Dutch A: Language and Literature

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 12	13 - 25	26 - 40	41 - 54	55 - 68	69 - 83	84 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 27	28 - 44	45 - 59	60 - 69	70 - 84	85 - 100

Higher level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 24	25 - 30

Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 24	25 - 30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

- The level was high, in terms of the texts chosen, the guiding questions and the discussions.

- All samples were on time.

- Almost all recordings were of good quality; only a few were of bad quality and had loud background noises.

- Almost all documents were uploaded properly and were complete. Only in a few cases were extracts or questions incomplete, wrongly uploaded or missing.

- Almost all Forms had been filled out properly.

- Almost all teachers added detailed and helpful comments which are very useful for the moderator.

- There was a good range of literary work submitted; only one school had extracts from the same literary work for all 5 samples.

- Almost all texts were of the proper length. Just in a couple of cases the extract was somewhat too long to analyze properly in 15 min.

- Not all the texts had numbered lines.

- Most schools had 2 good to excellent guiding questions.

- Almost all teachers had at least one question related to style or literary features.

- In one case the follow-up questions were too general and did not bring the student back to the particular extract.

- Not all the commentaries were of a proper length; the shortest was 6.44 minutes; the longest was 18.49 minutes.

- In a couple of cases students gave very long presentations up to 14 minutes.

- One school had presented the candidate a medieval text with translation, another school did without.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: the level of the knowledge and understanding of a text or extract was high, many students were very well prepared and coped relatively well to very well. However, in some cases the students focused too much on the work as a whole and the follow up conversations did not concentrate enough on the analysis of the extract itself.

Criterion B: not all the candidates mentioned literary features; even when the teacher gave some hints, some students still had difficulties finding and interpreting them. The most difficult part was the second question of Criterion B: To what extent does the commentary show understanding of the effects of literary features? Quite a few students struggled with this aspect.

Criterion C: there was a discrepancy in the commentaries concerning the organization. Some candidates were very good and explained the organization of the extract very well and clearly; others were not so successful and struggled.

- Some students followed a fixed scheme, they were clearly trained to introduce their analysis very well, mentioning what they would discuss and followed their plan during the presentation: introduction, the main points, and conclusion.
- Many stayed with the text, line after line, and referred to the text to support their ideas.
- A few students followed the "jumping"-scheme: I see in line 20 the main-theme, also in line 6 and in line 45 the main-theme comes back.

Criterion D: the language was by far the best part of the oral. All students coped with the language in a very acceptable, good way.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Language A: language and literature guide, First examinations 2013

- It is recommended to train the students in giving a commentary of about 10 minutes. Train them with a clock or watch.

- Approximately five minutes should be allocated for discussion between the teacher and the candidate (page 61).

- Please, let the student finish his sentence when time is up (as well as during the commentary and during the discussion).

- It is recommended to give the students guiding questions about the text, not about the novel (page 60).

- During the commentary students must focus only on the text (page 61).

- Students should not use the commentary as an opportunity to discuss everything they know about the larger text. They are encouraged to integrate responses to the guiding questions into the commentary (page 61).

- Placing the extract in the overall work can be done in the first 2, not 5 or more, minutes of the oral.

- If the text is an extract from a novel, the relationship to the whole text or other works by the author should only be mentioned when relevant (page 61).

- The teacher should allow students to analyse the text WITHOUT INTERRUPTION, but if the candidate needs positive encouragement, the teacher should BRIEFLY intervene, just to help them a little bit to continue the commentary (page 61).

- It is not necessary that the student reads the guiding questions out loud: the teacher

knows their own questions, the student has prepared them and the examiner also has a copy.

- The candidate should only mention their name, candidate number and school, that is enough.

- The discussion should not be - another - short commentary and/or repetition of what already has been said by the student.

- The teacher should not expose his own knowledge during the discussion or during the commentary.

- If a school opts to analyze medieval literature it is recommended to study the modern version together with the original medieval one in order to be able to analyze stylistic features better.

- There should be an explanation about style or use of language in the commentary and/or in the discussion.

- If the student doesn't mention stylistic features such as alliterations, metaphors, pleonasms etc., the teacher should ask for it.

- The mentioning of the literary features alone is not enough; the student should also give an explanation of the effects of the literary features (Criterion B, page 64).

- Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to communicate in a sustained and organized manner. The commentary should not be a series of unconnected points concerning the text (page 61). Train the candidates to organize their commentary more. Some students mentioned it very clearly: "I will give a commentary on the text in front of me. Firstly I will give an introduction. Secondly the guiding questions/the middle part/the theme/the protagonist/etc. etc. Thirdly I will discuss the stylistic features. Finally I will give my conclusion. I will start now with the introduction.

Higher level written Tasks

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 11	12 - 18	19 - 23	24 - 28	29 - 33	34 - 40

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Task 1

Overall the papers were good to very good, with some excellent ones. The most successful candidates chose a more creative text type (diary entry, poem, letter),

for which the conventions seem generally better known than for more formal, professional texts. Content-wise these papers ranged from more cultural and social topics to literary ones, but they all shared a good insight in the studied materials and the ability to re-use the materials in a new context.

The weaker candidates more often gave a descriptive account on a literary text or topic studied in class, which too frequently took the form of an essay-like text, without giving much thought to the conventions of the chosen text type for their task as set out in their rationale. Some less successful papers showed too little insight or own re-interpretation of the materials studied, especially when candidates chose more social/cultural topics.

Task 2

Although this task was newly introduced this year, the majority of candidates did well. The most successful candidates produced well-structured and well-written essays with a strong focus on the chosen essay question. A tendency to choose questions on the topic 'reader, culture, text' was noted, essays on 'text, genre' were less frequent. The weaker papers generally failed to produce an actual answer to the essay question, and were more general, often rather superficial, summaries of the work studied in class or included digressions about the literary work which showed no or a very weak link to the essay question. Some candidates did include a few good ideas or arguments in their essay but failed to expand on them. Other weaker candidates had problems in structuring their essay or thoughts, or in expressing their ideas, with a few candidates seemingly lacking the necessary knowledge of the language for this level.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Task 1

Criterion A: there was a clear understanding of the requirements for the rationale and most candidates were given the highest score for this criterion. Almost all candidates provided the necessary information for the examiner to correctly mark the task. Some candidates however failed to complete with care the Task Summary and in some cases the word counts were clearly estimates. A few candidates put forward tasks that were not signed by either the candidate or teacher, or both.

Criterion B: most students did well to very well (most scores between 4 and 7). The genre characteristics are usually well known for more literary text types, less so for more professional texts, such as police reports and even blogs. In some cases it seems that students are of the opinion that if a text has the visual characteristics of e.g. an online forum, that this makes the text automatically a forum posting, without giving too much consideration to the relevant language, register and style of the genre. Content-wise, candidates who took as their starting point a literary text studied in class, usually did better than those choosing for a cultural or social subject, which candidates generally had less insight into or discussed in a subjective or more superficial way.

Criterion C: Most candidates were able to structure a text according to the genre requirements, although quite a few tasks suffered from repetition. Only very few candidates scored less than 3 for this criterion.

Criterion D: Generally candidates have the required linguistic level and are able to write in a certain style or register (most candidates scored 4). Some candidates however had problems with word choice, often due to a limited vocabulary. Others seem to fail to understand that texts are time and culturally bound, and that word choice and register should be accordingly adapted. Too many candidates had problems with using correct punctuation and capital letters. Quite a number of tasks included anglicisms and loan words.

Task 2

Criterion A: All tasks included an outline which provided in some cases very detailed information about the task (Most students gained full marks). As mentioned above, some candidates refer to the English set essay questions; others provide their own Dutch translation, or even interpretation. Unlike for task 1, quite a few candidates did not respect the word limit and produced very long tasks.

Criterion B: Although overall the tasks were good (average of 5 for this criterion), some candidates did not answer the essay question in enough detail and focused too much on providing summaries of the texts they studied. Too often, the actual essay question would only be linked to the chosen literary work in the conclusion while the body of the essay focused on retelling the story of the book. These candidates therefore did not score very highly for this criterion. It was noted that for quite a number of schools, every candidate in that school would opt for the same question and literary work to base their essay on.

Criterion C: A good number of candidates produced a task which was basically coherent but overall too many candidates had problems structuring their text (average of 3 for this criterion). In some cases even basic elements, like an introduction and conclusion, were missing. Other tasks would start off as a well-structured essay but would fail to sustain this structure throughout the essay, often because of (unnecessary) digressions.

Criterion D: The same general language problems as mentioned for task 1 were observed. Moreover, some students had problems in writing in formal language, with inappropriate word choice being the most recurring problem.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Task 1

Teachers should give equal attention to the genre characteristics of literary and non-literary texts which candidates are usually much less acquainted with.

