**General Certificate of Education (A-level)
January 2011**

**English Language and Literature   ELLB4
B**

(Specification 2725)

Unit 4: Text Transformation

Report on the Examination

As always, a Principal Moderator's Report comes with a health warning! They are but a snapshot of one individual series of coursework and a report on a January series is, of course, based on a relatively small number of candidates. For the full picture of the ELLB4 coursework unit since its inception, centres are advised to consult all the previous Principal Moderator's Reports.

For this series, moderators felt that there was one issue that stood out above others: the prevalence of the monologue as the transformation genre of choice. In the hands of a skilful candidate the monologue (usually in the Alan Bennett mould) can be a very successful and convincing transformation. However, in the hands of a less talented or less motivated candidate, the default monologue can become at best unconvincing and at worst tedious, with little new perspective on the source text being manifest. Centres should think carefully before allowing their weaker candidates to pen a monologue. There were two main problems with monologues in this series, but they are not peculiar to January 2011 alone.

Firstly, many submissions were from candidates who seemed to be unaware that the monologue is foremost a spoken genre. Many of those submitted were unspeakable. They were mainly unimaginative first person narratives, with nothing of the spoken voice about them at all. It might be advisable for candidates to be encouraged to read these monologues aloud to a discerningly critical rather than adulatory audience to see if they were really, as claimed, 'listenable-to'.

A second fault with many of the less successful monologues (and one that has been referred to in previous reports) is that candidates don't always seem to realise that monologues are actually performed in a particular medium and that the conventions of these media differ. A monologue for performance on stage is distinctly different, for example, from a monologue that is for radio performance; the successful transformation into a monologue is one where the candidate shows awareness of this fact and shapes the new text accordingly. Moderators are ever alert to the disregard for the codes and conventions of a genre.

A related fault to the disregard of genre and, again, one that weaker candidates in this series seemed prone to committing, was the claim to be writing in what could best be called an indeterminate genre. To say that the new text was *a prose, a piece of writing* or *a narrative* as some candidates did, does not carry much conviction nor many marks. The more specific a genre that the candidate can write in, adhering to its codes and conventions, the better.

More surprising an error was that more candidates than usual were allowed to produce folders that contained a serious breach of the rubric for the unit. What is surely an unnecessary reminder for the majority of centres is that the authors of the texts chosen for transformation must come from two of the specified lists in the specification and that if candidates are allowed to choose two from the same list a mark penalty will be imposed. Not quite a red card, but certainly a yellow one! Moderators were regrettably needing to brandish more of these than in previous series.

A reminder to candidates: as this is a coursework unit, that gives them ample opportunity to draft and redraft their work, and there is no excuse for sloppy proof-reading skills. Centres and moderators should expect a high level of mechanical accuracy in candidate folders and if the quality of written expression is flawed, then this should be reflected in the mark that the centre awards. It is certainly a factor that moderators take into consideration when determining on a mark for a folder and any alteration to a mark.

The tenor of this report is not intended to be all negative and it must finish on a note of thanks to centres. Moderators commented on the very full and helpful annotation of the transformations and commentaries and that there were very few examples of badly presented folders. These were gratefully received, as too was the clear evidence of careful and conscientious internal moderation. Many thanks for this.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results statistics page of
the AQA Website.