appreciation of the different perspectives of people from other cultures, and how these perspectives construct meaning
6. Encourage students to appreciate the formal, stylistic and aesthetic qualities of texts
7. Promote in students an enjoyment of, and lifelong interest in, language and literature
8. Develop in students an understanding of the techniques involved in literary criticism
9. Develop the students' ability to form independent literary judgments and to support those ideas.”¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Literature Guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

5.1.2 Content and duration

Divided into four parts, this course requires students to study a wide range of literature, with the main aim of developing an ability to reflect critically on their reading and appreciate the artistry of literature.

The course is flexible, allowing teachers to choose works to suit the needs and interests of the students, however they must comply with requirements regarding literary genres, periods and place (where applicable) and be drawn from the PLA and PLT.

The four main parts of the course total a minimum of 240 teaching hours at HL and 150 teaching hours at SL. There is no requirement for the four parts to be taught in any particular order, but there may be factors that determine the best sequence such as assessment deadlines or student skills. The following table describes the requirements of each part of the course with the breakdown of teaching hours and the learning outcomes / teaching aims associated with each.

Table 39: English A: Literature (HL/SL) content and learning outcomes

English A: Literature (HL/SL)		
Part	Requirements	Learning Outcomes
Part 1: Works in translation (HL 65 hours, SL 40 hours)	Study of three works at HL and two at SL. All works are chosen from the titles in the PLT list.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the content of the work and the qualities of the work as literature Respond independently to the work by connecting the individual and cultural experience of the reader with the text Recognise the role played by cultural and contextual elements in literary works.
Part 2: Detailed study (HL 65 hours, SL 40 hours)	Study of three works at HL and two at SL. All works are chosen from the PLA for the language being studied, each from a different genre. At HL one of the genres must be poetry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire detailed knowledge and understanding of the works studied Demonstrate appropriate analytical responses to specific genres Show how particular effects are achieved through language use, and analyse elements such as character, theme and setting Engage with the details of works in order to develop a considered and informed response.
Part 3: Literature genres (HL 65 hours, SL 40 hours)	Study of four works at HL and three at SL. All works are chosen from the PLA for the language being studied, chosen from the same genre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire knowledge and understanding of the works studied Acquire a clear sense of the literary conventions of the selected genre Understand the ways in which content is delivered through the literary conventions of the selected genre Compare the similarities and differences between the chosen works.

English A: Literature (HL/SL)		
Part	Requirements	Learning Outcomes
Part 4: Options (HL 45 hours, SL 30 hours)	Study of three works at both HL and SL. Works are freely chosen in any combination ¹²¹ .	<p>Common to all options are the following, that students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire knowledge and understanding of the works studied • Present an individual, independent response to works studied • Acquire powers of expression through oral presentation • Learn how to interest and hold the attention of an audience. <p>Additional outcomes are specified for each of the options.</p>

Students are given the opportunity throughout the course to develop and refine their language skills. This includes being able to “Express ideas in clear, unambiguous language”¹²², being aware of style and register of language, structuring ideas coherently and effectively, and to acquire vocabulary appropriate to formal expression and literary analysis. As well as supporting continued language development, the course also provides students with the opportunity to develop skills in textual analysis and the expression and understanding of literary appreciation.

5.1.3 Summative assessment

Objectives

The different assessment areas for this particular course are listed below, along with the objectives for each:

Table 40: English A: Literature (HL/SL) assessment objectives

English A: Literature – HL/SL	
Assessment area:	Objective:
Knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of individual literary works as representatives of their genre and period, and the relationships between them • Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which cultural values are expressed in literature • Demonstrate awareness of the significance of the context in which a work is written and received • Substantiate and justify ideas with relevant examples.
Analysis, synthesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an ability to analyse language, structure, technique and

¹²¹ Option 1, “Prose other than fiction”, includes text types such as autobiographies, biographies, creative non-fiction, essays, letters, speeches and travel writing. Option 2, “new textualities” includes fan fiction, graphic novels and hypertext narratives. Option 3 focusses on literary works and their film adaptations.

¹²² International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Literature Guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document, p.16.

and evaluation	<p>style, and evaluate their effects on the reader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an ability to engage in independent literary criticism on both familiar and unfamiliar literary texts • Show an ability to examine and discuss in depth the effects of literary techniques and the connections between style and meaning (<i>HL only</i>).
Selection and use of appropriate presentation and language skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an ability to express ideas clearly and fluently in both written and oral communication, with an effective choice of register and style Demonstrate a command of terminology and concepts appropriate to the study of literature • Demonstrate an ability to express well-organised oral and written arguments • Demonstrate an ability to write a sustained and detailed literary commentary (<i>HL only</i>).

Methods

Both external and internal assessments are used in the English A: Literature course, as follows:

Table 41: English A: Literature (HL/SL) assessment methods and weighting

English A: Literature HL/SL	
External assessment	
Weighting	70%
Methods	Written Exams / Written Assignment
Internal assessment	
Weighting	30%
Methods	Oral Work

Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to provide literary commentary about prose and poetry both in writing and orally. Examinations therefore consist of written assignments and oral presentations, details of which are provided in the following tables. HL and SL examinations are shown separately due to differences in requirements and duration.

Table 42: English A: Literature SL assessment format

	English A: Literature SL				
Number and type of assessments each examination series	<i>External: Paper 1</i>	<i>External: Paper 2</i>	<i>External: Written Assignment (Four stage process consisting of written and oral tasks)</i>	<i>Internal: Formal oral commentary and interview</i>	<i>Internal: Individual oral presentation</i>
Duration	1½ hours	1½ hours	Not specified	10 mins (presentation 8 mins, questions from the teacher 2 mins)	10-15 mins
Type(s) of question	Guided literary analysis on one previously unseen passage	Essay (comparative literary analysis)	Written assignment based on a work in translation studied in part 1 of the course	Oral commentary (literary analysis) followed by questions from the teacher	Oral presentation based on works studied in part 4
Total marks available	20	25	25	30	30
Weighting toward overall qualification	20%	25%	25%	15%	15%

Table 43: English A: Literature HL assessment format

	English A: Literature HL				
Number and type of assessments each examination series	<i>External: Paper 1</i>	<i>External: Paper 2</i>	<i>External: Written Assignment</i>	<i>Internal: Formal oral commentary and discussion</i>	<i>Internal: Individual oral presentation</i>
Duration	2 hours	2 hours	Not specified	20 mins (10 minutes for the commentary followed by 10 minutes of discussion)	10-15 mins
Type(s) of question	Essay	Essay	Essay	Oral commentary	Oral presentation
Total marks available	20	25	25	30	30
Weighting toward overall qualification	20%	25%	25%	15%	15%

5.2 Comparative analysis of English A: Literature SL with CEFR

5.2.1 Reading and Writing

English A: Literature SL students' reading skills in English are developed through the study of authentic texts throughout their course, with 10 works¹²³ chosen from the PLA and PLT. These are advanced texts, with a number of these similarly included on the GCE A Level English Literature set texts list (designed for native speakers). Specific assessment of students' reading comprehension under examination conditions is provided in Paper 1, as reviewed below.

5.2.1.1 Analysis of unseen texts in Paper 1

Text length, structure and presentation

The Literature Subject Guide states that for the SL external assessment Paper 1 will contain two literary passages, one prose and one poetry. The prose could be taken from works such as a novel or short story, an essay, a biography, a journalistic piece of writing of literary merit, or a play. They are likely not to be taken from literary works previously studied during the course.

In the past papers reviewed, the poems ranged from 175-270 words whilst the prose ranged from 500-830 words.

Text domain, style and content

The texts provided in the exam papers reviewed were all from the personal domain (reading for interest or for information), although it is expected that students would be able to handle texts from all domains. The discourse type was either poetic or narrative and topics varied from *Travel, Adventure* and *War*, to *Relations with Other People* and *Environment*. In more detail, the texts included:

- Literary prose describing the experience of flying a WW1 bomber
- A poem describing the post battle trenches and the relationship between the writer and the dead
- An extract from a novel written from the perspective of an old lady near to death
- A poem describing a man's dislike for trees.

Linguistic complexity

In terms of text authenticity, all of the texts were authentic, taken directly from the novel without any alterations, or in the case of poetry, the full poems were provided. The use of grammar throughout the texts was quite varied, ranging from the present simple (A1) and future time (A2) to past perfect, relative clauses and conditionals (all at B1). The prose was

¹²³ The IB define a "work" as "1 single major work, such as a novel, autobiography or biography; 2 or more shorter texts such as novellas; 5-10 short stories; 5-8 essays; 10-15 letters; a substantial section or the whole of a long poem (at least 600 lines) or 15-20 shorter poems. International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Literature Guide - First examinations 2015*.

contemporary and descriptive and in some cases contained a high amount of specialist / subject specific vocabulary such as “cockpit”, “fuselage” and figurative expressions and imagery, e.g. “the forked green vein danced...” and “like a dark curtain drawn around her bed”. In other texts, the tone was more informal with a lot of colloquial expressions such as “Well missy, excuse me” and “old boy”.

As shown in the table below, the texts provide vocabulary across all levels of CEFR:

Table 44: Vocabulary items from English A: Literature SL, Paper 1 unseen texts

Items comprehensible to a learner/user at CEFR level		
A1	61% ears, small, white, room, rain, comes, snow, look, see, whiter, men, two	57% father, carries, snow, between, walk, something, arms, bed, cold, page, behind
	country, nose, warm, green, danced, because, well	trees, something, wrong, better, bodies
A2	11% engines, other, trying, lose, begins to, around, through, air, top, growing, most, could, soft	17% careful, space, have to, wood, where, hundred, like, almost, everywhere, across, field
	careful, pulled, nothing, like, excuse me	necks, cafeteria, managers, always, another, home, time, whole, customers
B1	10% bones, stuck, impossible, drop, once more, strange, rise, cheeks, ever, lift	11% frightening, thick, filled, ghostly, floating, landscape, ahead, keep (moving), blank, frozen
	sheet, chin, ought, knee, wrong, cushion, forehead, made (cause), up (not in bed) just (because), respect, cheek, warn	blaming for sure, shaving, lost, curls, transferred, leaves, drops, blocks, thieves, shade, branches
B2	7% burst out, cloth, wings, darkness, helmeted, designed to, prospect, figures, melt, if...could...would	7% mud, remain, scene, owl, blinked, linked, strange, species, spirits, turns away, figures, function
	wrist, paw, eyelids, down (unhappy)	robberies, sweeping, affection, caught
C1	n/a	2% extinct, extinction, some (not using name)
	neatly, spread (arrange), vein, in no time	n/a
C2	11% (including underlined words) racket, skulls, keep at bay, relief, hail, drift, turbulence, range, <u>hunker down</u> , <u>torsos</u> , <u>screech</u> , <u>pelting</u> , <u>flakes</u> , <u>sting</u> , <u>asunder</u> , <u>cockpit</u> , <u>fuselage</u>	6% (including underlined words) concealed, acre, dread, make no distinction, leave, <u>terrain</u> , <u>ass</u> , <u>blasted</u> , <u>trenches</u>
	your elders	drains, only (conj.), struck

Note: Underlined text is used to denote those words which are not considered critical to understanding of the main points of the text.

Taking into consideration the above factors, the level of reading comprehension needed to understand the texts was considered to be at least B2. At this level, the student would require a broad reading vocabulary and the ability to adapt to the style of writing and, where necessary, understand the use of imagery and metaphors, with B2 the first level at which students might be expected to deal not only with concrete but also abstract topics and texts. Although the texts contained some specialist lexical items including colloquialisms, which were often judged individually to be of a higher CEFR level, it was considered that by understanding the context of the writing the reader would be able to guess meanings where necessary, therefore not altering the CEFR level of the text overall.

5.2.1.2 Review of assessment tasks and rating for Paper 1

As outlined in the methodology though, it is important to review not only the texts in isolation, but also the assessment tasks that students must complete in relation to the unseen texts. Paper 1 is a guided literary analysis for which students have 1½ hours to review the two previously unseen passages, choose one and respond to two guiding questions on the text. In the papers reviewed, examples of the guiding questions include:

- What the student learns about the characters and their situation from the extract, and how the stylistic features of the text serve to create tension and suspense
- The nature of the journey in a poem, and the use of people and landscape to convey the emotional quality of the author's experience
- An exploration of how the character is dealing with her situation, and the role of humour and tone shifts in a piece of prose
- The theme of obsession and the development of imagery in a poem.

Review of marked scripts found that students were typically able to produce texts of around 800-1000 words in the time available. These responses have been graded using the following four criteria:

Table 45: Assessment criteria for English A: Literature SL Paper 1

Criterion:		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall paper
A	Understanding and interpretation	5	25%
B	Appreciation of the writer's choices	5	25%
C	Organization	5	25%
D	Language	5	25%

Criterion A and B

Criterion A considers how well the student has demonstrated an "Understanding of the thought and feeling of the passage" and the extent to which they've successfully supported their ideas through references to the text. Criterion B similarly relates to understanding and interpreting the text, but focusses on how well the student appreciates how the writer's choice of language, structure, technique and style in English influence meaning. Similar to the comparative analysis of the English A: Language and Literature course, it is relevant

here to consider how the expectations at the higher marking bands compare with CEFR through reference to a variety of CEFR scales for reception and written production.

Both criteria are related to the ability to identify writer's meaning and opinions that are *implicit* rather than *explicit* stated opinions using contextual, grammatical and lexical cues in the texts. A mark of 3 (on a scale of 0-5) in both Criterion A and B would be awarded for an "adequate" understanding and an interpretation "mostly supported" by references to the text. This suggests performance at B2+ threshold where, in terms of reading comprehension, learners would be able to identify main points from the text, look for contextual clues, whilst in writing their response, it would be expected that they are able to systematically develop and argument, incorporating relevant supporting information.

A mark of 4 in each criterion would be awarded for a "convincing interpretation" and a "good" appreciation of how language, structure, technique and style shape meaning, which most closely reflects CEFR C1 where learners would be expected to recognise sub-themes and infer attitude and mood from "contextual, grammatical and lexical cues". Furthermore, the expectation in the level descriptor that the interpretation would be "fully supported" by references to the text reflects CEFR C1 where learners would be able to support points at view at some length with relevant examples¹²⁴. Achievement of 5 marks in both criteria, reflecting an "excellent understanding" with comments "fully supported", would also reflect a good CEFR C1(+). The ability to "Understand precisely finer shades of meaning" and have "awareness of connotative levels of meaning"¹²⁵ is typically associated with CEFR C2.

Criterion C

Criterion C evaluates the organisation of the student's response, with relatively broad descriptors on the extent to which the ideas are organised making detailed comparison to CEFR difficult. Nevertheless, parallels can be drawn between the higher marks and CEFR B2+ / C1, for example where a mark of 5 would be awarded for responses which were "effectively organised" and with a "coherent and effective" structure.

Criterion D

Criterion D evaluates how accurate, clear and varied the student's language is in their written response. A mark of 2 would be awarded for responses that are fairly accurate though with errors evident, reflecting CEFR B1. At this level of the CEFR, it would be expected that learners could show good control and a range of vocabulary but may still make errors that at times impact the reader's understanding. A mark of 3 can be considered to reflect CEFR B1+/B2 since the degree of accuracy is considered "adequate" but with some lapses in accuracy evident.

¹²⁴ Reports and Essays [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹²⁵ Qualitative Factors for Reception [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

At B2+, lexical accuracy is generally high and errors do not impact understanding/communication. This is best reflected by a mark of 4 in Criterion D, given that students achieving this would need to have demonstrated a good degree of accuracy and sentence construction in their written response, with little sign of having to restrict what they want to say¹²⁶. The high level of accuracy, effective register and style expected for a mark of 5 is consistent with expectations at CEFR C1 level and above.

Reference to marked student samples across a range of achievement levels further supported the initial findings from the comparison of marking bands and CEFR scales¹²⁷.

5.2.1.3 Review of Paper 2

The second exam paper, also 1½ hours in duration, contains three essay questions linked to the literary genres represented on the PLA which include drama, poetry, novels and short stories, and prose other than fiction¹²⁸ by authors from across the world, and published in a range of eras, including texts from the 14th-21st centuries.

Students are expected to answer one question, relating their answer to at least two of the texts studied. Example questions drawn from some of the past papers reviewed ask students to discuss or examine:

- How playwrights make use of particular movement and/or the use of space for specific effects
- How playwrights seek to represent the inner life of their characters
- How poets create effect through subtle or abrupt shifts in subject matter or tone
- How works studied invite sympathy and/or disdain.