Task 2

- Candidates should be encouraged to be creative and innovative. It is not in the advantage of the candidate when the examiner has to read 20 essays coming from

the same school on the same essay question and literary work.

- Teachers should guide their students better in answering the set essay questions and remind them that a general essay about a studied literary work which gives no or little attention to the essay question will receive low marks for criterion B.

Further comments

- Students at this level should be taught how to use punctuation properly. Only very few of the candidates were able to do so correctly.
- Some students should have more linguistic support. Tasks with major language problems, ranging from difficulties with conjugation of verbs to the correct use of articles, are not acceptable at this level.

Standard level written Task

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Generally the tasks were good to very good, with more than a few surpassing the average candidate's HL written task 1.

The Language and Literature course offers candidates a free choice of topic for their task and this has a positive influence on the level of the tasks. More tasks than for the HL were on social and cultural topics, less on the studied literary texts. The most successful tasks were, just like for the HL, by candidates who chose a more literary text type, with letters, short stories and poems being the most popular. Regarding the content, the better tasks showed clear insight into the materials studied in class and often included elements of the candidate's own research and opinion and ideas. However, in this context it might be worth mentioning that some tasks suffered from an excessive number of references to secondary sources or a large number of appendices with little relevance to the task. Some candidates included very interesting and useful visual materials which they used in a convincing way in their task. The weaker tasks showed either little insight into the conventions of the chosen text type or only a superficial knowledge of the literary work or topic studied in class, or both. Too little attention in quite a number of tasks was given to the visual representation of certain text types, e.g. blogs, articles. Too many tasks suffered from linguistic problems with some students having clear problems in expressing themselves. Hence also register and word choice was a problem for students without the necessary linguistic background for this level.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: The rationales were overall very helpful and included the necessary background information (most candidates scored 2). Some of them however suffered from too many errors against the language and were for that reason hard to read. A small number of candidates did not respect the word limit of the rationale.

Criterion B: Most candidates did well for this criterion and showed an average to very good knowledge of the characteristics of the chosen text type and the topic discussed in class. As said before, the majority of candidates based their task on a cultural or social topic (with the 'role of women in publicity' being very popular) which they discussed in an insightful way while respecting the genre conventions of their chosen text type. A small number of candidates performed less well here (score under 4), most often because they produced a text which took on the form of an essay rather than the chosen text type.

Criterion C: Generally students did well for this criterion (average of 4). However a few students got a far lower score here because they exceeded the word limit and were given a penalty for this criterion.

Criterion D: Although a good number of students did very well for this criterion (scoring 4 or 5), some tasks simply suffered too much from the candidate's problems with the language. A limited knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and syntax also affects a student's ability to write in a certain genre or style. Hence the students with language problems generally performed less well for this criterion (scoring 1 or 2).

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates should be encouraged to use more visual materials in support of their task. However, references and appendices should be limited in number and relevant to the task.

- Teachers should also help candidates when they write their rationale. Often the linguistic level of the rationale is considerably lower than that of the actual written task.

- Too many candidates have problems with Dutch grammar and syntax. Extra training in this respect would be really helpful for a good number of candidates.

- Students should be encouraged to respect word limits both for the rationale and the actual task, as they will be penalised when they fail to do so.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 7	8 - 10	11 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Spelling, punctuation, vocabulary and organization were the four difficult (at times even very difficult) areas. Quite a lot of students struggle with basic spelling and punctuation rules. At times, capital letters are not written at all. Quotations are often incorrectly integrated in the commentary, and in some cases the range of vocabulary is (much) too limited to express views and idea in a clear, coherent, and convincing way.

What makes a text less legible/understandable as well is the lack of textual organization by means of a correct use of paragraphs. Sometimes there is no clear paragraph division at all. When one's knowledge of vocabulary is rather limited, it is very difficult to recognize (some) literary features like irony for example. This can also be a challenge for a lot of native speakers with years and years of experience, but, the less experience one has, the less one is exposed to the language, the bigger the challenge to grasp the real meaning of a text. For quite a few candidates, language skills seemed too limited to discover all nuances. This is a very important issue when considering the (possible) effects on the audience, which reflects, after all, one of the criteria.

A Higher Level a candidate is expected to use literary terminology. It is true that students generally do try to incorporate literary features in their commentary, but most of the times the use is quite generic and superficial.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Most students were able to write quite a lot about the combination of their choice. The majority of the Higher Level candidates chose to comment on the combination of text 3 and 4, the two texts dealing with the issue of whaling. A reason for this might have been the higher (i.e. quasi-literary) level of text 1 and the topic: what can/should we expect of the older generation in terms of financial support? Whaling/environmental issues might be a 'hotter' topic amongst the younger generations and might appeal more to feelings of identification, justice and more in general: morality.

A lot of students use the first minutes of the examination to write down a (sort of) draft that they use when writing the commentary. This most certainly helps to structure ideas. It is also clear that most students write their commentary using an introduction, core part and

conclusion (the very good ones refer in their conclusion) to the introduction which makes the commentary well-rounded.

Most students try to come up with 'proof' and use quotations.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

The overall general knowledge of the candidates about the common issue of text 3/4 was bigger than the problem described in text 1/2, perhaps because they have not become aware of this problem in their own lives yet. Nevertheless, students who did comment on text 1/2 were well aware that the two texts describe a generation gap. This could clearly be observed in text 2 where the older 'Oma en opa' write in a more formal way when compared to the younger 'Chawwa'

Candidates who had opted for the combination of text 1/2 found it difficult at times to recognize the irony used by the author in text 1. This literary feature requires a high level of linguistic knowledge, and as a result even native speakers themselves can find it hard to recognize. Only a few candidates commented on the title, 'Het toetje van het leven' for example. Hardly any student commented on the ambiguity of the word 'rijk', which was the title of the novel that the excerpt was taken from. The same can be said about the choice of wording towards the end of text 1: 'geestige, pedagogisch verantwoorde babybcomputers', ''meppen', rare stemmetjes' en 'Dit is mijn hand, dit is mijn voet' implicitly show the opinion of the author; when children are raised like this, we end up having a generation that only seems to rely on the (financial) support of older generations and that is basically selfish. In text 2 not all candidates commented on the use of emoticons, that are essential in modern (online and mobile) communication, and only a few wrote about the informal way of writing, that is so typical for a public opinion forum, where anyone can write anything in any stylistic way.

Only a few candidates clearly mentioned the link between text 1 and 2: text 2 shows us the everyday reality of a problem that text 1 wanted to describe in a literary manner. Text 3 was the easier one in the combination of text 3 and 4. Students have regularly heard about or seen whaling in the media and are generally aware of organizations that fight whaling. It was surprising to see that quite a number of students did not comment on the use of the image, that should play a role in convincing the audience that whaling is a cruel and therefore despicable business, at least in western eyes, because the organization behind the text has its origin in an European/American context. None of the students mentioned that a European context does NOT equal anti-whaling as there are also European countries that support this type of hunting. Only a few students commented on the rather strange circumstance that the text, taken from Seashepherd's website, mainly focuses on the Japanese consumption of whale meat, without describing in detail the different (cruel) aspects of whaling. This is what one would have expected in a text like this: Seashepherd wants to persuade the audience to donate money, and in this text the organization tries to achieve this by describing the whale meat consumption in Japan, rather than by showing the cruelty of whaling.

What quite some candidates failed to notice or at least failed to mention in text 4 was the fact

that the author of the text speaks as an expert, since he himself lives in Japan, and so he knows what he is talking about. A lot of students did not comment on the use of the words/expression 'heilige koe' and the meaning of the entire last paragraph of text 4. Only a few students saw that the author of text 4, written in 2001, was already criticizing organizations like Seashepherd of manipulating the audience in a way that is supported by text 3 that could be found ten years later on the website of the organization.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Further emphasis on the correct use of spelling and punctuation.

- Focus on a correct integration of quotations in a commentary.

- Encourage students to use literary terminology that goes beyond statements like 'there are several literary features' or 'there is irony'.

- Students should really focus on the effects of the use of language on the reader. In general, students do observe features but then fail to comment on the effects. So, if a text has been determined as being an 'ego-document' for example, then the candidate should comment on the possible consequences for the reader.

Further comments

It is of the utmost importance that students are placed in the correct course, which means: a program and level that does justice to their (overall) language skills. Sometimes, students seem to have more qualities of a non-native than native candidate. If a student has not reached a certain level (range of vocabulary, grammar concepts, punctuation etc.), it is difficult for him or her to write a coherent, balanced and convincing commentary. This can lead to a significantly lower number of marks. A student who is clearly non-native should not register for examinations on a native level.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 20

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Some candidates had difficulties identifying the specific audience the text was meant for because they missed clues such as choice of words, tone and style. Candidates also often lacked the appropriate terminology and an efficient method to analyze media type text-types such as brochures, columns or blogs; they tended to write about them as if they were dealing with a passage from a novel. Consequently they often ignored features that are typical for paper or online media publications.