Responses are graded using the following criteria:

Table 46: Assessment criteria for English A: Literature SL Paper 2

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall paper
A	Knowledge and understanding	5	20%
B	Response to the question	5	20%
C	Appreciation of the literary conventions of the genre	5	20%
D	Organization and development	5	20%
E	Language	5	20%

¹²⁶ General Linguistic Range. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. [pdf]. p.110].

¹²⁷ Sample 1 scored 8/20 (A1, B2, C2, D3); Sample 2 scored 13/20 (A3, B3, C3, D4); Sample 3 scored 18/20 (A5, B4, C5, D4).

¹²⁸ As outlined above, "Prose other than fiction" may include autobiographies, biographies, creative non-fiction, essays, letters, speeches, and travel writing.

Criterion A

Criterion A considers the level and knowledge of understanding of the texts studied. Whilst the overarching content of this criterion is similar to others used for DP English A courses, the wording of the descriptors is focussed on how well the student knows the Part 3 works studied, which reflects on the extent of their studies and exam preparation. Links could be drawn between the level of understanding of the texts studied in English, as was the case for the aforementioned similarly-focussed criteria (where a mark of 3 reflects B2/B2+, 4 reflects a threshold C1, and a mark of 5 represents a strong C1, borderline C2), but with the caveat that this only reflects part of the level descriptor for each marking band.

Criterion B

Criterion B considers the extent to which the student has understood the specific demands of the question, as evidenced in their response. Because the questions focus specifically on the student's competency in literary analysis, it is not possible to draw reliable comparisons to CEFR.

Criterion C

Criterion C considers the extent to which the student's essay shows awareness of how the writer's choice of stylistic features in the texts selected help to construct meaning. The level descriptors demonstrate a link with CEFR scales for reading comprehension at levels B2 and C1, particularly the latter where students should be able to infer meaning or identify *implied* (i.e. not stated) opinions, in this case those of the author. Students achieving a mark of 3 would have an adequate awareness of these features, sufficient to compare to B2+, whilst for a mark of 4 or 5 on the 0-5 scale, it would be expected that students would have a good or very good understanding of the text, and be able to infer meaning through the identification of contextual, grammatical and lexical cues, as expected at CEFR C1 or borderline C2 respectively.

Criterion D

Criterion D considers the extent to which the student's response and the ideas within it are organised, coherent and developed effectively. The descriptors are similar to those used in Paper 1 Criterion C but with greater detail included on the level of coherence and development expected at each marking band. A mark of 4 would reflect expectations at B2+ where the essay is well organised, coherent and structured, with good development of ideas. A mark of 5, awarded to those students producing an effectively organised response with a very good structure, coherence and development of ideas, reflects a good performance at CEFR C1 level and above, where students would be expected to be able to write clear, well-structured texts, developing the ideas and salient points and coming to an appropriate conclusion.

Criterion E

Criterion E evaluates the clarity, variety and accuracy of the student's English in their written response, also taking into consideration the choice of register within the answer.

Reviewing the task level, rating level descriptors and further supported by marked student work¹²⁹, revealed that a CEFR B1 level (where students can show good control and range of vocabulary but with errors which may interrupt reading or result in misunderstanding) would be best met by those achieving a mark of 2. To achieve this mark, the student's response would be "sometimes clear" with "carefully chosen grammar, vocab and sentence construction though error and inconsistencies are apparent".

Competency at CEFR B1+/B2 is indicated by a mark of 3 where the degree of accuracy is considered "adequate" with only some lapses in accuracy evident. At B2+, where accuracy in vocabulary, grammar and sentence construction is generally high, and errors minor, a mark of 4 would be needed, acknowledging that at this level, students should be able to express themselves clearly, even when expressing opinions or developing arguments, with little (apparent) need to restrict what they want to say. The "Clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise"¹³⁰ language with effective register and style in relation to the task required for a mark of 5 is consistent with expectations at CEFR C1 level and above.

5.2.1.4 Review of the Written Assignment

Students are tasked with completing an analytical literary essay of 1200-1500 words with a reflective statement of 300-400 words based on a text studied during Part 1 of the course (selected from the PLT). The assessment takes place in four stages:

1. The interactive oral, involving a group discussion of each work studied
2. A reflective statement, completed after the interactive oral, in response to the question, "How was your understanding of cultural and contextual considerations of the work developed through the interactive oral?"
3. Supervised writing, completed during class time. From the pieces produced, students will choose one to further develop in the next stage
4. Production of the essay for external assessment.

Student responses are graded using the following five criteria:

¹²⁹ Marked student work reviewed included work graded 11/25 (A2, B2, C2, D2, E3); 19/25 (A4, B4, C4, D3, E4) and 25/25 (full marks across all criteria). Where criterion E was scored 3 out of 5, the individual was able to write with a fair degree of accuracy but with some noticeable errors in subject-verb agreements, spelling and weaknesses in expression. By contrast the student achieving 4 out of 5 was able to produce a comparatively more accurate response (in terms of vocabulary, grammar and sentence construction) with few errors. A score of 5 was awarded for criterion E where the language was not only very clear, varied and accurate but where there was an effective register and style.

¹³⁰ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Literature Guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

Table 47: Assessment criteria for English A: Literature SL Written Assignment

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall component
A	Fulfilling the requirements of the reflective statement	3	12%
B	Knowledge and understanding	6	24%
C	Appreciation of the writer's choices	6	24%
D	Organization and development	5	20%
E	Language	5	20%

Criterion A

This criterion focusses on the reflective statement and deducts one mark from the 0-3 scales for those exceeding the 300-400 word limit. It evaluates the student's understanding of cultural and contextual elements of the works studied and discussed during the interactive oral (group discussion, described above). The CEFR focusses on language learning with references to competence in socio-linguistic reception, but does not reflect on learners' understanding of cultural and contextual elements. By contrast, this is a feature of the IB DP language courses, which aim to develop not only language skills but also an understanding of the cultures in which the language is used. Accordingly, no comparisons can be drawn between the expectations of students under Criterion A and the CEFR.

Criterion B and C

Criterion B reflects on the student's knowledge and understanding of the works studied (which is drawn from the PLT). As with Criterion A of Paper 1, the mark awarded will, to a good degree, reflect the extent of the student's studies and exam preparation however Criterion B further reflects on the level of understanding and insight the student can demonstrate into the text as a result of their reading. Therefore, since a high level of English reading comprehension would be required, comparisons can be drawn between the higher level marking bands and CEFR scales for reading.

Criterion C also reflects on the level of understanding the student can demonstrate of the text in question, focussing this time on the writer's choices in terms of language, structure, technique and style.

Both scales have four marking bands, over a scale of 0-6, where a grade of 3-4 would be awarded to those who are able to demonstrate understanding and some insight into the text, and an adequate appreciation of the writer's choices in creating meaning. Whilst at B2+ level, students should be able to understand texts in which writers adopt particular stances, the expectations for these marking bands go beyond this, where students would need to be able to unpick texts, looking for cues and inferred meanings, thereby reflecting a level of reading at CEFR C1. The "detailed understanding", "perceptive insight" and "excellent

appreciation” of the use of different elements to shape meaning¹³¹, as required for a mark of 5-6, is more closely reflective of a high C1, approaching even C2, where students should possess not only skills in recognising cues, sub-themes and implied opinions, but also the ability to “Understand precisely finer shades of meaning”¹³².

Criterion D

Criterion D assesses the level of organisation, development and coherence of the student’s written response and how well they have integrated examples from the works studied into their writing. A mark of 3 would reflect an essay that was “adequately organised and developed”, with appropriate references from the text integrated into the response. At B2+, students would be expected to be able to write organised and coherent essays, “With appropriate highlighting of...relevant supporting detail”¹³³. The expectation that essays and the ideas within them should be “effectively organised and developed” with “well-integrated examples” reflects the expectation at CEFR C1, where students should be able to “Support points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples”¹³⁴. The ability to organise and develop ideas “persuasively”, with effectively integrated examples is at least C1 with the aforementioned ability to support their essay with examples, and approaching C2 in that students would be expected to be able to “Produce clear, smooth-flowing, complex...essays...giving critical appreciation of...literary works”¹³⁵.

Criterion E

The final criterion evaluates the student’s language in terms of accuracy, clarity, variety and choice of register (where register is defined in this case as vocabulary, tone and sentence structure). The level descriptors and mark allocation reflect those used for the Language criterion in Paper 2, analysis of which revealed that a mark of 2 could be considered to reflect CEFR B1 level; a mark of 3 reflecting CEFR B1+/B2 level; 4 indicative of B2+ level and a mark of 5 reflecting CEFR C1 level and above.

The above recommendations were also supported by review of marked student work across a range of achievement levels¹³⁶.

5.2.2 Speaking and listening

Speaking is assessed through two separate internal assessment components. The first is an oral commentary and discussion on an extract from one of the two works studied during Part

¹³¹ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Literature Guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

¹³² Qualitative Factors for Reception [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹³³ Reports and Essays [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹³⁴ Reports and Essays [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹³⁵ Reports and Essays [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹³⁶ Samples included scored 11/25 (A2, B2, C1, D4); 18/25 (A2, B4, C4, D4, E4) and 24/25 (A3, B6, C5, D5, E5).

2 of the programme. The students are not aware which works will be assessed until they begin the assessment. Students are given 20 minutes of preparation time during which they are able to read the extract selected by the teacher and plan their commentary for the assessment. The extract is accompanied by one or two guiding questions that are intended to help students prepare for their commentary; however, they are not required to address them. They then have eight minutes to deliver the commentary presentation, followed by two minutes of question/discussion time with the teacher.

The second assessment is an oral presentation on one or more works studied in Part 4 of the programme. Students are able to choose their own topic based on any aspect of the works studied and in consultation with their teacher prior to the assessment. These can include thematic focus, characterisation, techniques and style. From the topic choice, students must then select a type of presentation, focus and structure for the presentation. All students are expected to show the following within their presentation:

- Knowledge and understanding of the works
- Thorough appreciation of the aspect discussed
- Good use of strategies to engage an audience
- Delivery of the presentation in a manner that is appropriate to the task¹³⁷.

The presentation is prepared outside of class, and is delivered in class individually, in pairs or a small group of students; each student must give a 10-15 minute presentation or contribute that time to a larger presentation within a group or pair.

For both components, students are evaluated against a series of assessment criteria by teachers using a best-fit approach.

Table 48: Assessment criteria for the English A: Literature SL internal assessment

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the component
Individual oral commentary			
A	Knowledge and understanding of the extract	10	17%
B	Appreciation of the writer's choices	10	17%
C	Organisation and presentation	5	8%
D	Language	5	8%
Individual oral presentation			
A	Knowledge and understanding of the work(s)	10	17%
B	Presentation	10	17%
C	Language	10	17%

¹³⁷ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: literature guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

Using the most relevant tables and scales in the CEFR, the project team conducted a comparative analysis of the level descriptors against the level and range of skills expected at each CEFR level.

Criterion A

In the Individual Oral Commentary, Criterion A evaluates the level of knowledge the student has of the extract, their ability to interpret it and to provide references. The descriptors range from “no knowledge” to “very good knowledge”. Similarly, Criterion A for the second internal assessment, the Individual Oral Presentation, evaluates the level of knowledge and understanding of the content and the implications of the presented work(s) (from “very limited” to “very good”). Although there are minor differences in the level descriptors used for each criterion, the level of knowledge implied at each marking band is the same; both also assess these on a scale from 0-10.

It should be noted, however, that these descriptors refer directly to the student’s demonstration of literary knowledge rather than their English language skills. A broad comparison to the CEFR grids can be made for the higher levels (in line with Section 2, the Methodology), but not for the lower levels.

“Adequate knowledge”, awarded 5-6 marks, could fall at B2 where the speaker can give “clear description or narrative”¹³⁸. The next marking band (7-8 marks) expects “good knowledge” which may also reflect B2+. CEFR level C1 is reflected at the highest marking band (9-10) where students demonstrate “very good knowledge” which could be demonstrated using “elaborate descriptions and narratives”¹³⁹.

Criterion B

In the Individual Oral Commentary Criterion B evaluates the extent to which the student understands how the author of the extract uses language, structure, technique and style to influence the meaning of the text (on a scale from “no understanding” to “very good appreciation/understanding”).

Similar to the descriptors for Criterion A, Criterion B is not focussed on the student’s language or speaking ability but rather their level of understanding or appreciation of the literature. The comparison therefore is the same as that provided for Criterion A, with the highest mark bands reflecting B2+ and C1.

For the Individual Oral Presentation, Criterion B evaluates the delivery of the presentation including the appropriateness and attempt to interest the audience. This includes the volume at which the student speaks, whether they make eye contact, or use gestures. These descriptors are also not related to the student’s English language ability but rather their skills at speaking publically.

¹³⁸ Thematic Development Grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹³⁹ Thematic Development Grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

Criterion C

Criterion C for the Individual Oral Commentary evaluates the organisation and presentation of the commentary, including how well-structured and focussed it is. Although the CEFR grids include descriptors related to sentence structure, the IB descriptors are referring to the level of planning for the structure of the presentation, which is not included in the CEFR descriptors. Therefore, these level descriptors cannot be compared to the CEFR grids.

For the Individual Oral Presentation, Criterion C evaluates the language used in relation to the choice of the presentation. Register (including vocabulary and sentence structure), style, and appropriateness are all considered, with marks awarded on a scale of 0-10.

To be awarded 5-6 marks, students have “mostly appropriate” language and are able to pay some attention to their register and presentation style. Similarly, at CEFR B1 the speaker “Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him / herself with some hesitation”¹⁴⁰.

At the next marking band (7-8), the descriptor broadly reflects a B2/B2+ across the CEFR grids in that the language and presentation is clear and no errors are made that cause misunderstanding. The speaker also has a sufficient and suitable range of language (register) for the presentation.

At the highest marking band (9-10) students must be able to consistently and effectively use a suitable register and style for their presentation with very clear language. This is reflective of CEFR C1 where the speaker is able to use a broad range of language that suits the presentation and descriptions are clear and appropriate.

Criterion D

Criterion D for the Individual Oral Commentary evaluates the language used in the presentation, and the descriptors are similar to those evaluated above for Criterion C in the individual oral presentation. For Criterion D, the accuracy of the student’s grammar and sentence construction are evaluated in addition to register, style and language.

The next marking band (4 marks) reflects achievement associated with B2 where the speaker gives clear descriptions, has a sufficient range of language and ‘good’ grammatical accuracy and sentence construction is evident. Finally, the highest marks (5) are awarded to students who demonstrate a consistently high degree of grammatical accuracy, and use effective register and style. This reflects the descriptors for C1 where very clear language and elaborate descriptions are given.

To support the findings from the comparative analysis of the assessment criteria to the relevant CEFR scales, a review of marked individual oral commentaries was completed. In one sample, graded at 12/30 (A4, B4, C2, D2), the teacher selected an extract from *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare. The student begins the commentary by introducing the

¹⁴⁰ Oral Assessment Criteria Grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

extract and describing what occurs within it. Within the first minute of the commentary, it is clear that the student has a noticeable foreign accent but has clear pronunciation, indicative of A2 in phonological control grid¹⁴¹. Throughout the commentary, the student speaks in short utterances, with frequent pauses and repetition of words, which is also associated with the oral assessment skills at A2. When providing his interpretation of the analysis, the student's tone is fairly flat and his arguments are structured as a simple list of points and are occasionally difficult to follow. He has a sufficient vocabulary to complete the task and is sometimes able to link together the sequence of points, as found across the grids for B1. However, the number of false starts and use of simple sentence structures throughout the commentary reflect an overall performance at CEFR A2.

In a second sample, the student received a 29/30 (A10, B9, C5, D5) for their commentary on an extract from *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare. As with all individual oral commentary assessments, the student received both the extract and two guiding questions. In this case, the two guiding questions were:

- 1) "What characteristics of the King are revealed in this speech?"
- 2) "What are the deeper issues of Shakespeare's thesis brought out here?"

The student begins their commentary by describing the location of the passage within the larger text, and summarising the extract. The student speaks fluently with excellent pronunciation and sentence structure. He has a good range of vocabulary and is able to discuss complex points while also giving evidence from the passage. His commentary is indicative of C1 with some sections of the presentation demonstrating C2 as he is able to formulate his thoughts precisely and present a smoothly-flowing structured speech, with very few errors. He is also able to quickly and accurately understand the teacher during the short discussion at the end of the assessment. It should be noted, however that he is able to demonstrate this fluent speech due to his excellent knowledge and understanding of the text and his ability to assess the deeper meaning of the text, thus giving him the opportunity to use a wide range of vocabulary in a well-structured and fluently spoken presentation.

A final sample, graded at 17/30 (A6, B5, C3, D3) is a commentary on extract from *King Lear* by William Shakespeare. The guiding questions provided to the student were:

- 1) "How effective is the imagery used by Shakespeare in the passage?"
- 2) "How does this passage relate to the development of Lear's character and situation?"

Throughout the commentary, the student speaks fluently with excellent pronunciation. He gives clear descriptions that are easy to follow. He provides key points about the extract, but with some uncertainty to what he is arguing or what he intends to say next; leading to some hesitations in his speech. He does however provide examples from the text to support his statements. As the commentary goes on, the speaker drops his formal tone and becomes more casual in his speech. Due to his fluent and clear intonation, he clearly seems capable of an English proficiency at C2, but the various difficulties encountered reflect performance at B2.

¹⁴¹ Phonological Control. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

5.2.3 Summary of English language competency assessment in English A: Literature SL

As shown in the table below, English A: Literature SL tests students' receptive, productive and interactive skills in English. Listening comprehension is also included in the internal assessments (two-minute discussion with the teacher after the oral commentary, and during the interactive oral in the Written Assignment) but not assessed formally.

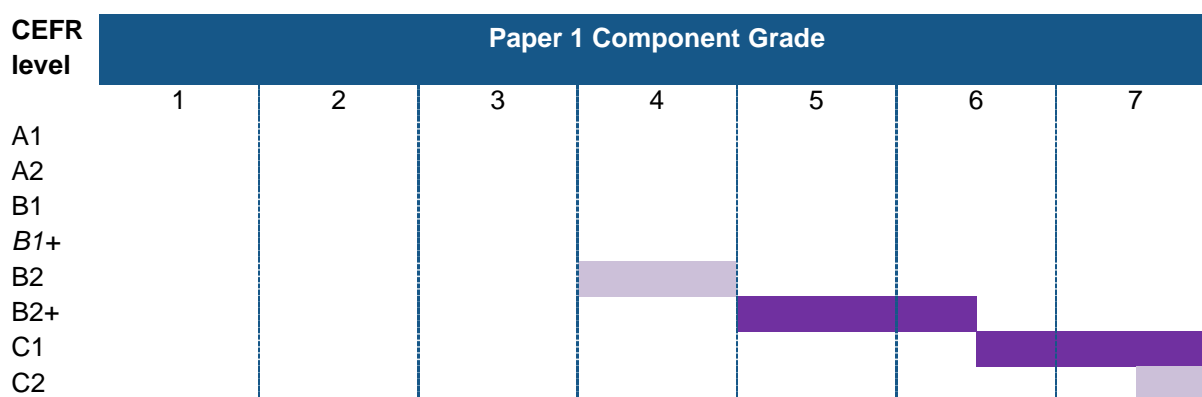
Table 49: Skills facets assessed in the English A: Literature SL course

Skill facet	Receptive		Production		Interaction	
	Reading comp.	Listening comp.	Written production	Spoken production	Written Interaction	Spoken Interaction
Assessed?	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes
Relevant assessment	Paper 1 Individual Oral commentary ¹⁴²		Paper 1 Paper 2 Written Assignment	Individual Oral Presentation		Individual Oral commentary Written Assignment

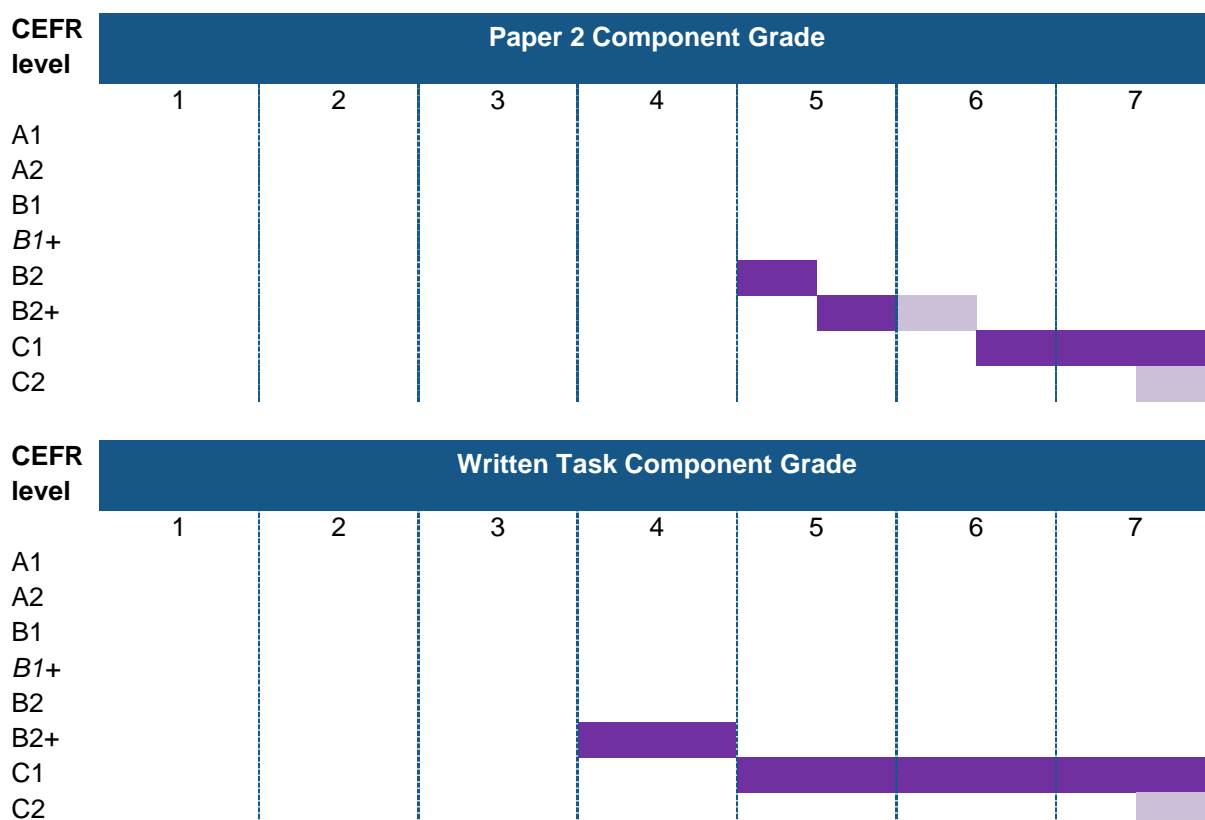
Reading and Writing

Taking into consideration the referencing of the level descriptors to CEFR, the weighting of the components and the component grade boundaries (as outlined in Section 2, the Methodology), the following comparison is proposed for the three reading and writing components:

Figure 21: English A: Literature SL reading and writing components and corresponding CEFR levels



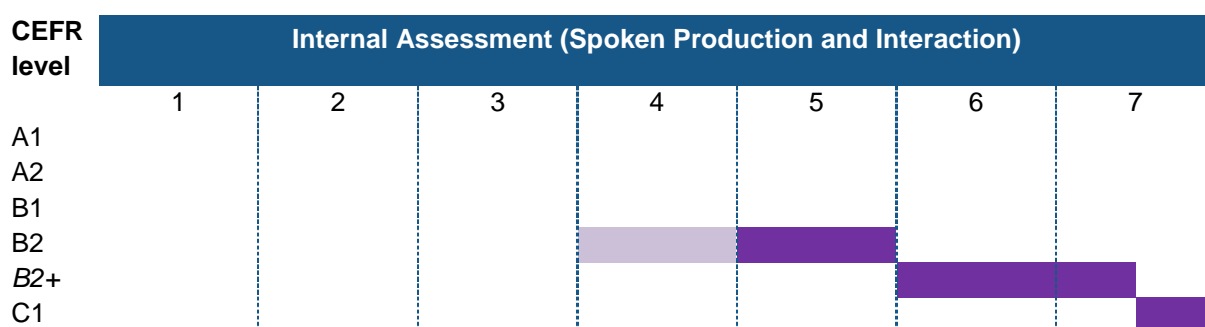
¹⁴² Paper 2 and the Written Assignment also test reading comprehension in a broader sense since students should reference works they've studied during the course within their written response. Paper 1 and the Individual Oral commentary assess students' understanding of texts presented to them under examination conditions, thereby providing a more direct assessment of reading comprehension.



Speaking

Based on the comparison of the assessment criteria, their relative weighting (in terms of the proportion of marks available for each) and further supported the review of marked audio scripts, the following threshold scores are recommended for comparability to the respective CEFR levels for speaking.

Figure 22: English A: Literature SL internal assessment and corresponding CEFR levels



Drawing on the comparability of the different components and their relative weighting to the overall grade, the overall grade boundaries (drawn from three sittings) and the grade descriptors as appropriate, the overall comparability to CEFR of the English A: Literature SL is recommended as follows:

Figure 23: Comparability of the English A: Literature SL to the CEFR

CEFR Level	English A: Literature
C2	SL
C1	7
B2+	6
B2	5
B1	4
A2	
A1	

5.3 Comparative analysis of English A: Literature HL with CEFR

5.3.1 Reading and writing

5.3.1.1 Analysis of unseen texts in Paper 1

Text length, structure and presentation

Paper 1 comprises two texts, both literary fiction, of between 195 and 670 words each. The Subject Guide states that for the HL external assessment, Paper 1 will contain two literary passages, one prose and one poetry. The prose could be taken from works such as: a novel or short story, an essay, a biography, or a journalistic piece of writing of literary merit.

Text domain, style and content

The texts provided in the two exam papers reviewed were all from the personal domain (reading for interest or for information) and the discourse type was either poetic or narration. Topics included *Free Time*, *Environment*, *Philosophy*, *Daily Life and Relations With Other People*. The papers that were analysed included texts that can be described as follows:

- Nostalgic prose describing experiences of train travel
- A poem reflecting on the act of sleepwalking and what it teaches us about faith
- An extract from a novel setting the scene and describing the morning routine of young working women in London
- A poem setting out the thoughts and emotions of a scholar, reflecting on a 900 year-old inscription and its meaning.

Linguistic complexity

In terms of text authenticity, all of the texts were authentic, taken directly from the novel without any alterations, or in the case of poetry, the full poems were provided.

The prose was contemporary, descriptive and detailed in some cases contained high frequency specialist and literary vocabulary often critical to the understanding of the text. There was also heavy use of metaphor and figurative speech, e.g. “burn with passion” and “his heart is wrung” throughout all of the texts. The use of grammar varied significantly in terms of complexity with some more simplistic structures such as present simple (A1) and past continuous (A2) (despite the overall level of the text deemed to be of a higher CEFR level in terms of vocabulary) and more complex structures including past tense modals (C1), and phrasal verbs (B1/B2).

As shown in the table below, the texts provide vocabulary across all levels of CEFR:

Table 50: Vocabulary items from English A: Literature HL, Paper 1 unseen texts

Items comprehensible to a learner/user at CEFR level		
	Text 1	Text 2
A1	60% train, station, windows, streets, shops, different, morning, walked, summer, look, watch	55% tonight, window, bodies, home, always, men, know, morning, love
	girls, getting up, old, their, hair, room, cold, no, fun, weekends, washing, pairs, some (not all)	words, years, pen
A2	15% churches, lights, bicycles, have to, guess, spent, got off, around, seats, buildings	15% wonderful, so much, carpet, stairs, everything, spaces, return, like, who
	all over, added, for, pulling, meter, gas, shared, alone, wet, walk, however	piece, found, hundred, another, shout
B1	9% pennies, canals, lonely, fever, experience, looked like, face to face, ahead, landscape	14% worn, instead of, willing, step out, welcome, touching, safely, blank, shadows, blind
	in (wearing), pyjamas, cotton, themselves, tying, pins, kettle, switching on, prayers, underwear, just (exactly), achievement	bone, upon, gone, age, takes (get hold), turns (about), once more
B2	5% taking notes, commerce, exposed to, pretending, now and then, eventually, laundry, rear, brick	8% arrow, faith, invisible, leads to, feeling, darkness
	cardigan, warmth, prospects, fate, identical, victory, advertising	the following, widow, scratched, despair, rage, passion
C1	1% journal, possess, attached to, opt	3% sleepwalkers, the way that
	stood (accept), triumph, draughts, by way of	scholar, tranquil, hate (noun)
C2	10% (including underlined words) saddened, solitary, province, shields, wearing (an expression), interim, inhabited, parting with, scarred, <u>melancholy</u> , <u>pigeons</u> , <u>fetid</u> , <u>vagrancy</u> , <u>adrift</u> , <u>grimy</u> , <u>waned</u> , <u>curtailed</u> , <u>transience</u> , <u>psychic</u> , <u>ephemeral</u> , <u>wherewithal</u> Includes many words critical for comprehension.	5% carved, doorway, palming, seamless, gaping Some meanings can be guessed, others are not critical for comprehension
	unevenly, otherwise (differently), eventual, conditioning, against the odds	Loathe

Note: Underlined text is used to denote those words which are not considered critical to understanding of the main points of the text.

Taking into consideration the above factors, the level of reading comprehension needed for each text ranges from B2 to C1. This judgement was based not only on the level of vocabulary but also the style and tone of writing and other linguistic features apparent in the texts. For one text, despite there being a lot of vocabulary between A1 and B2, the few

words and phrases at C1 or higher were deemed to be crucial for understanding the meanings and descriptions being conveyed by the author, as well as the context in which certain words are being used (e.g. “against the odds”, “loathe”, “by way of”).

5.3.1.2 Review of assessment tasks and rating in Paper 1

For Paper 1, students are expected to write an essay on one of the two unseen passages in the examination. It should be written as a literary commentary discussing aspects such as content, language, style, structure, technique and themes.

The written responses are graded on four criteria, as outlined in the table below

Table 51: Assessment criteria for English A: Literature HL Paper 1

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards overall component
A	Understanding and interpretation	5	25%
B	Appreciation of the writer's choices	5	25%
C	Organisation and development	5	25%
D	Language	5	25%

Criterion A and B

As with the SL Paper 1 for Literature, Criterion A and B focus on the student's understanding of the unseen texts presented in Paper 1, whether and how these are supported by references to the text and the analysis of the ways in which the writer employs language, structure, technique and style to shape meaning. The level descriptors used are similar to those at SL but with the difference that the level descriptor for a mark of 5 at SL level would only be awarded a mark of 4 for those examined at HL.

Accordingly, those achieving a mark of 4 will have provided a “convincing interpretation” and a “good” appreciation of how language, structure, technique and style shape meaning, which most closely reflects CEFR C1 where learners would be expected to recognise sub-themes and infer attitude and mood from “contextual, grammatical and lexical cues”. Furthermore, the expectation in the level descriptor, that the interpretation would be “fully supported” by references to the text, reflects CEFR C1 where learners would be able to support points of view at some length with relevant examples¹⁴³. Achievement of 5 marks in both criteria, reflecting an “excellent understanding” with comments “fully supported”, would also reflect a good CEFR C1(+).

¹⁴³ Reports and Essays [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

Criterion C

Criterion C assesses the organisation and development of the student's ideas within their written response, with marks awarded on the basis of organisation, structure, coherence and development. To achieve a mark of 3, the ideas should be satisfactorily organised with the essay demonstrating a suitable structure and some consideration for the coherence and development of ideas. This would represent a threshold B2, where essays should still be "organised and structured in a generally coherent way"¹⁴⁴ but with a B2+ demonstrated by a mark of 4 where students would be expected to produce an "effectively organised" essay with systematically developed argument(s) and a coherent structure. A mark of 5 reflects a "persuasively organised" text, with "excellent" coherence, development and structure, reflecting performance at CEFR C1/C2¹⁴⁵.

Criterion D

Criterion D assesses the student's English language within their written response, taking into consideration the accuracy, clarity and variety demonstrated by the student, as well as the choice of register relevant to the task.

Reviewing the task level, rating level descriptors and marked student work¹⁴⁶ demonstrated that a mark of 2, for which students should be able to demonstrate "sometimes clear" language and "fairly accurate" grammar and vocabulary, best reflects CEFR B1.

A mark of 3, for which the level of accuracy is considered adequate with some lapses nonetheless evident, would compare to CEFR B1+/B2. For a mark of 4, the student's response should be clear, with little evidence of the individual needing to restrict what they want to say when expressing opinions or developing arguments. This would comfortably reflect B2+, where learners would generally write with a high degree of accuracy in vocabulary, grammar and sentence construction with any errors minor. CEFR C1 and above is reflected by a mark of 5, where students should produce "clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise"¹⁴⁷ language with effective register and style in relation to the task.

5.3.1.3 Review of Paper 2

Paper 2 of the English A: Literature HL is a two-hour essay examination. There are four sets of questions, linked to drama; poetry; prose, novel and short story; or prose other than fiction. Under each category are three questions, and students are expected to answer a single question from the full list, referring to at least two of the texts studied in Part 3 of the programme, comparing and contrasting these in the response. Examples of questions from past papers reviewed by the project team asked students to:

¹⁴⁴ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Language and Literature guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document, p.49

¹⁴⁵ As outlined for similarly-focussed criteria, students should be able to write clear, well-structured expositions of complex subjects at C1 whilst the ability to write smoothly-flowing essays with an effective and logical structure to highlight the main points for the reader is associated with CEFR C2.

¹⁴⁶ Where scores for this criterion ranged from 2-5.

¹⁴⁷ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Literature Guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

- Consider the ways in which plays make use of stock or stereotypical characters and the effects achieved
- Explore the ways in which poets have made and sustained a strong connection with the individual reader
- Compare the presentation of warnings, reprimands or exhortations to the reader and society.

Responses are graded on the following criteria:

Table 52: Assessment criteria for English A: Literature HL Paper 2

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall component
A	Knowledge and understanding	5	20%
B	Response to the question	5	20%
C	Appreciation of the literary conventions of the genre	5	20%
D	Organisation and development	5	20%
E	Language	5	20%

Criterion A

Criterion A assesses the student's knowledge and understanding of the Part 3 works, as demonstrated in their response. It can be somewhat complex to compare to CEFR as a whole, given that knowledge of the text can be a reflection on the extent of study and preparation undertaken by the student; nevertheless, as for other similarly-focussed criteria, to achieve a high mark in this criterion (3 and above on the 0-5 scale) a good level of English reading comprehension would be required, akin to CEFR B2/B2+. A mark of 4 where students would be expected to demonstrate a good understanding of literary texts reflects a C1 level, whilst a mark of 5, awarded for demonstration of a very good level of understanding, reflects receptive competence at a C1 and above.

Criterion B

Criterion B evaluates the student's understanding of the question and how well their response reflects the requirements of the question, including the extent to which they've compared and contrasted the two chosen texts. Whilst the question in itself would undoubtedly require a certain level of English, the assessment criterion is designed to assess subject knowledge and ability and achievement of high or low marks on the 0-5 scale would not give a reliable indication of the student's English ability.

Criterion C

Criterion C considers the extent to which the student has identified and shown an appreciation of the use of literary conventions in the texts, identifying examples of these relevant to the question.

As with other similarly-focussed assessment criteria, comparison at the lower levels is complex in that a low mark in this criterion could be indicative of low subject knowledge; but to obtain a mark of 3 on the 0-5 scale, examples of literary conventions should be “mostly” identified. This would require a high level of reading comprehension, overall reflecting performance at a minimum of CEFR B2+/threshold C1. Marks of 4 and 5, for which examples of literary conventions should be “clearly identified” would reflect a high C1, threshold C2.

Criterion D

Criterion D reflects on the level of organisation, coherence and development of ideas in the student’s written English response. At B2 level, students should be able to produce essays which are “organised and structured in a generally coherent way”¹⁴⁸, an ability reflected by a mark of 3 in Criterion D, where the student’s ideas should be satisfactorily organised with the essay demonstrating a suitable structure and some consideration for the coherence and development of ideas. For a mark of 4, students should be able to write an “effectively organised” essay with coherent structure and arguments which have been developed: this reflects written production skills expected at, at least, B2+. The ability to produce “persuasively organised” text, with “excellent” coherence, development and structure, for which the IB would award a mark of 5, would be associated with written productive competence at CEFR C1/C2¹⁴⁹.

Criterion E

Criterion E reflects on the English language used in the student’s written response, rating it for clarity, variety and accuracy as well as the appropriateness of the register used.

The level descriptors used, and the allocation of marks to these, are the same for this criterion and Criterion D for the HL Paper 1 (described above). Comparative analysis with relevant CEFR scales and subscales demonstrated that a mark of 2 would reflect CEFR B1; a mark of 3 comparable to CEFR B1+/B2; a mark of 4 indicative of CEFR B2+ and a mark of 5 reflecting C1 and above.

5.3.1.4 Review of the Written Assignment

The format, assessment criteria, level descriptors and mark distribution for the Written Assignment are the same for the HL course as the SL (described in section 5.2.1.4).

5.3.2 Speaking and listening

Speaking is assessed through two separate internal assessment components. The first is an oral commentary and discussion on a literary analysis of a poem (or an extract from a poem)

¹⁴⁸ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: Language and Literature guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document, p.49

¹⁴⁹ As outlined for similarly-focussed criteria, students should be able to write clear, well-structured expositions of complex subjects at C1 whilst the ability to write smoothly-flowing essays with an effective and logical structure to highlight the main points for the reader is associated with CEFR C2.

studied during Part 2 of the programme. Students are given 20 minutes of preparation time where they are able to read the extract selected by the teacher, and plan their commentary for the assessment. The extract is accompanied by one or two guiding questions that are intended to assist the student when preparing their commentary, however they are not required to use or answer these questions. They then have eight minutes to deliver the commentary presentation, followed by two minutes of questions from the teacher. The teacher and student then engage in a ten-minute discussion on a different text from Part 2 of the programme.

The second assessment is an oral presentation on one or more works studied in Part 4 of the programme. Students are able to choose their own topic based on any aspect of the works studied and in consultation with their teacher prior to the assessment. These can include thematic focus, characterisation, techniques and style. From the topic choice, students must then select a type of presentation, focus and structure. All students are expected to show the following within their presentation:

- knowledge and understanding of the works
- thorough appreciation of the aspect discussed
- good use of strategies to engage an audience
- delivery of the presentation in a manner that is appropriate to the task¹⁵⁰.

The presentation is prepared outside of class, and is delivered in class individually, in pairs or a small group of students; each student must give a 10-15 minute presentation or contribute that time to a larger presentation within a group or pair.

For both components, students are evaluated against a series of assessment criteria by teachers using a best-fit approach.

¹⁵⁰ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Language A: literature guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

Table 53: Assessment criteria for English Literature HL internal assessment

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards each component
Individual oral commentary and discussion			
A	Knowledge and understanding of the poem	5	8%
B	Appreciation of the writer's choices	5	8%
C	Organization and presentation of the commentary	5	8%
D	Knowledge and understanding of the work used in the discussion	5	8%
E	Response to the discussion questions	5	8%
F	Language	5	8%
Individual oral presentation			
A	Knowledge and understanding of the work(s)	10	17%
B	Presentation	10	17%
C	Language	10	17%

Using the most relevant tables and scales in the CEFR, the project team conducted a comparative analysis of the level descriptors against the level and range of skills expected at each CEFR level.

Criterion A

In the Individual Oral Commentary and Discussion, Criterion A evaluates the level of knowledge and understanding the student has of the poem, and their ability to interpret it and provide references. These range from “limited” to “excellent” knowledge on a scale of 0-5. Similarly, for the Individual Oral Presentation, Criterion A evaluates the level of knowledge and understanding of the content and the implications of the presented work(s) (from “little” to “excellent” on a scale of 0-10). Although there are minor differences in the descriptors for each criterion, the level of knowledge implied at each marking band is the same.

It should be noted, however, that these descriptors refer to the student's ability to demonstrate their level of literary knowledge and understanding, and thus in line with the methodology, comparisons cannot be drawn between the mark descriptors at the lower levels where a low score could be indicative of low subject ability rather than their English language skills. A broad comparison to the CEFR grids and scales can be made for the higher levels which would necessitate a high level of reading comprehension skills in English.

Adequate knowledge and understanding (which fall at the 5-6 / 3 marking band) implies that the speaker is able to give a straightforward description or narrative as found at B1; however, this marking band (for the commentary and discussion) also requires the speaker

to provide relevant supporting detail as is also stated in the IB commentary and discussion descriptor, reflective of achievement at B2.

To be awarded 7-8 marks (or 4 in the commentary and discussion assessment), students must demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding which implies that the student is able to speak fluently and give a clear narrative. This reflects B2+ where clear systematically developed descriptions are presented¹⁵¹ and appropriately selected supporting evidence is provided. However, this marking band is also partially at level C1 where conclusions are provided and complex subjects are presented.

To be awarded the top marks for either assessment (9-10 / 5) students must demonstrate excellent knowledge and use precise references. This also reflects C1 across the oral grids where the speaker expresses themselves clearly through a well-structured speech.

Criterion B

In the Individual Oral Commentary Criterion B evaluates the extent to which the student appreciates how the author of the extract uses language, structure, technique and style to influence the meaning of the text (on a scale from “no appreciation” to “excellent appreciation”).

Similar to the descriptors for Criterion A, Criterion B is not focussed on the student’s language or speaking ability but rather their level of understanding or appreciation of the literature. The comparison therefore is the same as that provided for Criterion A, with a threshold B2+ represented by a mark of 5-6; 3 and the highest mark band (9-10; 5) reflecting C1.

For the Individual Oral Presentation, Criterion B evaluates the delivery of the presentation including the appropriateness and attempt to interest the audience. This includes the volume at which the student speaks at, whether they make eye contact, or use gestures. These descriptors are also not related to the student’s English language ability but rather their presentation skills.

Criterion C

Criterion C for the Individual Oral Commentary reflects on the organisation and presentation of the commentary, evaluating how well-structured and focussed it is. Although sentence structure is included in the oral CEFR grids, the IB descriptors refer to the level of planning for the structure of the presentation, which is not included in CEFR descriptors.

For the individual oral presentation, Criterion C evaluates the language used in relation to the choice of the presentation. Register (including vocabulary and sentence structure), style and appropriateness are all considered, with marks awarded on a scale of 0-10.

¹⁵¹ Overall oral production. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

To be awarded 5-6 marks, students have mostly clear and appropriate language and are able to pay some attention to their register and presentation style. Similarly, at B1 the speaker “has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him / herself with some hesitation”¹⁵². However, at B2 a speaker begins to use some clear language, so this marking band may fall at either B1/B2 depending on how clear the student’s language is.

At the next marking band (7-8), the descriptor broadly reflects B2+ across the CEFR grids in that the language and presentation is clear and no errors are made that cause misunderstanding. The speaker also has consistently suitable register and style for the presentation, which reflects some of the descriptors at C1.

To receive full marks (9-10) for this criterion, students must demonstrate very clear language and consistently effective register and style. This reflects C1 where the speaker can express themselves fluently and uses a broad range of language that suits the presentation and descriptions are clear and appropriate.

Criterion D

In addition to the Criterion A-C, the Individual Oral Commentary and Discussion assessment includes three further criteria to evaluate the student’s work. Criterion D evaluates the level of knowledge and understanding the student has of the content of the work used in the discussion (ranging from “little” to “excellent” knowledge) on a scale from 1-5. These descriptors are the same as those used for the Individual Oral Presentation in Criterion A, and therefore, the comparison is the same. A mark of 3 reflects achievement at B2. A slightly clearer narrative can be provided by B2+ speakers (and conclusions provided at C1) similar to the descriptor for 4 marks. The full 5 marks are then awarded for excellent knowledge and references, reflecting C1.

Criterion E

Criterion E evaluates the student’s response to the discussion questions in the Individual Oral and Discussion assessment. In particular, the descriptors range from a limited ability to respond to persuasive and independent responses (on a scale from 0-5).

To achieve a mark of 3, the student’s response should be relevant and include some independent thought which correlates with the oral grids at B2 since a speaker at this level should be able to develop arguments, give clear descriptions and express their points without any noticeable difficulty.

A mark of 4 is awarded to students who provide independently thought out and well-informed responses. This relates to a speaker performing at CEFR B2+, able to give “Clear, systematically developed descriptions and presentations, with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail”¹⁵³.

¹⁵² The Oral Assessment Criteria Grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹⁵³ Overall oral production. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

At the highest marking band, the speaker is persuasive and independent when giving responses which suggests a high level of fluency and spontaneity as found at C1. Further a speaker at this level is able to use intonation and sentence stress to express finer shades of meaning and to persuade listeners.

Criterion F

Criterion F for the Individual Oral Commentary evaluates the language used with focus on the register and style. These descriptors are similar to those used for Criterion C in Individual Oral Presentation. For Criterion F, however, the student is also evaluated on their grammatical accuracy and sentence constructions.

The descriptors for a mark of 3 emphasise mostly clear and accurate grammar and sentence construction, register and style. This reflects the descriptors for B1 where the speaker uses “Reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used routines and patterns”¹⁵⁴, and reasonably comprehensible language is used.

To be awarded 4 marks, clear language and “a good degree” of accurate grammar and sentence construction should be seen. This level of accuracy is similar to that expected at B2 where the speaker gives clear descriptions and has a sufficient range of language. The highest marks (5) are then awarded to students who demonstrate very clear language with a high degree of accuracy and effective register and style. This reflects the descriptors for C1 where very clear language and elaborate descriptions are given.

To support the findings from the comparative analysis of the assessment criteria to the relevant CEFR scales, a review of marked student commentaries was conducted.

In the first sample, the student received a score of 12/30 (A3, B1, C2, D2, E2, F2). The assessment was based on two texts: selected poems by Philip Larkin, and *Titus Andronicus* by William Shakespeare. For the commentary component, the student was given an extract from the selected poems along with two guiding questions. The questions included:

- 1) “How does Larkin use diction in this poem to reveal the thoughts and feelings of the persona?”
- 2) “How does the structure of this poem reflect the development of its subject?”

The student begins the commentary by addressing the first guiding question. He speaks fluently with clear and natural intonation and pronunciation. There are some pauses and hesitations to this speech, and he seems somewhat restricted in what he is trying to say, both as a result of his English language and his knowledge of the poem. He speaks informally at times, rather than in a formal speech register. Occasionally he is unable to finish his argument and moves onto a different point. When considering his vocabulary, range of language, fluency and accuracy the student demonstrates B2/C1 during most of the commentary, with occasional lapses and moments of uncertainty in his speech that appear more at B1. Overall, the student gives an eight-minute commentary before the teacher

¹⁵⁴ The oral assessment criteria grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

begins asking two minutes of questions related this text and his speech. The student responds to the teacher's questions quickly and understands her perfectly; however his responses are simple and underdeveloped.

For the second part of the assessment, the student is asked to pick one of two envelopes to reveal the selected text. The student and teacher then engage in a ten-minute discussion about *Titus Andronicus* by William Shakespeare. The teacher begins with a question and the student is able to respond quickly but, similar to the previous questions, some of his sentences are under developed and disjointed. Evaluating the interaction, the student and teacher are both able to comprehend one another and engage in an almost effortless conversation, as found at C1. It is clear, however, that the student makes under developed analyses and arguments about the text, and only demonstrates moderate understanding. Overall, this sample highlights the challenges in comparing this assessment to CEFR given that whilst the individual is clearly able to converse at a high level, he lacks the subject knowledge and analytical skills to score highly in the assessment.

In another sample, the student received 20/30 (A4, B3, C3, D3, E3, F4). In the commentary, the student speaks fluently and naturally. She introduces her commentary and provides a well-prepared speech. Her intonation and pronunciation is clear and her speaking is mostly effortless, with some hesitations and pauses in line with performance at a borderline level of B2/C1. It seems that the student has adequate understanding and fairly well developed arguments on the text. When the teacher asks questions after the commentary and during the discussion, the student shows excellent understanding of the teacher's questions, and provides somewhat clear responses with evidence using a broad range of language. This interaction also falls at a borderline level of B2 / C1.

In another sample, marked at 27/30 (A5, B5, C4, D5, E4, F4), the student speaks clearly and fluently with a smooth-flowing well-structured commentary. The student sounds confident and knowledgeable of the text and the deeper meaning of the extract. She provides clear detailed information on the text and uses a broad range of language accurately, overall reflecting C1. The commentary lasts for eight minutes before the teacher asks follow-up questions to the student. During this interaction, the student provides well-structured and detailed responses, demonstrating that she has excellent knowledge of the text and of the teacher's questions. During the discussion component, the student and teacher have a discussion on a different text (*The Great Gatsby*). Again, the student responds quickly to the teacher's questions and speaks clearly with detailed responses using a broad range of language. In some instances, this interaction could represent the English language ability expected at C2, however the student occasionally makes errors or has to correct mistakes regarding her commentary on the text, which relates to C1 where "Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language."¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ The Oral Assessment Criteria Grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

5.3.3 Summary of English language competency assessment in English A: Literature HL

As shown in the table below, English A: Literature HL tests students' receptive, productive and interactive skills in English. Listening comprehension is also included in the internal assessments (a ten-minute discussion with the teacher after the oral commentary, and during the interactive oral in the Written Assignment) but not assessed formally.

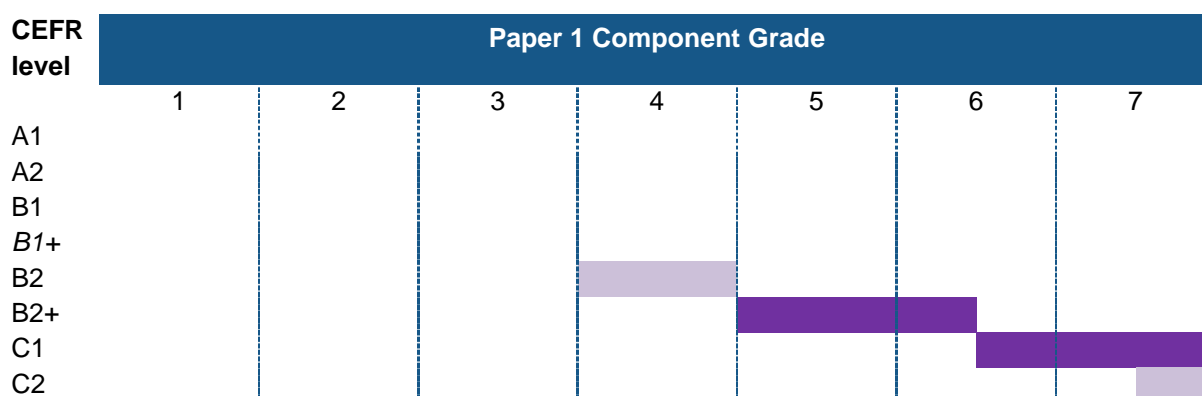
Table 54: Skills facets assessed in the English A: Literature HL course

Skill facet	Receptive		Production		Interaction	
	Reading comp.	Listening comp.	Written production	Spoken production	Written Interaction	Spoken Interaction
Assessed?	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes
Relevant assessment	Paper 1 Individual Oral commentary and discussion ¹⁵⁶		Paper 1 Paper 2 Written Assignment	Individual Oral Presentation		Individual Oral commentary and discussion Written Assignment

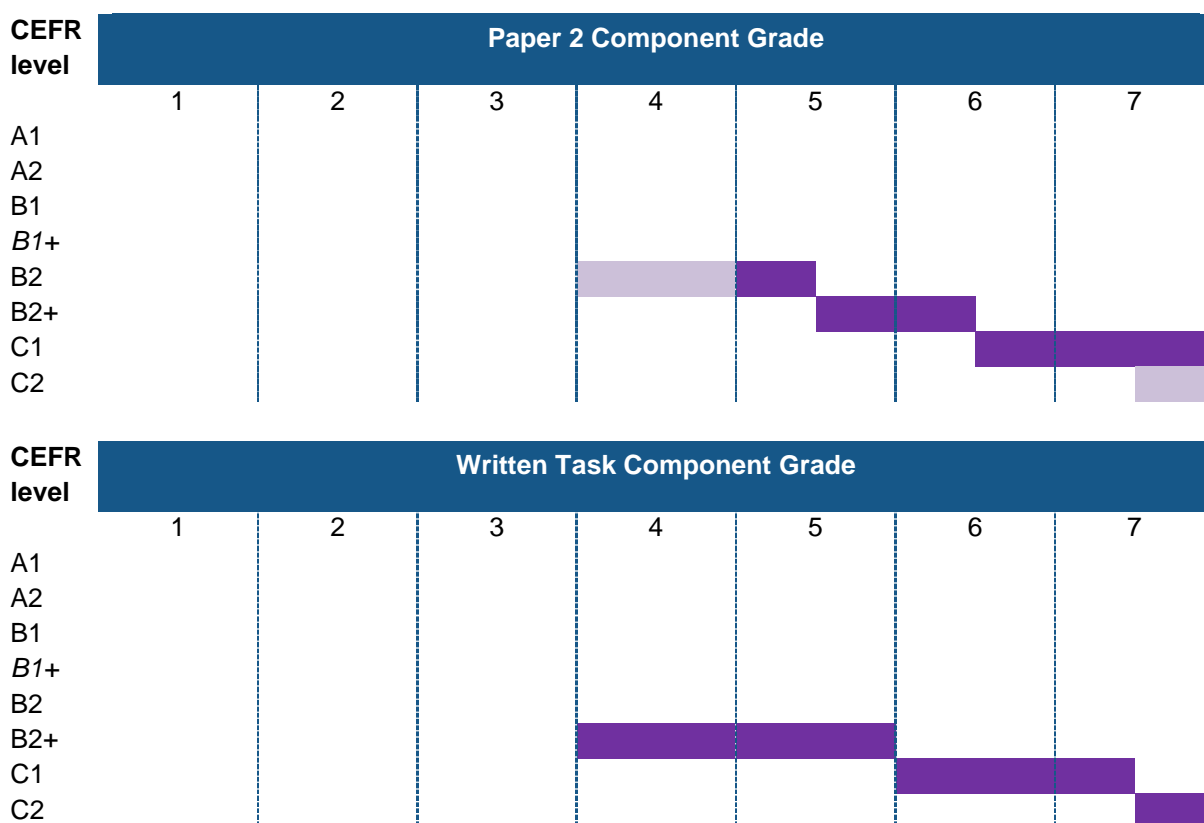
Reading and Writing

Taking into consideration the referencing of the level descriptors to CEFR, the weighting of the components and the component grade boundaries (as outlined in Section 2, the Methodology), the following comparison is proposed for the three reading and writing components:

Figure 24: English A: Literature HL reading and writing components and corresponding CEFR levels



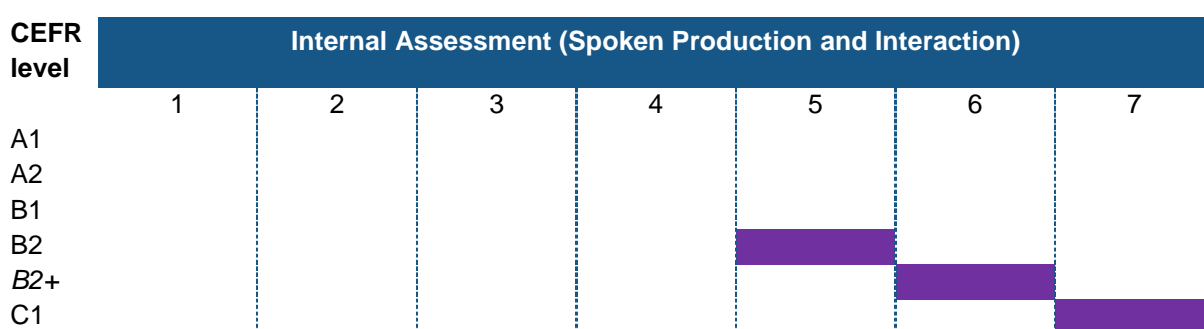
¹⁵⁶ Paper 2 and the Written Assignment also test reading comprehension in a broader sense since students should reference works they've studied during the course within their written response. Paper 1 and the Individual Oral commentary assess students' understanding of texts presented to them under examination conditions, thereby providing a more direct assessment of reading comprehension.



Speaking

Based on the comparison of the assessment criteria, their relative weighting and further supported the review of marked audio scripts, the following threshold scores are recommended for comparability to the respective CEFR levels for speaking.

Figure 25: English A: Literature HL internal assessment and corresponding CEFR levels



Drawing on the comparability of the different components and their relative weighting to the overall grade, the overall grade boundaries (drawn from three sittings) and the grade descriptors as appropriate, the overall comparability to CEFR of the English A: Literature HL is recommended as follows:

Figure 26: Comparability of the English A: Literature HL to the CEFR

CEFR Level	English A: Literature
C2	HL
C1	7
B2+	6
B2	5
B1	4
A2	
A1	

6. Literature and Performance

6.1 Profile of Literature and Performance

6.1.1 Overview and aims of Literature and Performance

The Literature and Performance course is targeted at students with prior experience in the target language (i.e. English) in an academic setting, including those who are fluent in the language (although there are no formal entry requirements for the course). Literature and Performance is currently only offered at SL.

As an interdisciplinary subject, the purpose of the Literature and Performance course is to combine the English A programme in Group 1 with the theatre programme in Group 6 (the arts) and to investigate how performance plays a role in understanding dramatic literature.

As the Literature and Performance course combines two Group courses into one programme, both Group-level and course-specific aims are applicable, as follows:

Group 1 (all programmes) aims:

- Introduce students to a range of texts from different periods, styles and genres
- Develop in students the ability to engage in close, detailed analysis of individual texts and make relevant connections
- Develop the students' powers of expression, both in oral and written communication
- Encourage students to recognize the importance of the contexts in which texts are written and received
- Encourage, through the study of texts, an appreciation of the different perspectives of people from other cultures, and how these perspectives construct meaning
- Encourage students to appreciate the formal, stylistic and aesthetic qualities of texts
- Promote in students an enjoyment of, and lifelong interest in, language and literature.

Group 6 aims (the arts):

- Enjoy lifelong engagement with the arts
- Become informed, reflective and critical practitioners in the arts
- Understand the dynamic and changing nature of the arts
- Explore and value the diversity of the arts across time, place and cultures
- Express ideas with confidence and competence
- Develop perceptual and analytical skills.

Literature and performance aims:

- Equip students with the skills to explore critically and imaginatively a range of literary texts and performance possibilities
- Develop in students the ability to articulate their responses to literature and performance in a variety of styles and contexts
- Introduce students to a range of performance skills

- Broaden the perspectives of students through the exploration of texts from differing cultures, periods and genres
- Foster a personal and passionate engagement with literature and performance, and by so doing guide students towards a better understanding of themselves and the world.

6.1.2 Content and duration

The course is split into three parts with each focusing on a different area of literature or performance. Students are also taught three key skills: written and oral expression, performance skills and close analysis of texts. A minimum of five texts are studied within the course.

‘Transformation’ is a central issue of the course, with the students learning to transform a text by paying close attention to the details of language, message and form. Students are also taught to examine how reception and production shape meaning. They further demonstrate their understanding of how to transform a text within their performance assessment.

The three main parts of this course total a minimum of 150 required teaching hours. Teachers are able to organise and teach the course using methods and strategies that are appropriate to the school, classroom and students; however all students should engage in inquiry-based learning to develop critical thinking skills. A description of each part of the course can be seen in the table below.

Table 55: English Literature and Performance SL content

English Literature and Performance – SL	
Parts and recommended teaching hours	Description
Part 1: Critical study of texts (50 hours).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studying a range of literary texts • Identifying meaning and making viable interpretations • Analysing the effect of literary features • Writing and speaking appropriately about literature.
Part 2: Exploration of the chosen approach to the text (40 hours).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring performance potential of texts • Generating ideas for transforming prose and poetry texts into dramatic form • Speaking and writing appropriately about ideas.
Part 3: Realization of texts in performance (60 hours).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing pieces for performance and performing scripted drama • Performing to an audience • Analysing and evaluating performance through appropriate speech and writing.

6.1.3 Summative assessment

Objectives

The Literature and Performance SL course prescribes four assessment objectives that describe what is expected of students upon completing the course. These objectives are linked to assessment criteria that are used when marking students' assessments.

Table 56: English Literature and Performance SL assessment objectives

Literature and Performance SL	
Assessment objective:	Students must demonstrate:
Knowledge and understanding of texts from different genres and cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding of a range of texts and performances • Understanding of structure, technique and style • Ability to substantiate points made through appropriate reference to texts.
Awareness and understanding of literary techniques and performance potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to identify and evaluate the use and effect of literary techniques and performance potential in texts • Ability to use the relevant terminology in the analysis and appreciation of the texts studied • Ability to realize the performance potential in a text.
Commitment and ability as performers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of performance skills • Necessary commitment in developing and presenting performance • Ability to express ideas, emotion, character and atmosphere through performance.
Ability to speak and write effectively about texts and performances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to express ideas clearly and in an appropriate register • Ability to use the oral and written forms of the language in a range of styles, registers and situations • Ability to discuss and analyse texts and their performance potential in a focused and logical manner.

Methods

Internal and external assessment is used in the Literature and Performance course. The weightings and methods used for these assessments are shown in the table below:

Table 57: English Literature and Performance SL assessment methods and weighting

Literature and Performance SL	
External assessment	
Weighting	60%
Methods	Two written exams / One written coursework All three are completed at school and marked externally
Internal assessment	
Weighting	40%
Methods	Oral presentation internally assessed and externally moderated

Table 58: English Literature and Performance SL assessment format

Literature and Performance SL				
Number and type of assessments each examination series	<i>External:</i> Paper 1: Prose and performance	<i>External:</i> Paper 2: Poetry	<i>External:</i> Written Coursework: Major playwrights in performance	<i>Internal:</i> Performance and individual oral presentation
Duration	1½ hours	1½ hours	n/a	20 minutes
Type(s) of question	Essay / extended response <i>Students must answer one essay question (from a choice of three)</i>	Essay / extended response <i>Students must answer one essay question (from a choice of six)</i>	Essay / extended response <i>One critical analysis and self-reflection essay</i>	n/a <i>One performance and one oral presentation</i>
Total marks available	20 marks	25 marks	20 marks	40 marks
Weighting toward overall qualification	20%	20%	20%	40%

6.2 Comparative analysis of English Literature and Performance SL with CEFR

The Literature and Performance course seeks to develop students' skills in written and oral expression and literary analysis.

6.2.1 Reading and writing

Students study a minimum of five texts drawn from the PLA and the PLT with assessment based on:

- One novel
- Two poetry texts
- One play
- Prose or poetry.

This requires to students to be able to read authentic complex texts in English. Unlike the other courses reviewed, the Literature and Performance assessment course does not include an assessment with unseen texts in a written examination. The ability to comprehend texts in English is assessed through two written examination papers (under exam conditions) and the written assignment (untimed coursework).

6.2.1.1 Review of Paper 1

In Paper 1, Prose and Performance, students have 1½ hours to answer one question from a choice of three. Example questions from the past papers reviewed in this study asked students to select a passage from a novel studied which dealt with:

- The appearance of a character in a specific setting raises unsettling questions for the reader, asking the student to explain how they would stage this for an audience to encompass intrigue and/or surprise
- The speech of an important character which was pivotal to the narrative, asking the student how they would stage this to ensure the importance was emphasised for the audience
- Money being a predominant factor in the relationship between characters, asking students how they would dramatize its importance and the effect of it on characters
- Guilt and the destructive or redemptive consequences of it for characters, asking students how they would combine acting, production and design elements to demonstrate the effects of this guilt for the audience.

The language of the text is clear but requiring a good level of reading comprehension, with the words critical to understanding the question placed at B2 and C1.

Student responses are evaluated against the following criteria:

Table 59: Assessment criteria for English Literature and Performance SL Paper 1

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the component overall
A	Understanding of the novel and selection of the extract	5	25%
B	Ideas for dramatizations based on interpretation of the literary text	10	50%
C	Use of language	5	25%

Criterion A

Criterion A relates to the student's understanding of a literary extract and its relationship to the novel as a whole, as well as whether the student has selected an extract which is relevant to the question. This criterion both reflects subject knowledge and learners' reading comprehension and therefore some parallels can be drawn with various CEFR scales for reception and production. For example, a mark of 3 on the 0-5 scale is awarded to those who are able to demonstrate an "adequate" understanding of the literary extract, supported by relevant references to the text. This mark demonstrates at least B2+ where students would need to be able to draw out key information and stances from texts, and write essays with relevant supporting details.

Those able to demonstrate a "good" understanding, supported by detailed references to the text, would be awarded a mark of 4, demonstrating a level of English receptive and productive competence at CEFR C1 where students should be able to substantiate their points at length with relevant examples and to identify implicit rather than explicit information, themes and viewpoints.

To obtain the highest mark, 5, students would need to demonstrate a perceptive understanding of the literary extract, with detailed, well-chosen references from the text, and in doing so, would demonstrate receptive and productive competence at C1 and above.

Criterion B

Criterion B focusses on the student's ideas for dramatization of the literary text, which reflects subject-specific competency rather than aspects of English language proficiency and accordingly, the level descriptors associated with this criterion cannot be compared with CEFR.

Criterion C

Criterion C, marked on a scale of 0-5, considers the student's use of language in their written response, in terms of accuracy and clarity as well as the appropriateness of register, style and terminology. Clear links can be seen between the level descriptors and a number of CEFR scales focussed on range, control and accuracy.

A mark of 2 is awarded to those whose responses show "some degree" of clarity, coherence and accuracy, reflecting a CEFR B1 level, where students can show good control and range of vocabulary but with errors which may impact communication / understanding. Those obtaining a mark of 3 must have produced clear and coherent language with only a few significant lapses. This would reflect B1+/B2, acknowledging that errors are expected at both levels but by B2, such errors should not impact understanding.

To obtain a mark of 4, students should use clear, varied and precise language, with no significant lapses, despite writing on complex topics. This comfortably reflects B2+/borderline C1 since a high degree of accuracy in vocabulary, grammar and sentence construction would be expected with the student unrestricted by their language in expressing their ideas or arguments. This expectation is similarly reflected in the level descriptor for a mark of 5, where it would additionally be expected that students could write concisely and employ an effective register, considered indicative of CEFR C1 level and above.

6.2.1.2 Review of Paper 2

Students written production skills are further assessed through Paper 2, which focusses on poetry. The 1½ exam paper comprises six questions from which students must answer one, making reference to the work of at least two poets in their response. Example questions from past papers reviewed asked students to examine:

- How dramatic elements are presented and developed within the poems
- The strategies poets have used to convey the feeling of loss and/or longing
- How poets have shown conflict between personal beliefs and those of family or wider society
- How poets have conveyed hope and/or pessimism in their poetry
- How the pace of poems is created and its impact on meaning.

Their response is evaluated against the following criteria:

Table 60: Assessment criteria for English Literature and Performance SL Paper 2

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall paper
A	Knowledge and understanding of texts	5	20%
B	Response to the question	5	20%
C	Appreciation of literary features	5	20%
D	Presentation	5	20%
E	Formal use of language	5	20%

Criterion A

Similar to Criterion A of Paper 1, this criterion focusses on how well the student knows the texts studied and can demonstrate understanding of the texts with appropriate references. As such this criterion measures both the student's level of study of the texts during the course and their reading comprehension in terms of the ability to identify both the explicit and the implicit themes.

At CEFR B2+, students would need to be able to identify and extract key information and understand where authors may have adopted a particular stance, and demonstrate their understanding through the provision of relevant supporting details within their written response. This level is best represented by a mark of 3 on the 0-5 scale since students at this level would need to be able to demonstrate an "adequate" understanding of the literary extract, supported by relevant references to the text.

At CEFR C1, students should be able to both identify the implicit information, themes and viewpoints within a given text, as well as illustrate and support their analysis in some depth with relevant examples drawn from the text. This would most closely reflect a mark of 4. A mark of 5 would also represent this level of performance but with a perceptive understanding of the literary extract demonstrated in their response, substantiated with detailed and well-chosen references, thereby reflecting receptive and productive competence more indicative of C1 and above.

Criterion B

For this criterion, markers should consider how well the student has understood and responded to the specific requirements of the question, identifying relevant ideas, and at the top level, demonstrating independence of thought. A high level of English would inevitably be needed to communicate this, but the focus of the level descriptors is firmly on subject ability and accordingly, no direct comparisons can be drawn between Criterion B and CEFR. The expectation that the student's ideas should be substantiated and illustrated by good examples is also encompassed within these level descriptors, but for the purpose of the comparative analysis, this ability has been referenced to relevant CEFR scales in the preceding analysis (Criterion A).

Criterion C

Criterion C considers the student's understanding of literary features such as imagery, tone, style and the effect of these; and further considers the illustration of the analysis with relevant examples. As with other similarly-focussed assessment criteria, comparison at the lower levels is complex in that a low mark may be indicative of low subject knowledge but to obtain a mark of 3 or 4 on the 0-5 scale, a student would need to be able to undertake, respectively, "some" or an "adequate" level of analysis of literary features in text, which in CEFR terms, requires a high level of reading comprehension and an ability to demonstrate this through the use of appropriate examples, overall reflecting performance at a minimum of CEFR B2+ with potential that some scoring 4 would reach level C1. For a detailed analysis with carefully chosen examples, worth 5 marks, students would likely meet a level of C1/C2, being able to recognise cues and sub-themes and potentially able to identify finer shades of meaning.

Criterion D

Criterion D considers the level of organisation of the response and the success with which the student has been able to present their thoughts and integrate the aforementioned supporting examples into their response. A mark of 4, awarded for appropriate integration of examples and production of a "clear and logical" structure, would reflect a CEFR C1 where learners should be able to produce clear, structured and smoothly-flowing texts on complex subjects, supporting points at length. A mark of 5, awarded for a "purposeful and effective" structure, with examples well integrated into the student's response would similarly reflect expectations at CEFR C1 but with scope to reach C2, given that students at this level would similarly be expected to produce clear, structured and smoothly-flowing text but also to do so using an effective style to highlight significant points.

Criterion E

Similar to Criterion C for Paper 1, Criterion E concentrates on the student's ability to use language appropriately, but with a specific focus on the choice of register and its appropriateness for literary analysis. Accordingly, the findings for each marking band are somewhat higher than those for other similarly-focussed criteria, with a mark of 2 reflecting a borderline B1+/B2 since the level of clarity and accuracy best reflects B1, but familiarity with vocabulary on more complex topics would not be expected until at least B2 level. A mark of 3 would be indicative of B2+ where language is clear and coherence with only a few lapses (B2) but with some ability to select appropriate vocabulary, idiom and style (B2+/C1, since at B2, language may lack expressiveness and idiomaticity¹⁵⁷)

By extension, marks of 4 and 5, where it is expected that language would be precise, clear and varied (and concise for a mark of 5), with effective use of vocabulary, idiom and style, and a register effective for literary analysis, would be indicative of a high C1 and threshold C2 respectively, with the expectation of the latter being that students should be able to

¹⁵⁷ Written Assessment Criteria Grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

“Convey finer shades of meaning... give emphasis and...[demonstrate] a good command of idiomatic expressions”¹⁵⁸.

Review of Written Coursework

Lastly, students’ written production skills are assessed through the written coursework, worth 20% of their overall course grade for English Literature and Performance. This takes the form of a critical analysis of an extract or a series of related extract from a play or playwrights on the PLA. Students are expected to produce around 1500-2000 words (markers are instructed not to read past the first 2000 words where the word count is exceeded). Examples of marked student work reviewed include:

- A critical analysis of a scene from *Romeo and Juliet* focussing on the interaction between two of the non-lead characters
- A critical analysis of two acts from *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* focussing on a particular character.

Table 61: Assessment criteria for English Literature and Performance SL written coursework

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards the overall component
A	Analysis of the literary features of the text	5	17%
B	Exploration of the chosen approach to the text	20	66%
C	Use of language, structure	5	17%

Criterion A

Criterion A evaluates the extent to which the student has been able to recognise and analyse literary features of the text and support their essay with references to the text, focussing on reading comprehension and written production. A mark of 3 is awarded for an adequate analysis of the text and demonstration of this understanding through the selection of some appropriate references to the texts. This reflects expectations at B2+ that learners should be able to understand texts with a particular stance, or texts of a specialised nature; and substantiate their written response with relevant supporting detail.

To achieve a mark of 4, students should be able to produce a sound detailed analysis, thereby requiring a higher level of reading comprehension, such as C1, where it is expected that learners would be able to recognise sub-themes, inferred meaning and viewpoints. This is similarly true for a mark of 5, where students need to demonstrate a perceptive analysis, reflecting a level of C1 (borderline C2), reflecting the aforementioned skills for a mark of 4 with the added ability, at 5 marks, to recognise finer shades of meaning.

¹⁵⁸ Written Assessment Criteria Grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

Criterion B

Criterion B evaluates how well students have addressed the theatrical questions raised by the extract with top marks awarded to those producing a “Focussed, detailed and imaginative exploration...”. The expectations for this criterion are linked to subject knowledge of literature and performance, with links to CEFR not readily identifiable.

Criterion C

Criterion C reviews the student’s use of language and structure in their essay. The descriptors are comparatively broad in relation to other criteria focussed on language use in other assessments and DP English courses. Reference to student work therefore supported an analysis against CEFR scales by enabling the project team to consider the application of these level descriptors in practice. In the marked student work reviewed, samples scoring 3 and 5 on a 0-5 scale (representing “adequate organisation and language” and “very well organized with appropriate and effective use of language”) highlighted the challenge in comparing these descriptors to CEFR since both were clear, relatively well structured texts with a high degree of accuracy, clarity and variety evidenced within the language, but not explicitly required by the assessment criteria.

6.2.2 Speaking and listening

Speaking is assessed through a single internal assessment that comprises two compulsory sections. The first section is a five-minute theatrical performance in English that is a transformation of one or more of the poetry and prose texts studied during the course. Students are required to deliver their performance in front of a live audience of teachers, classmates, peers or other school or local community members. The student can give the performance alone or with a group of students; the performance time must be increased to about 20 minutes for a group. The use of props and costumes is also allowed but not assessed.

The second section is a 15-minute individual oral presentation based on the performance they completed. During the performance, they are expected to demonstrate the following:

- Understanding of the text(s)
- Critical perspectives on the dramatic potential of the text(s)
- Insights into the performance process experienced from page to stage
- Critical evaluation of their particular role and contribution to this process of transformation or adaptation and realization¹⁵⁹.

For both components, students are evaluated against a series of assessment criteria by teachers using a best-fit approach.

¹⁵⁹ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Literature and performance guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

Table 62: Assessment criteria for the English Literature and Performance SL internal assessment

Criterion		Marks available	Weighting towards each component
A	Performance	15	37.5%
B	Presentation of evidence supporting the student's involvement in the process leading up to the performance	5	12.5%
C	Presentation and use of language	5	12.5%
D	Critical reflection	5	12.5%
E	Knowledge and understanding of the literary features of the original text and rationale for its realization	10	25%

Criterion A, B, D and E

These criteria cannot be linked to CEFR since they focus on aspects of literature and performance which would not be included in the CEFR scales.

For example, Criterion A evaluates how effective and appropriate the student's performance skills are (from "limited" to "excellent"). Additionally, the descriptors measure the student's level of involvement and commitment to the performance along with their understanding of the text presented on. Whilst it is acknowledged that students would need a high level of English language to obtain high marks in this criterion, these descriptors centre on the student's performance skills, creativity and originality demonstrated in response to the text.

Criterion B evaluates how engaged the student is in the run up to the performance, from "limited involvement" to "fully committed" in the preparation and lead up to the performance. Similar to those in Criterion A, these descriptors measure the level of work the student put in to the development and preparation of the performance, which is not a reflection of their English language abilities.

Criterion D evaluates the extent to which a student can critically reflect on their performance. The descriptors evaluate how successful the student is at critically reflecting, rather than their use of language / English.

Criterion E evaluates the student's level of knowledge and understanding of the literary features of the original text and their rationale for its realisation. It is acknowledged that those scoring 5 and above on the 0-10 scale would need to possess a strong level of English reading comprehension to enable them to demonstrate an "adequate" to "excellent" understanding of literary features in authentic English texts, requiring receptive competence at a minimum of B2+ up to C1/C2 level. Nevertheless, this requirement represents one aspect of the level descriptors, with the other focus on the realisation of the texts not relatable to CEFR.

Criterion C

The level descriptors in Criterion C evaluate the student's presentation and use of language with focus on the structure, organisation and clarity. These are marked on a scale from 0-5.

A mark of 3 requires adequate language, structure, and organisation which also reflect the CEFR grids across B1/B1+ where "a sufficient range of language" is used¹⁶⁰.

At the next marking band (4 marks), the student should be able to demonstrate good use of language with clear and coherent structure and organisation. This descriptor relates to B2 on the oral grids with clear and detailed descriptions, complex sentence forms, and coherent discourse.

To be awarded the highest marks (5 marks), the student must give an excellent presentation and use persuasive and clear language with coherent structure and organisation. The expectation of excellent language and persuasiveness, with the ability to express oneself clearly without restriction on what they are trying to say, is indicative of achievement at C1 on the general linguistic range grid. Additionally, errors are rare and the speaker is fluent and spontaneous at this level.

The project team reviewed one sample internal assessment including a video recording of the performance and an mp3 of the individual oral presentation. This sample was compared across the profile for the oral assessment (range; accuracy, fluency; interaction and cohesion).

In the internal assessment reviewed, the student scored 34/40 (A12, B4, C5, D4, E9)¹⁶¹ for his performance on a transformation of *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess and the second component of the accompanying oral presentation. For the performance component, the student gives a 20-minute performance within a group of about five students on stage, using costumes and props. The student appears to be the main actor in the performance giving both individual monologues and engaging in dialogue with other student actors. All of the actors are speaking from memory, and the performance appears well structured and thought-out. The student being assessed speaks clearly and fluently.

The second part of the assessment, the individual oral presentation, includes the student speaking alone. He explains his understanding of *A Clockwork Orange*, and his interpretation of the novel. He gives evidence for his interpretation and critical reflection. He speaks fluently and clearly using a wide range of language. Very few grammatical errors are made, and the speech flows with few pauses. Overall, he demonstrates English associated with CEFR C1 or C2. The student demonstrates the ability to convey finer shades of meaning naturally with no sign of having to restrict what he is saying. This reflects the previous comparison above of Criterion C to the CEFR scales, as the student received the highest marks for this criterion (5 marks).

¹⁶⁰ General Linguistic Range Grid. [Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*].

¹⁶¹ International Baccalaureate Organization, (n.d.). *Languages teacher support material*. [online].

6.2.3 Summary of English language competence assessment in Literature and Performance SL

English Literature and Performance provides an opportunity to develop strong skills across the four skills areas (reading, writing, speaking and listening) in English with assessment focussing on testing the first three. Unlike the other DP language courses, there is no assessment of students' ability to understand unseen texts; however, their reading comprehension is assessed in a broader sense since students should reference works they have studied during the course within their written or spoken response, demonstrating understanding of these texts to a high level in order to be able to adequately infer from and analyse these.

Table 63: Skills facets assessed in the English Literature and Performance SL course

Skill facet	Receptive		Production		Interaction	
	Reading comp.	Listening comp.	Written production	Spoken production	Written Interaction	Spoken Interaction
Assessed?	Yes		Yes	Yes		
Relevant assessment	<i>Paper 1</i> <i>Paper 2</i> <i>Written Assignment</i> <i>Performance and individual oral presentation</i>		<i>Paper 1</i> <i>Paper 2</i> <i>Written Assignment</i>	<i>Performance and individual oral presentation</i>		

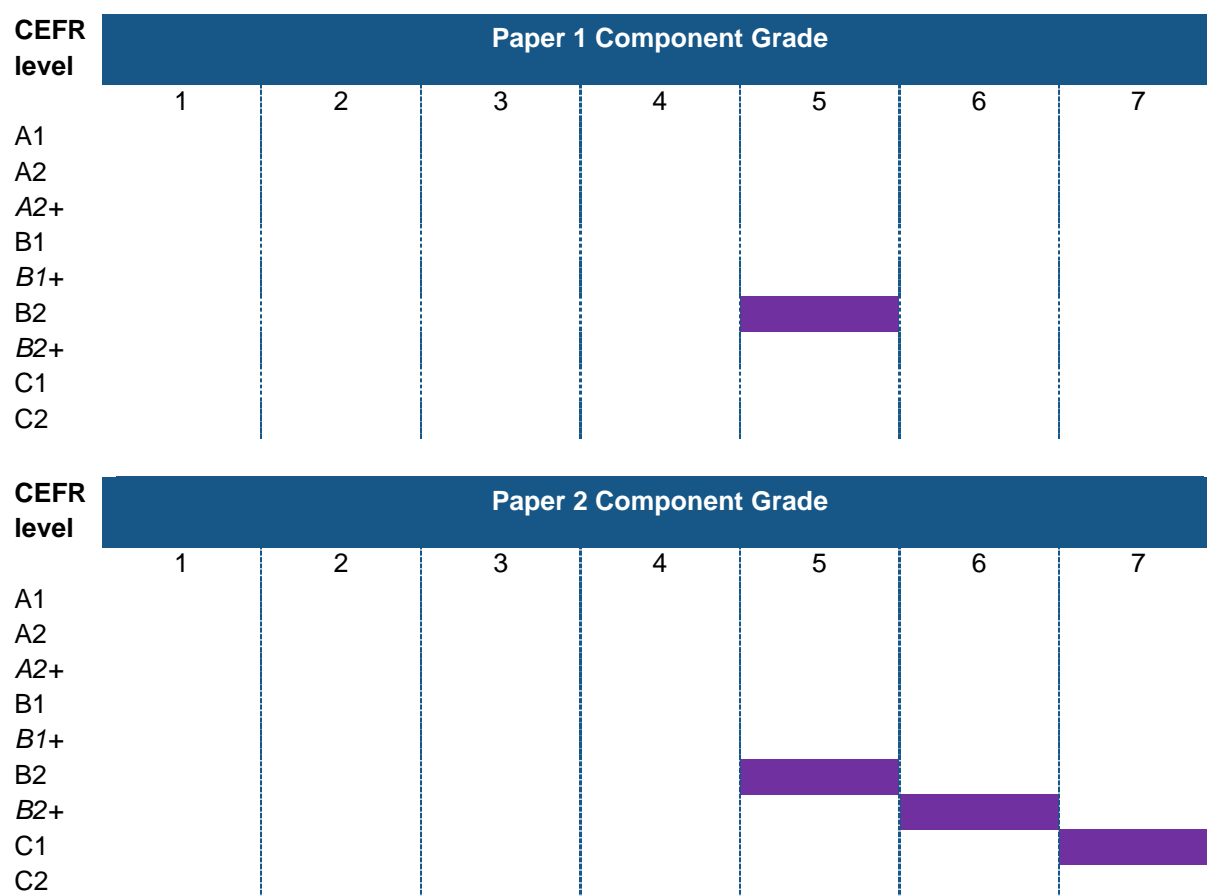
Reading and writing

Whilst the assessment focusses primarily on testing subject-specific abilities such as literary analysis and performance, from review of the course documentation, it is possible to conclude that Literature and Performance students will require a high level of English language reading comprehension in order to demonstrate the level of understanding required across each of the assessments and select the key references from a range of authentic literary texts.

The written assessments also test students' ability to construct clear, coherent and smooth-flowing essays in English, integrating appropriate references and examples to substantiate their analysis.

The biggest challenge in comparing the Literature and Performance course to CEFR is that the weighting of criteria designed to assess subject-specific knowledge is considerably greater than the weighting of those for which links to CEFR can be drawn.

Figure 27: English Literature and Performance SL reading and writing component and corresponding CEFR levels



Speaking

Through careful review of the speaking element of Literature and Performance content, assessment criteria and marked student scripts, it is clear that the course requires a high level of productive and interactive competence in English to discuss complex topics of literary analysis and theatrical production. Students' spoken production and interaction skills are assessed through a performance and individual oral presentation.

Of the assessment criteria used to rate students, much of the weighting is placed on evaluating the students' ability to analyse texts and present ideas and considerations for the dramatization of these texts. Their use of English language is also considered in the rating, both directly through Criterion C, worth 12.5% of the overall internal oral assessment, and indirectly through criteria A and E, which reflect on the students' understanding of the texts studied in English although these criteria also focus on performance and realisation of the text.

Figure 28: Comparability of the Literature and Performance SL to the CEFR

CEFR Level	English Literature and Performance
	SL
C2	
C1	
B2+	
B2	5
B1	
A2	
A1	

7. Bibliography

IB Materials

Course-Specific Documentation (Internal Documents)

The following documentation was reviewed for each IB DP course:

- Subject guides
- IB DP grade descriptors (overall and subject-specific)
- Examination papers, over a three-year period (May and November 2013 – 2015)
- Guidance on internal assessment tasks and criteria
- Mark schemes for the respective assessments
- Sample completed external and internal assessments (marked student work from May 2013- May 2015 sittings) across a range of three achievement levels, where available
- Subject reports outlining the grade boundaries for the overall courses and each component (May and November 2014-2015 for English B and English A: Literature and Language; May 2014-2015 for time zone 1 and time zone 2 and November 2014-2015 for English A: Literature; May 2013-2015 for Literature and Performance)
- Quality assurance and control procedures, including details of marking and moderation, assessment development and exam administration procedures.

External Documents

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<www.englishprofile.org/images/pdf/theenglishprofilebooklet.pdf>.

Appendix 1: Use of CEFR forms and grids

Document	Source	Used?
	CEFR Manual	
Form A1: General Examination Description	Page 126	✓
Form A2: Test Development	Page 127	✓
Form A3: Marking	Page 129	✓
Form A4: Grading	Page 130	✓
Form A5: Reporting Results	Page 130	✓
Form A6: Data Analysis	Page 131	✓
Form A7: Rationale for Decisions	Page 131	✓
Form A8: Initial Estimation of Overall Examination Level	Page 28 / 132	
Form A9: Listening Comprehension	Page 132	
Form A10: Reading Comprehension	Page 133	✓
Form A11: Spoken Interaction	Page 134	
Form A12: Written Interaction	Page 136	
Form A13: Spoken Production	Page 137	✓
Form A14: Written Production	Page 138	✓
Form A15: Integrated Skills Combinations	Page 139	✓
Form A16: Integrated Skills	Page 139	✓
Form A17: Spoken Mediation	Page 140	
Form A18: Written Mediation	Page 141	
Form A19: Aspects of Language Competence in Reception	Page 142	✓
Form A20: Aspects of Language Competence in Interaction	Page 145	
Form A21: Aspects of Language Competence in Production	Page 146	✓
Form A22: Aspects of Language Competence in Mediation	Page 150	
Form A23: Graphic Profile of the Relationship of the Examination to CEFR Levels	Page 33 / 152	
Form A24: Confirmed Estimation of Overall Examination Level	Page 34 / 152	✓
Form C1: Training Record Form	Page 181	

Form C2:	Analytic Rating Form (Swiss Project)	Page 182	
Form C3:	Holistic Rating Form (DIALANG)	Page 182	
Form C4:	Collation Global Rating Form (DIALANG)	Page 183	
Form C5:	Item Rating Form (DIALANG)	Page 183	
Grid	Content Analysis Grids	Pages 159 - 178	✓

Appendix 2: CEFR Scales and Sub-scales

CEFR Scales	English B			English A: Literature			English A: Language and Literature			Literature and Performance		
	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Speaking
Linguistic Competence												
General Linguistic Range	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vocabulary Range	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vocabulary Control	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grammatical Accuracy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phonological Control			✓			✓			✓			✓
Pragmatic Competence												
Thematic Development		✓	✓			✓			✓			✓
Cohesion and Coherence		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓			✓
Strategic Competence												
Identifying cues/infering			✓									
Reading												
Overall Reading Comprehension	✓			✓			✓			✓		
Qualitative Factors for Reception	✓			✓			✓			✓		

	English B			English A: Literature			English A: Language and Literature			Literature and Performance		
CEFR Scales	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Speaking
Salient Characteristics: Reception	✓			✓			✓			✓		
Writing												
Overall Written Production Scales		✓										
Written Assessment Criteria		✓			✓			✓			✓	
Relevant Qualitative Factors for Production		✓			✓			✓			✓	
Written Production Sub-scale												
Creative Writing								✓				
Reports and essays		✓			✓			✓			✓	
Listening / Speaking Grids												
Understanding a native speaker interlocutor			✓			✓ ^{HL}						
Formal Discussion / Being Interviewed			✓									
Overall Oral Production			✓			✓			✓			✓
Overall Spoken Interaction			✓			✓ ^{HL}			✓			
Global Oral Assessment Scale			✓			✓			✓			✓

	English B			English A: Literature			English A: Language and Literature			Literature and Performance		
CEFR Scales	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Speaking
Oral Assessment Criteria Grid			✓			✓			✓			✓

Appendix 3: Quality assurance and control mechanisms

The IB develops assessment models and assessments internally as part of a required review procedure. Key IB staff, experts and external consultants are involved in the development of all assessments. External assessments are re-developed for each examination period (over a period of 18 months to two years) whereas internal assessments are set by assessment models which are re-developed as part of the curriculum review held every seven years. The IB ensures many factors are considered when developing these assessments, including the varied cultures and languages of its students. The reliability and validity of the assessments is also important to the IB, with both considered during the development and marking procedures.

External assessments are developed by examiners, IB staff and external consultants from examination specifications which describe the content, number and type of questions to be included in the examinations. After the examination questions are first drafted, they are taken through a lengthy process of review, discussion, and editing by a Senior Examining Team, Subject Area Manager, Curriculum Area Manager, and external advisor.

To ensure reliable grading of the assessment, the IB has multiple policies for the marking and moderation of assessment. Detailed mark schemes and assessment criteria are used by trained and experienced examiners in the case of external assessments, or by teachers for internal assessment. The marked assessments then undergo rigorous moderation, with a sample of all examiners' marked scripts double-marked by an experienced examiner. Internal assessments marked by teachers are also moderated. Where discrepancies in examiner or teacher marking are found, different procedures are applied for the proportion of student assessments that need to be re-marked or adjusted.

Students are awarded marks for each assessment task and examination paper, and can receive these marks on requests. Grade boundaries are used on all external and internal assessments, and are re-set for each new assessment (yearly for external assessments, every seven years for internal). The assessment marks are then combined to provide students with a final subject grade from 1-7. All results are provided to students online.

Form A2: Test development ¹⁶²

Test development	Short description and/or references
1. What organisation decided that the examination was required?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Own organisation/school <input type="checkbox"/> A cultural institute <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry of Education <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry of Justice <input type="checkbox"/> Other: specify: _____
2. If an external organisation is involved, what influence do they have on design and development?	<input type="checkbox"/> Determine the overall aims <input type="checkbox"/> Determine level of language proficiency <input type="checkbox"/> Determine examination domain or content <input type="checkbox"/> Determine exam format and type of test tasks <input type="checkbox"/> Other: specify: _____
3. If no external organisation was involved, what other factors determined design and development of examination?	<input type="checkbox"/> A needs analysis <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internal description of examination aims <input type="checkbox"/> Internal description of language level <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A syllabus or curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> Profile of candidates
4. In producing test tasks are specific features of candidates taken into account?	<input type="checkbox"/> Linguistic background (L1) ¹⁶³ <input type="checkbox"/> Language learning background <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age <input type="checkbox"/> Educational level <input type="checkbox"/> Socio-economic background <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social-cultural factors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ethnic background <input type="checkbox"/> Gender
5. Who writes the items or develops the test tasks?	<p>Examinations: Senior examiners and IBO staff with the help of the Deputy chief examiners and external consultants; in smaller subjects, such as the languages, one examiner sets the examinations papers and is known as the 'examiner responsible'.</p> <p>Internal assessment: Teachers deliver the internal assessment, but it is set as part of the assessment models that are reviewed every seven years by a review group of teachers, examiners, IBO staff and external consultants.</p>
6. Have test writers guidance to ensure quality?	<input type="checkbox"/> Training

¹⁶² International Baccalaureate Organization, 2010. *Diploma Programme Assessment Principles and Practice*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

¹⁶³ The IB states the following: "Diploma Programme assessment and grading procedures should ensure parity of treatment for all candidates irrespective of school, subject, response language or examination session" *Diploma Programme Assessment Principles and Practice*, p. 54.

Test development	Short description and/or references
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Guidelines ¹⁶⁴ <input type="checkbox"/> Checklists <input type="checkbox"/> Examples of valid, reliable, appropriate tasks: <input type="checkbox"/> Calibrated to CEFR level description <input type="checkbox"/> Calibrated to other level description: _____
7. Is training for test writers provided?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
8. Are test tasks discussed before use?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes ¹⁶⁵ <input type="checkbox"/> No
9. If yes, by whom?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual colleagues <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internal group discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External examination committee ¹⁶⁶ <input type="checkbox"/> Internal stakeholders <input type="checkbox"/> External stakeholders
10. Are test tasks pretested?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
11. If yes, how?	n/a
12. If no, why not?	No reasoning provided by IB.
13. Is the reliability of the test estimated?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
14. If yes, how?	<input type="checkbox"/> Data collection and psychometric procedures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: specify: The IB focusses on both test and marker reliability, and aims for at least 95% confidence that a final subject grade is correct. These are achieved through the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment models contain a variety of tasks in different contexts. These reduce threats that a single assessment task has on reliability. • Focussing on reliability of determining grades that consistently represent the same standard of achievement rather than 'parallel-forms' of reliability at the level of student marks awarded. • Application of consistent standards and statistical background data are used to determine grade boundaries. "Grade standards

¹⁶⁴ In the form of exam specifications that include information on the number and type of questions. The course objectives are also used to develop examinations.

¹⁶⁵ The test tasks are discussed internally in the IB.

¹⁶⁶ The examination papers are reviewed by a Senior Examining Team, Subject Area Manager (SAM) and Curriculum Area Manager (CAM) before they are revised and sent to an external advisor (consultant) for an external review.

Test development	Short description and/or references
	<p>are documented and exemplified, and judgments made about grade boundaries are checked by a number of statistical indicators.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student achievement is recorded over different levels and as it progresses through these levels the reliability of the reporting increases with high reliability achieved by the final subject grade. • Marker reliability is ensured through use of detailed mark schemes, assessment criteria and moderation procedures and reducing marker bias.
15. Are different aspects of validity estimated?	<input type="checkbox"/> Face validity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Content validity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concurrent validity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Predictive validity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Construct validity
16. If yes, describe how.	<p>The IB focusses on construct validity and argues that if construct validity is achieved, then so are predictive, concurrent, and content validity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predictive validity: Estimated through informal studies and anecdotal evidence. • Construct validity: Achieved through the assessment model that is applied to each subject and is designed to be broadly based, including a variety of types of evidence.

Examinations

Form A3: Marking¹⁶⁷

Marking	Short description and/or reference
1. How are the test tasks marked?	<p>For receptive test tasks:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Optical mark reader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clerical marking <p>For productive or integrated test tasks:</p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trained examiners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teachers
2. Where are the test tasks marked?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Centrally <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Locally: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By local teams <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By individual examiners <p><i>Examiners mark the external assessments and any internal assessments required to be marked / moderated externally. They do</i></p>

¹⁶⁷ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2010. *Diploma Programme assessment Principles and practice*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

Marking	Short description and/or reference
	<p><i>so centrally (outside of the classroom; remote marking).</i></p> <p><i>Teachers mark all other internal assessments. This is done locally (within the classroom context).</i></p>
3. What criteria are used to select markers?	<p>External assessment:</p> <p>Examiners are often experienced IB teachers. They are also subjected to moderation and only those who mark consistently and objectively are appointed and retained.</p> <p>Further role requirements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A degree or equivalent in the subject they mark in. • A minimum of one year's teaching experience the subject (or related subject) to students aged 16-19. • Appropriate internet access. <p>Internal assessment:</p> <p>This is marked by teachers. The IB has less control over who can be an IB teacher, but does provide guidance on using the assessment criteria to mark internal assessments. This guidance might vary for each subject, but where level descriptors are used, teachers are instructed to use the best-fit model to match the descriptor to the level attained by the student ensuring that the descriptor that most accurately describes the student's work is chosen.¹⁶⁸</p>
4. How is accuracy of marking promoted?	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular checks by co-ordinator¹⁶⁹</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training of markers/raters</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderating sessions to standardise judgments</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Using standardised examples of test tasks:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Calibrated to CEFR</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Calibrated to another level description</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not calibrated to CEFR or other description</p>
5. Describe the specifications of the rating criteria of productive and/or integrative test tasks.	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One holistic score for each task</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marks for different aspects for each task¹⁷⁰</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Rating scale for overall performance in test</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Rating Grid for aspects of test performance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Rating scale for each task</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Rating Grid for aspects of each task</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rating scale bands are defined, but not to CEFR</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Rating scale bands are defined in relation to CEFR</p>

¹⁶⁸ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Diploma Programme Literature and performance guide - First examinations 2015*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

¹⁶⁹ The IB moderation procedures.

¹⁷⁰ For some assessments, a set of criterion are used to assess each task in an assessment.

Marking	Short description and/or reference
6. Are productive or integrated test tasks single or double rated?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Single rater <input type="checkbox"/> Two simultaneous raters <input type="checkbox"/> Double marking of scripts / recordings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: specify: <i>A sample of each examiner's marked scripts is 'moderated' (re-marked¹⁷¹) by an experienced examiner. After grade boundaries are set, any students narrowly missing a higher grade have their scripts re-marked by a senior examiner.</i>
7. If double rated, what procedures are used when differences between raters occur?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use of third rater and that score holds <input type="checkbox"/> Use of third marker and two closest marks used <input type="checkbox"/> Average of two marks <input type="checkbox"/> Two markers discuss and reach agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Other: specify: _____ <i>A great deal of statistical analysis is used when moderating the examiner's marks. Depending on how much they 'fail' the moderation procedure, all or some of the examiner's work will be re-marked by a third party who is more experienced. The re-marked grade will then be used.</i>
8. Is inter-rater agreement calculated?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
9. Is intra-rater agreement calculated?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Form A4: Grading¹⁷²

Grading	Short description and/or reference
1. Are pass marks and/or grades given?	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass marks <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grades
2. Describe the procedures used to establish pass marks and/or grades and cut scores	<p>After the marking and moderation is completed, each assessment / assignment has a final mark (out of the total possible marks). The students receive a breakdown of the marks for each criterion as well. No cut scores are determined at this level. Grade boundaries are used on all external and internal assessments to convert the final mark into a grade from 1-7. The procedure to determine grade boundaries is outlined below.</p>

¹⁷¹ Or, in the case of internal assessment, they are judged to be appropriate or inappropriate.

¹⁷² International Baccalaureate Organization, 2010. *Diploma Programme assessment Principles and practice*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

Grading	Short description and/or reference
3. If only pass/fail is reported, how are the cut-off scores for pass/fail set?	n/a
4. If grades are given, how are the grade boundaries decided?	<p>Examination papers:</p> <p>The grades between 3 and 4; 6 and 7; 2 and 3; are determined judgementally in that order. This is done through review of the quality of the student's work against grade descriptors which represent the standard of work expected for each grade.</p> <p>The other boundaries are determined by interpolation from the first judgementally set boundaries.</p> <p>These boundaries are then considered alongside the senior examiner team's past experience with boundaries; how each examination paper has functioned; and the moderated mark distribution for the component in comparison to previous years. Scripts at each assessment mark are examined to help determine the highest or lowest mark within a grade boundary (i.e. a mark of 27 is the highest mark for grade 3, and a mark of 28 is the lowest mark for grade 4).</p> <p>A different process is taken for multiple-choice question papers as the responses provide little evidence on what the candidate has done. The grade boundaries are then "calculated that give as closely as possible the same percentages of candidates within each grade as those established judgmentally on the most closely associated examination paper."</p>
5. How is consistency in these standards maintained?	<p>All internal and non-examination components have grade boundaries that are set once the assessments are first created and these are used for all assessments until the assessment is revised.</p> <p>Examination grade boundaries are set each year for each new examination. The marking and moderation procedures mentioned above also help maintain consistency in grading standards.</p>

Form A5: Reporting results¹⁷³

Results	Short description and/or reference
1. What results are reported to candidates?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Global grade or pass/fail <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade or pass/fail per subtest <input type="checkbox"/> Global grade plus profile across subtests <input type="checkbox"/> Profile of aspects of performance per subtest <i>Students receive a grade from 1 to 7 in each subject. For each test, students receive a mark breakdown and the total marks achieved (this is part of a new service called 'results extra').</i>
2. In what form are results reported?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Raw scores - <i>For each test.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Undefined grades (e.g. "C") <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level on a defined scale – <i>For each subject.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Diagnostic profiles
3. On what document are results reported?	<input type="checkbox"/> Letter or email <input type="checkbox"/> Report card <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate / Diploma <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-line
5. Do candidates have the right to see the corrected and scored examination papers?	<p>A new service called Results Extra will allow students to receive a breakdown of their marks for each task in each assessment.</p> <p>Currently, after official results are released, schools have access to the moderated marks and grades for each component in each assessment for all candidates. However, these are not part of the official published results.</p>
6. Do candidates have the right to ask for remarking?	<p>Yes. An enquiry upon results service allows students to pay to have their external work re-marked if they do not feel it is a fair reflection of their performance. The IB states that "if the subject grade is changed as a consequence of this re-mark, then no fee is charged. Subject grades may be raised or lowered as a result of a re-mark".</p>

¹⁷³ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2010. Diploma Programme assessment Principles and practice. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

Form A6: Data analysis¹⁷⁴

Data analysis	Short description and/or reference
1. Is feedback gathered on the examinations?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. If yes, by whom?	<input type="checkbox"/> Internal experts (colleagues) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External experts – <i>A senior examining team puts together a subject report.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Local examination institutes <input type="checkbox"/> Test administrators <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Candidates
3. Is the feedback incorporated in revised versions of the examinations?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
4. Is data collected to do analysis on the tests?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On all tests <input type="checkbox"/> On a sample of test takers: How large?: _____. How often?: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No
5. If yes, indicate how data are collected?	<input type="checkbox"/> During pretesting <input type="checkbox"/> During live examinations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> After live examinations
6. For which features is analysis on the data gathered carried out?	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reliability <input type="checkbox"/> Validity
7. State which analytic methods have been used (e.g. in terms of psychometric procedures).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correlation coefficient • Linear regression • Slope of regression line • The difference between the mean assistant examiner sample mark and the mean team leader sample mark (must be less than 10%).
7. Are performances of candidates from different groups analysed? If so, describe how.	No

¹⁷⁴ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2010. *Diploma Programme Assessment Principles and Practice*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

Data analysis	Short description and/or reference
9. Describe the procedures to protect the confidentiality of data.	The IB has a privacy policy ¹⁷⁵ that explains what personal data may be needed and how it could be used. The IB does not share or transfer personal data other than the ways outlined in the policy. Online and data security is also used.
10. Are relevant measurement concepts explained for test users? If so, describe how.	Students are aware of marking and moderation procedures used at the IB. The reliability measurements are likely not explained to students, but are accessible on the IB website.

Form A7: Rationale for decisions¹⁷⁶

Rationale for decisions (and revisions)	Short description and/or reference
Give the rationale for the decisions that have been made in relation to the examination or the test tasks in question. Is there a review cycle for the examination? (How often? Who by? Procedures for revising decisions)	Yearly re-development of examinations. Curriculum and assessment model reviews are conducted every seven years.

¹⁷⁵ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2016. *IB Privacy Policy* [online]. Available at: <<http://www.ibo.org/terms-and-conditions/privacy-policy/>> [Accessed 9th August 2016].

¹⁷⁶ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2010. *Diploma Programme Assessment Principles and Practice*. Internal International Baccalaureate Organization document.

Appendix 4: Form A1 General Examination Description

Form A1: General examination description – English Literature and Performance SL

General Examination Description	
1. General Information	
Name of examination	Literature and Performance SL
Language tested	English
Examining institution	International Baccalaureate
Versions analysed (date)	May and November 2013-2015
Type of examination	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional
Purpose	To develop in students high social, aesthetic, cultural literacy and effective communication skills. Particular focus is placed on literary analysis, performance and dramatic literature. The course is taken as part of the IB DP to earn a baccalaureate style award.
Target population	<input type="checkbox"/> Lower Secondary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Upper Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> University / College Students <input type="checkbox"/> Adult
No. of test takers per year	429 (May 2015)
2. What is the overall aim?	To teach those with previous academic experience with a language, with the aim to expand that knowledge through an interdisciplinary language and arts course.
3. What are the more specific objectives? If available describe the needs of the intended users on which this examination is based.	<p>The objectives are for students to develop:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowledge and understanding of texts from different genres and cultures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of texts and performances • Demonstrate an understanding of structure, technique and style • Demonstrate an ability to substantiate the points made through appropriate reference to texts. 2. Awareness and understanding of literary techniques and performance potential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an ability to identify and evaluate the use and effect of literary techniques and performance potential in texts • Demonstrate an ability to use the relevant terminology in the analysis and appreciation of the texts studied • Demonstrate an ability to realize the performance potential in a text. 3. Commitment and ability as performers

General Examination Description		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of performance skills • Show the necessary commitment in developing and presenting performance • Demonstrate an ability to express ideas, emotion, character and atmosphere through performance. <p>4. Ability to speak and write effectively about texts and performances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an ability to express ideas clearly and in an appropriate register • Use the oral and written forms of the language in a range of styles, registers and situations • Demonstrate an ability to discuss and analyse texts and their performance potential in a focused and logical manner. 	
4. What is/are principal domain(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational	
5. Which communicative activities are tested?		Name of Subtest(s) and Duration
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Listening comprehension	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 Reading comprehension	Paper 1: 1 hour 30 minutes Paper 2: 1 hour 30 minutes Written Coursework: n/a Internal assessment: 20 minutes.
	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Spoken interaction	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Written interaction	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 Spoken production	Internal assessment: 20 minutes
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6 Written production	Paper 1: 1 hour 30 minutes Paper 2: 1 hour 30 minutes Written Coursework: n/a

General Examination Description		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 7 Integrated skills	<p>Paper 1: 1 hour 30 minutes (combines Reading and written production)</p> <p>Paper 2: 1 hour 30 minutes (combines Reading and written production)</p> <p>Written Coursework: n/a (Reading and written production)</p> <p>Internal assessment: 20 minutes (Reading and spoken production).</p>
	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 Spoken mediation of text	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 9 Written mediation of text	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Language usage	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 Other: (specify):	
6. What is the weighting of the different subtests in the global result?	<p>1) Paper 1: 20%</p> <p>2) Paper 2: 20%</p> <p>3) Written coursework: 20%</p> <p>4) Internal assessment: 40%.</p>	
7. Describe briefly the structure of each subtest	<p>1. Paper 1 (External)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One essay question out of a selection of three 20 marks. <p>2. Paper 2 (External)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One essay questions out of a selection of six 25 marks. <p>3. Written coursework (External)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One critical analysis and self-reflection essay 1,500-2,000 words 20 marks. <p>4. Internal assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One performance and one individual oral presentation 40 marks. 	
8. What type(s) of responses are required?		Subtests used in (Write numbers above)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple-choice	
	<input type="checkbox"/> True/False	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Matching	

General Examination Description		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ordering	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Gap fill sentence	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sentence completion	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Gapped text / cloze, selected response	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Open gapped text / cloze	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Short answer to open question(s)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Extended answer (text / monologue)	1, 2, 3, 4
	<input type="checkbox"/> Interaction with examiner	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Interaction with peers	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
9. What information is published for candidates and teachers?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Overall aim <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Principal domain(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test subtests <input type="checkbox"/> Test tasks <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sample test papers <input type="checkbox"/> Video of format of oral <input type="checkbox"/> Sample answer papers <input type="checkbox"/> Marking schemes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grading schemes <input type="checkbox"/> Standardised performance samples showing pass level <input type="checkbox"/> Sample certificate	
10. Where is this accessible?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On the website <input type="checkbox"/> From bookshops <input type="checkbox"/> In test centres <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On request from the institution <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
11. What is reported?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Global grade <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade per subtest <input type="checkbox"/> Global grade plus graphic profile <input type="checkbox"/> Profile per subtest	

Form A1: General examination description – English A: Language and Literature HL

General Examination Description	
1. General Information	
Name of examination	English A: Language and Literature HL
Language tested	English
Examining institution	International Baccalaureate
Versions analysed (date)	May and November 2013-2015
Type of examination	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional
Purpose	For students to study both language and literature and learn how language generates meanings and the constructed nature and context of these meanings. The course is taken as part of the IB DP to earn a baccalaureate style award.
Target population	<input type="checkbox"/> Lower Secondary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Upper Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> University / College Students <input type="checkbox"/> Adult
No. of test takers per year	14,790 (May 2015)
2. What is the overall aim?	To develop textual analysis skills and an understanding of both literary and non-literary texts in that they can be autonomous while at the same time related to reading practices that are culturally determined.
3. What are the more specific objectives? If available describe the needs of the intended users on which this examination is based.	<p>The objectives upon which students are assessed are:</p> <p>1. Knowledge and understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of texts • Demonstrate an understanding of the use of language, structure, technique and style • Demonstrate a critical understanding of the various ways in which the reader constructs meaning and of how context influences this constructed meaning • Demonstrate an understanding of how different perspectives influence the reading of a text. <p>2. Application and analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an ability to choose a text type appropriate to the purpose required • Demonstrate an ability to use terminology relevant to the various text types studied • Demonstrate an ability to analyse the effects of language, structure, technique and style on the reader • Demonstrate an awareness of the ways in which the production and reception of texts contribute to their meanings • Demonstrate an ability to substantiate and justify ideas with relevant examples.

General Examination Description		
	3. Synthesis and evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an ability to compare and contrast the formal elements, content and context of texts • Discuss the different ways in which language and image may be used in a range of texts • Demonstrate an ability to evaluate conflicting viewpoints within and about a text • Produce a critical response evaluating some aspects of text, context and meaning. 4. Selection and use of appropriate presentation and language skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an ability to express ideas clearly and with fluency in both written and oral communication • Demonstrate an ability to use the oral and written forms of the language, in a range of styles, registers and situations • Demonstrate an ability to discuss and analyse texts in a focused and logical manner • Demonstrate an ability to write a balanced, comparative analysis. 	
4. What is/are principal domain(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational	
5. Which communicative activities are tested?		Name of Subtest(s) and Duration
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Listening comprehension	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 Reading comprehension	Paper 1: 2 hours Paper 2: 2 hours Written Task 2: n/a.
	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Spoken interaction	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Written interaction	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 Spoken production	Individual Oral Commentary: 15 minutes (plus 20 minutes' preparation) Further Oral Activity: n/a.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6 Written production	Paper 1: 2 hours Paper 2: 2 hours Written Tasks: n/a.

General Examination Description		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 7 Integrated skills	Paper 1: 2 hours (Reading and written production) Paper 2: 2 hours (Reading and written production) Written Task 2: n/a (Reading and written production).
	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 Spoken mediation of text	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 9 Written mediation of text	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Language usage	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 Other: (specify):	
6. What is the weighting of the different subtests in the global result?	1) Paper 1: 25% 2) Paper 2: 25% 3) Written Tasks: 20% 4) Oral Commentary: 15% 5) Further Oral Activity: 15%.	
7. Describe briefly the structure of each subtest	1. Paper 1 (External) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparative textual analysis One pair of unseen texts 20 marks available. 2. Paper 2 (External) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essay Choice of one question out of six Based on at least two texts studied 25 marks available. 3. Written Tasks (External) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least four tasks based on course material Two submitted for external assessment 800-1,000 words in length 40 marks available (20 for each task). 4. Individual Oral Commentary (Internal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on a literary text studied Two guiding questions 30 marks available. 5. Further Oral Activity (Internal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least two further activities Mark of one submitted for final assessment 30 marks available. 	

General Examination Description		
8. What type(s) of responses are required?		Subtests used in (Write numbers above)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple-choice	
	<input type="checkbox"/> True/False	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Matching	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ordering	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Gap fill sentence	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sentence completion	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Gapped text / cloze, selected response	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Open gapped text / cloze	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Short answer to open question(s)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Extended answer (text / monologue)	1,2,3
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interaction with examiner	4,5
	<input type="checkbox"/> Interaction with peers	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
9. What information is published for candidates and teachers?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Overall aim	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Principal domain(s)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test subtests	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Test tasks	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sample test papers	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Video of format of oral	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sample answer papers	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Marking schemes	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grading schemes	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Standardised performance samples showing pass level	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sample certificate	
10. Where is this accessible?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On the website	
	<input type="checkbox"/> From bookshops	
	<input type="checkbox"/> In test centres	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On request from the institution	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

General Examination Description	
11. What is reported?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Global grade <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade per subtest <input type="checkbox"/> Global grade plus graphic profile <input type="checkbox"/> Profile per subtest