As to structuring their texts, weak candidates have difficulties building paragraphs, using connectives and inserting relevant quotes in the correct fashion, they also often resort to paraphrasing.

At standard level correct use of language is often a challenge and problems with grammar (the gender of nouns and the endings of verbs), syntax (run-on sentences), vocabulary and register (often too colloquial, sometimes too ambitious) are frequent.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Many candidates managed to make good use of their experience with the different text types they have analyzed in class and they are well able to recognize to which specific type the exam text belongs. They recognized the text type even though the exam did not show the original (online) format. Quite a few also showed the ability to read between the lines. Good candidates also proved that they could structure their analysis in function of the text type and they showed explicitly that they were well aware of the special nature of online texts.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Both text A and B had their own opportunities and pitfalls for analysis. An overwhelming majority of candidates chose text A, an official brochure with the appeal to volunteer in helping make the city streets safer. They went for this text because it looked the easier option of the two. The brochure was indeed not hard to understand and good candidates could without much difficulty use it for a clear and well structured analysis; unfortunately its simplicity was also often an invitation for superficial analysis, paraphrasing and stating the obvious. Text B, an online column, was more subtle and challenging and had more flesh on the bone. Overall it was chosen by stronger candidates who realized that the text offered more opportunities to examine stylistic features. They could also show that they understood the title of the column, which suggested the opposite of what the message of the text was about. Weaker candidates got lost in this longer text and ended up with a long commentary paraphrasing bits and pieces of the text without much structure.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates should learn that writing about different text types requires different approaches and different styles of analysis. Writing about a brochure or a blog is not the same as writing about a novel or a poem; it requires different language and vocabulary.

- Candidates may need more guidance about how to adequately refer to relevant passages in the text and how to avoid unnecessary summarizing. Candidates should also practise the sentence structures that are necessary to fit quotes into their text.

- As many candidates seem to struggle with grammar - especially with gender correspondence and verb endings - it might be an equally good idea to spend some time on these matters, even though grammar as such is not part of the programme.

Further comments

Teachers should not give up the battle against wrongly spelled verb endings and against careless use of gender; it often looks as if this battle has been lost.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 25

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Quite a number of candidates underestimated the level of the questions and their implications for their essay. They seemed to be under the impression that all six questions could be used for an analysis of all literary works they had read. A clear reflection on the questions and their implications were a real challenge for most students.

Sometimes, the wording of a question turned out to be the problem. Question 2, for example, asked about 'social class' and a lot of students who chose to write about this question thought that 'social class' was based on personal experiences. The way students understand wording depends, of course, on their linguistic skills. If knowledge of grammar and vocabulary are (rather) limited, students might be less aware of the questions' implications. When writing an essay about one of the six questions, students should first decide which elements constitute the question. Then they have to define these elements and use these definitions in their essay in order to make clear in which context the literary works are being analyzed. Otherwise, an examiner might interpret an element in a different way. So, when writing an essay about question 5 (that asks about genre and genre conventions), a student should first indicate what a genre is and then which conventions are linked to a certain genre

(depending on the literary works that he or she wants to focus on) before analyzing. Providing enough proof and/or context is a problem for a lot of students. In order to make the essay 'flow' and more coherent, students should provide adequate context, even when they think the examiner will understand what they mean. What is not there just isn't there, and this might make it more difficult for an examiner to value a student's train of thought. Spelling, punctuation and range of vocabulary were often (very) problematic, more so than for paper 1.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Most students use the first minutes of the examination and the first page(s) of the booklet to write down a draft that they use when writing their essay.

Most essays have a division in the sense that there is an introduction, core and a conclusion. Most students have good knowledge of the literary works; try to come up with 'proof' and use quotations.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

The overall problem with paper 2 was the student's awareness of the implications of the questions. This was basically the problem for all six questions, but it became very obvious in the case of question 2 about social class, that most students confused with personal experience, which is something else. Students should 'cut a question into pieces', focus on these different pieces and pay attention to them all when writing their essay.

Most students preferred to write about question 2 (social class), 3 (friendship) or 5 (genre). Of these three, question 3 turned out to be the 'easiest' one, as 'friendship' perhaps is a more concrete phenomenon than social class and genre. Social class, as stated above, was very often confused with personal experience, and genre was often confused with literary movement. Question 1 (gender) and 4 (age) were also more manifest, but oddly enough only a few students wrote their essay on these questions.

Even though the scripts were anonymous, it was felt that some students had a non-native background or had a non-native mental framework which became in obvious in English sentence structure, English words, limited range of expression and as a result a more superficial approach (repetitions, no development) as the linguistics skills were just not enough to nuance and write a coherent and balanced essay.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Further emphasis on the correct use of spelling, punctuation and paragraphs.

- Focus on a correct integration of quotations in a commentary.

- Encourage students to use literary terminology.

- Continue to teach students to write in a clear and coherent way by providing enough context and/or explanation and/or proof.

- Students should be taught that not all literary works are equally suitable for each and every one of the six questions. Students should first reflect on the meaning, implication and requirement of the questions and then decide which literary works are more suitable than others. This means, that certain literary works might be less or not useful at all to analyze within the framework of a question.

Further comments

It is of the utmost importance that students are placed in the correct course, which means: a program and level that does justice to their (overall) language skills. Sometimes, students seem to have more qualities of a non-native than native candidate. If a student has not reached a certain level (range of vocabulary, grammar concepts, punctuation et cetera), it is difficult for him or her to write a coherent, balanced and convincing commentary. This can lead to a significant lower number of marks. A student who is clearly non-native should not register for examinations on a native level.

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 11	12 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 22	23 - 25

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Some candidates had difficulties interpreting the questions correctly and choosing suitable books for them. They didn't know how to connect what they had learned in class to the question and therefore wrote about what they had learned without making personal links to the works.

Writing about literary features in function of the topic is a challenge for many candidates. In many cases they limit themselves to summing up a few features and giving a few examples but without putting them in a meaningful context.

Although in most cases the general structure of the essays is quite good, there is still a considerable number of candidates who do not really know how to build a paragraph around a central idea, how to make an argument and how to provide proof.

At standard level correct use of language is often a challenge and problems with grammar (e.g. the gender of nouns, the endings of verbs), syntax (e.g. run-on sentences), vocabulary and register (often too colloquial, sometimes too ambitious) are frequent.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Most candidates show good knowledge and understanding of the books they have read and many are able to organize their essay well. Quite a few candidates show good knowledge of literary techniques and of the characteristics of genres. Often the most challenging questions and the most challenging literary works lead to the best results.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

- For many candidates question 1 proved to be a tricky one as it could lead to rather unfounded speculations about how 'women' or 'men' would react and to rather superficial statements like 'women do not like violence, so they will not like the murder scenes in this novel.' There were a few candidates who had read books that were suitable for this topic and who had enough background to make noteworthy observations and reach interesting conclusions.

- Weaker candidates found it difficult to focus on the social class of the author and how this reflects on the characters and instead just wrote about the social class of the characters without discussing the link. For strong candidates this topic offered plenty of opportunities to show their knowledge of the books. Novels like 'Max Havelaar' or 'Stille Kracht' were particularly suitable.

- The question about 'friendship' was by far the most popular one. Some candidates used it for novels in which 'friendship' is hardly a theme (e.g. de Aanslag) or in which the absence of friendship a main theme (Het Parfum). This could then lead to bending the material to suit the topic and finding 'friendship' where there is none. Some other candidates did not get much further than summing up examples of friendship in the novels. However most of the better candidates managed to successfully develop the theme and prove their knowledge of the books in the process.

- Question 4 no responses.

- This topic gave strong candidates the opportunity to shine, they were most successful with works such as 'Max Havelaar' 'Oidipous Rex' 'De Held' en 'Medea'. Weak candidates hardly wrote about the conventions at all or could not identify where the authors followed them or deviated from them. Some other candidates partly ignored the question and wrote about what they had learned in class about the books.

International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

- Question 6 no responses.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Use the 2013 paper to practise interpreting questions and linking them to the books that have been studied.

- Practise choosing and inserting relevant quotes.

- Show students how to use their knowledge of literary features in function of a meaningful interpretation of the literary work.

- Revise some grammatical and spelling difficulties: endings of verbs, correspondence between the gender of nouns and pronouns.

International Baccalaureate
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional