2006 HSC Notes from the Marking Centre English Extension 2

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2006 HSC NOTES FROM THE MARKING CENTRE
ENGLISH EXTENSION 2

Introduction

These notes have been developed to provide teachers and students of the English Extension 2 course with comments regarding the Major Works for the 2006 Higher School Certificate. The comments indicate the number of candidates and the quality of the candidates' Major Works as well as highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the candidature.

These notes should be read along with the *English Stage 6 Syllabus* and the 2006 HSC English Extension 2 marking guidelines. Reference should also be made to the 2002 English Extension 2 Standards Package and the English Extension 2 *Young Writers Showcase* books and CD-ROMs for the years 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005.

The marking guidelines follow the report from the Marking Centre.

General Comments

The total number of candidates in the English Extension 2 course for 2006 was 2,637. The following breakdown across options demonstrates candidate preference for the type of Major Work.

OPTION	*CANDIDATE NUMBERS*
Print Medium	
Short Story(ies)	1622
Poems	164
Critical Responses	351
Scripts – Radio, Film, Television and Drama	169
Sound Medium	
Speeches	71
Radio Drama	17
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The large majority of works in 2006 showed a clear understanding of the guidelines and the requirements of the course. This was evident in the Reflection Statement where candidates showed a clear understanding of the criteria and of the importance of this part of the Major Work.

Identification of the parts of the project

A small number of candidates presented hand-written works or presented oversized or undersized formats (rather than the required A4 format). Most candidates clearly labelled the discrete parts of their Major Work: the Major Work, the Reflection Statement and the journal. Candidates are reminded to label the discrete sections of the Major Work and to ensure that all pages are printed.

The role of the Major Work journal

Candidates submit their journal with their Major Work. Journals are not marked. However, journals document the independent investigation and the composition process. This can be especially important when markers are required to access the journal if, for example, questions are raised about the authenticity of the work. Most candidates carefully recorded the development of the work, maintaining drafts of work with their reflections, and were consequently able to compose a sophisticated Reflection Statement.

The role of the Reflection Statement

The Reflection Statement explains and evaluates both the process and the completed Major Work. The Stage 6 English syllabus (p 131) and the English Extension 2 marking guidelines outline the requirements for the Reflection Statement.

The Reflection Statement:

- summarises the intent of the work and its relationship with the extensive investigation
- must include an outline of the intended audience for the Major Work and the purpose for which it was composed
- supports the Major Work explaining the relationships of concept, structure, technical and language features and conventions
- should explain the development of concepts during the process of composition making clear the links between independent investigation and the development of the finished product
- should indicate how the student realised the concepts in the final product.

Better Reflection Statements were sophisticated, explained the intention, development and realisation of the Major Work and adhered to the word limit. These Reflection Statements were thorough, logical, coherent, engaging and sustained an appropriate register. All components of the Reflection Statement were treated in a sophisticated manner. Stronger Reflection Statements are synthesised works of prose rather than report style using subheadings and bullet points.

Weaker Reflection Statements explained some aspects of the intention, development and realisation of the Major Work. They were inconsistent in quality or did not reflect their Major Works.

Links with the English (Advanced) and English Extension 1 courses

Students compose a major work as an extension of the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in the English (Advanced) and English Extension 1 courses (p 92, *English Stage 6 Syllabus*). Candidates need to demonstrate that their work is an extension of their other English courses and not an imitation of the modules and electives studied.

Major Works

Strengths

- The Major Work was an extension of the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in the English (Advanced) and English Extension 1 courses.
- Purpose and audience guided the development of the Major Work.
- Purpose and audience were clearly discernible in the Major Work and Reflection Statement.
- Deliberate choices about language, forms, features and structure were evident in the work and articulated in the Reflection Statement.
- Clarity was maintained across the Major Work.
- The Major Works were highly original in a range of ways.
- The Reflection Statement addressed all the requirements specified in the *English Stage 6 Syllabus*, p131.
- There was a clear relationship between the Work and the Reflection Statement.

Weaknesses

- The Major Work did not extend beyond the English Advanced and English Extension 1 course.
- Ideas and concepts were explored in a general manner.
- Investigation of ideas, concepts, and form was limited.
- There was limited understanding of the medium and its techniques.
- Exploration of the intention, development and realisation of the Major Work was underdeveloped.
- Attention to detail, especially in the editing process, could have been more thorough.
- Syllabus requirements were not adhered to.

PRINT MEDIUM

Short Story(ies)

General Comments

Successful short stories demonstrated finely tuned control of language to deliberately engage an audience. Candidates explored a wide variety of concepts and their Major Works were well informed by extensive independent investigation. Strong compositions, regardless of their experimentation, had an underpinning thread which held the narrative together through its setting, characterisation and use of language.

Candidates who were able to develop an authentic voice augmented by carefully controlled pace successfully engaged their audiences. Convincing dialogue often enhanced and advanced the focus of the narrative.

Candidates wrote single narratives as well as suites of short stories. The more successful of these

were integrated thematically providing a cumulative effect in terms of the exploration of the concept.

There were strong and explicit links to the Advanced and Extension courses. This was clearly signposted in the Reflection Statements.

This year candidates explored a wide variety of concepts including:

- Generations within families
- Changing roles and experiences of women
- Mythology and allegory
- Family
- Speculative fiction.

The quality of Reflection Statements is improving. However, the quality of the discussion of audience remains variable. Audience and purpose are integrally related and students must explicitly explain how they have manipulated form, feature and structure of text in order to position audiences. This was done particularly well where there was an authentic purpose for the Major Work. Successful responses identified the relationship between the investigation and the Major Work. Specific texts were cited and their direct influence on the Major Work was highlighted. There was meaningful explanation of how the skills and knowledge gained in the Stage 6 English courses underpinned the Major Work.

A continuing concern is lack of editing of the final product, both Major Work and Reflection Statement. It is important to allow adequate time to proofread work thoroughly.

Investigation into form is as significant as investigation into concept. Students should read extensively within the short story genre in order to extend their understanding of its possibilities in shaping their own voice. This should be explicitly discussed as part of their independent investigation. Independent investigation does not simply mean research into a topic.

Students are reminded about several organisational matters:

- It is important to maintain anonymity
- Annotated bibliographies should be in the Journal, not attached to the Major Work
- Evidence of independent investigation should be detailed in the Reflection Statement
- The use of footnotes is to be kept to a minimum and should be justified in the Reflection Statement
- The word limit should be strictly observed.

Strengths:

- strong awareness of audience throughout the work
- sustained nuances of characterisation to create believable personalities
- strong evocation of place
- finely controlled imagery
- economy of language where the use of strong verbs and nouns eliminate the need for excessive use of qualifiers
- an acute awareness of the involvement of the reader in constructing meaning which showed intellectual maturity
- variety of text types only used purposefully
- concepts demonstrating clear personal insight and showing evidence of sophistication

- emotional maturity
- a simple story well told is an attractive and engaging option
- careful and thoughtful rewriting and editing
- Reflection Statements logically organised with a clear explanation of intention, development and realisation of the major work
- extensive research that showed how a range of sources, including form and published authors, helped to shape the work
- a highly analytical evaluation of the process of composition.

Weaknesses:

- a misunderstanding of postmodernism resulted in stories that were incoherent and consequently ineffective
- inadequate and inaccurate investigation was evident in inconsistent relationships between Major Works and Reflection Statements
- investigation was sometimes irrelevant and lacking in a clear purpose
- unconvincing voice inhibited engagement
- an overreliance on *Young Writers Showcase* Major Works as a source of both investigation and inspiration resulted in works that were derivative
- a number of students who are technically competent find it difficult to vary language according to a particular register.

Suggestions

- Where students use personal experience as background for their stories they should realise this does not preclude them from researching form, genre and concepts. Importantly, students need to demonstrate emotional maturity in their work.
- Students need to ensure they can sustain voice across the entirety of the work, regardless of whether they submit one story or a collection. Within parallel narratives it is particularly important to have clearly delineated and sustained voices.
- Students should not deviate from the prescribed font styles and sizes. Different fonts do not substitute for delineation of voice, character or persona.
- Spelling errors should be edited using English standard rather than an American spell-check
- Reflection Statements must address investigation into the short story form as well as into concepts.
- Language and structural choices should be validated in the Reflection Statement.

A Range

A Range short stories were demonstrably an extension of the knowledge, understanding and skills of the Advanced and Extension courses. They were highly original, sustained and inventive in their composition and based on thorough and thoughtful investigation. The purposeful manipulation of structure and voice showed effective manipulation of register, syntax and vocabulary.

A Range short stories addressed all the requirements of the Reflection Statement (*English Stage 6 Syllabus*, p131). They commented on the independent research undertaken, explaining in a thorough, sophisticated way how research shaped the Major Work. They also explained and evaluated the ways in which considerations of purpose and audience led to decisions regarding the process of development. A skilful integration of links to Stage 6 English courses was an outstanding feature of these stories.

B Range

B Range short stories were clearly an extension of the knowledge, understanding and skills of the Advanced and Extension courses. They were coherent and sustained. Investigation, although skilfully integrated, did not have imaginative synthesis of concept, perspective and form. Control of form was skilful in crafting and constructing the stories. Reflection Statements commented on links between the investigation and the Major Work.

C Range

C Range short stories were an extension of the knowledge, understanding and skills of the Advanced and Extension courses. Claims made regarding this extension were at times undeveloped and largely reliant on 'Journey' and 'Representations of Truth'. These Major Works were substantial and coherent, but investigation was not fully integrated. Stories were sometimes unable to sustain a high level of interest, and may have been inconsistent in their development of character and tone. In particular, use of dialogue was flat, limiting character development. Editing was sometimes careless, particularly the editing of punctuation. The Reflection Statement tended to explain the intention and development of the project rather than critically comment on the impact of investigation on these areas. This was particularly evident in relation to investigation into form.

D Range

D Range short stories were an extension of some of the knowledge, understanding and skills of the Advanced and Extension courses. They were literal and at times simplistic in their exploration of concept. These stories were characterised by a failure to sustain integration of concept and form. They were often derivative. The impact of *anime* continues to be evident. Editing was sometimes very careless. The Reflection Statement did not address all the requirements and explanation of the intention was superficial.

E Range

E Range short stories attempted to compose a major work, and were superficial, lacking in substance or incomplete. Simplistic concepts were the basis for these Major Works. Additionally, limited investigation was evident, with inconsistencies within the work. The work therefore lacked focus and connections between its different aspects. These responses demonstrated poor control of textual features, editing and language. The Reflection Statement revealed inconsistencies between intention and realisation of the final product.

Poems

General Comments

Candidates explored a wide range of concepts in their work. Better works had a clear and sustained focus in the poetry as well as considerable skill in the manipulation of poetic form and language. Exploration of human experience/s was a popular choice of concept. Most candidates submitted a suite of poems that were linked by a philosophical position, theme, issue or idea. A few candidates submitted extended poems based on established forms like the epic or ballad or in extended narrative variants of free verse. Overall there were very few extremely poor responses.

Strengths

- Deliberate and astute use of imagery, sound devices, form and structure.
- Poems were thoughtfully sequenced in the collections, demonstrating not only the progression of ideas, but also the careful re-arrangement of poems in the final editing

process.

- Better works showed evidence of structurally intelligent poetic resolution in the final poems of the collections, indicating a unity of design.
- Higher 'A' range works were exceptional in their attention to rhythm, balance and lyricism in the collections as a whole, and in the individual poems themselves. These works displayed a capacity to write figuratively and aesthetically with an authentic, engaging and controlled voice.
- Reflection Statements supported the work, indicating how extensive, relevant independent investigation had informed the work and showing how concepts were clear extensions of other English courses.
- In the strongest Major Works there is usually the sense that the student has needed to be very selective of what to include in the Reflection Statement.

Weaknesses

- Reflection Statements generally revealed a lack of investigation into the poetic form and an inability to reflect on the creative process.
- Investigation into poetic form and techniques is necessary to ensure ideas are transformed successfully into poetic language. Investigation into free verse was poor in many instances.
- 'Free verse' was sometimes merely prose broken into lines. Stream of consciousness was sometimes used as a justification for poorly considered, ineffective writing. Layout, such as centering the poem on a page or shape poetry, was rarely found to be an effective method of engaging the reader. Works which experiment with form must have a reason for the experimentation and this should be addressed in the Reflection Statement.
- There is no lower word limit but brevity can be an issue when the poetry Major Work does not seem substantial enough to reflect the sustained development of concepts and techniques.
- Students should edit their entire collection carefully and be prepared to delete weaker poems from their suites.
- Varying font type and size should not be substitutes for adept word choice and poignant imagery.
- Reflection Statements sometimes displayed a greater sense of control and explanatory prowess than the actual Major Works. Students need to be highly self referential, critical and analytical in their Reflection Statements, explaining their intention and how their poetry works.
- *Young Writers Showcase* is a useful guide for candidates, but some students seem to use it as a substitute for wider investigation of poetry or to compose poetry which seems derivative or imitative of previously published Major Works.
- Overly sentimental, emotional and depressive material compromised many good ideas.
- Some works employed 'auras' or colours in a simplistic way as a substitute for effective imagery.
- Many poems using rhyme did not use it in a sophisticated way to enhance the effectiveness of the poetry.

Candidates should be encouraged to redraft and refine their work thoughtfully. Candidates need to be aware of the specifications for layout, page size and spacing.

A Range

- Complex ideas were expressed with flair.
- There was willingness to experiment with different forms in a successful and engaging manner.

- Language use was subtle/ evocative/ witty/ poignant/ dramatic and appropriate for purpose.
- Where the work appropriated ideas and/or forms, this was achieved with flair and offered a fresh perspective on the original.
- The poetry engaged the responder throughout the entirety of the work.
- Reflection Statements were sophisticated in their discussion of concept and investigation and critical in their discussion of process. In particular, they were able to show how a particular concept from the investigation was realised in the project itself.
- Some Reflection Statements were outstanding in their ability to elucidate and explicate the language and form of their Major Work.
- The work had a clear purpose and often took risks with language to communicate developed ideas.
- A capacity to write figuratively with an economy of words was demonstrated.
- Works were often new, inventive and insightful.

B Range

- There was attention to formulating insights and concepts throughout the work.
- Works were generally focused on creating and maintaining a consistent conceptual foundation based on substantive investigation.
- The Major works demonstrated ability to offer a fresh perspective which may have involved intertextuality or appropriation stemming from the independent investigation.
- Fluency and sophistication might not be sustained.
- Skilful and conscious choice of rhythmic devices, image, motif and symbol were evident, with variable consistency, application and integration.
- Reflection Statements were clear in their exploration of concept, form and language.

C Range

- There was some attempt at originality, but this was not sustained by the quality of the work.
- Little effective manipulation of either language or form took place. Most poems 'talk through' an experience or idea.
- Techniques were used in an unfocused way.
- Rhyme or rhythm was banal or unfocused, undermining ideas.
- Reflection Statements were descriptive rather than critical.
- Reflection Statements did not address all the criteria.
- Links to only one or a small number of published poets were made.

D/E Range

- No real understanding of poetic form was shown and there was inappropriate use of techniques, eg rhyme and rhythm, which trivialised rather than strengthened serious themes.
- The audience was not engaged in a sustained way.
- Concepts which may be predictable, clichéd, naïve or not fully realised.
- Minor, simplistic forms such as acrostics and shape poems were described as 'experimental' or changing fonts as 'techniques'.
- A limited sense of poetry as a craft where one makes deliberate choices in terms of language and structure was evident.
- Ideas were not explored in any depth. The poetry dealt with angst-ridden moments in a pedestrian way or was overly sentimental.

- The poetry was often over-written, reliant on ill-chosen modifiers.
- Reflection Statements revealed little or no investigation, perhaps explaining the intention of the work or making unjustified claims.
- Reflection Statements were too brief or not relevant to the criteria.

Critical Responses

General Comments

Critical Responses undertaken in 2006 included:
- evaluation of texts drawn from a range of contexts, genres and media
- the application of critical theory to the evaluation of texts
- exploration of the relationships between composer, responder, text and context
- extensions of issues, paradigms and texts arising out of the Advanced and Extension 1 Modules
- exploration of representation and its relationship to meaning.

The Critical Response investigation of candidates must be 'an area of personal interest from their specialised study of English' (*English Stage 6 Syllabus* p 92). Candidates are urged to ensure that their Critical Responses satisfy this requirement. Candidates also need to ensure that their Critical Responses are an extension of the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in the other Stage 6 English courses. This will be demonstrated in the scope, complexity, depth and sophistication of the investigation undertaken.

The Reflection Statement needs to address all the criteria. It is important to reflect on process as well as product, to show how an awareness of a specified audience has shaped their writing and to make clear how the investigation of form is evident in the Major Work.

Strengths

- Effective Critical Responses were able to integrate texts, paradigms and critical approaches skilfully.
- There was a clear extension of other Stage 6 English courses in text selection, subject matter and critical method.
- Where more than one text was examined there was balance in the treatment of them and thorough exploration of their relationship to one another and the intent of the investigation.
- Form was used skilfully, both in traditional academic responses and other types of response such as journals, providing structural clarity.
- Where candidates submitted Major Works in the form of journals they chose types of publications which allowed for sophistication and complexity, for a clearly targeted audience.
- There was appropriate, but not excessive, use of footnotes.

Weaknesses

Some weaker Critical Responses were not a clear extension of the 'knowledge, skills and understanding of English (Advanced) and (Extension) courses' but were more suitable for History or HSIE investigations. Others were too ambitious for an Extension 2 Critical Response. Many failed to provide close textual support for their arguments.

Other weaknesses were:
- mismatch of critical response and chosen text
- poor structure
- over-use of footnotes
- descriptive rather than analytical and/or critical approach
- incomplete and/or under the specified word count
- failure in Reflection Statement to locate where research shaped the realisation of the Major Work
- reference to literary theory without real understanding of the theory or its terminology.

Popular Issues, Texts, Themes and Approaches in 2006 Critical Responses included:

- 19th century texts – Wilde and Austen
- post-colonial theory – often successfully applied to unexpected texts
- postmodernism – often poorly understood
- experiment with form (eg magazine, lecture series)
- gender in texts
- cultural studies – not always text-based
- popular culture – often from a particular critical perspective.

A Range

A Range Critical Responses were original in the nature of the investigation, the choice of texts and the approaches taken. They were analytical and evaluative, supported by extensive investigation which was clearly evident in the Major Work.

These responses were highly articulate and fluent, using terminology clearly and appropriately. They did not strain for effect through the over-use of language intended to impress.

Arguments were well structured and economical in developing and sustaining a thesis. The integration of content, texts and critical theory was impressive. They were well edited.

All requirements for the Reflection Statement were addressed, supporting and enhancing the Major Work. The strength of these Reflection Statements was evident in the following:

- identification and refinement of concepts
- the scope, methodology and depth of the investigation
- awareness of audience and its impact on the Major Work
- investigation of content and form
- the development of the project and reasons for decisions made during the composition of the project
- identification and explanation of clear links to other Stage 6 English courses.

B Range

B Range Critical Responses were original in the nature of the investigation, the choice of texts and the approaches taken. Many were analytical and evaluative, but there were occasional lapses either in the shaping of a consistent thesis or in providing completely consistent textual support. Extensive investigation was clearly evident in the Major Work. These responses were well expressed and fluent, but at times transitions affected fluent integration of meaning and form.

Terminology was used appropriately but not always with complete assurance. Arguments were well structured in sustaining a thesis. They were well edited.

All requirements for the Reflection Statement were addressed, supporting the Major Work. The strength of these Reflection Statements was evident in:

- identification of a concept
- the scope, methodology and depth of the investigation
- awareness of audience and its impact on the Major Work
- investigation of content and form
- the development of the project and reasons for decisions made during the composition of the project
- identification and explanation of clear links to other Stage 6 English courses.

C Range

C Range Critical Responses were sometimes original in the nature of the investigation, the choice of texts and the approaches taken, but lacked the integration of B Range responses. They either attempted a strongly analytical, evaluative approach which often faltered or had a thesis which lacked enough scope for significant investigation. C Range responses often lapsed into description. There was little evidence of insight in the investigation. Effective control of expression, structure and form was not always maintained. Some footnotes were superfluous and/or too extensive.

Most requirements for the Reflection Statement were addressed but usually not fully developed. In identifying independent investigation they failed to explain how it was evident in the Major Work. The audience was usually identified simplistically, without a clear sense of how an awareness of audience shaped the Critical Response.

D Range

D Range Critical Responses were extensions of the other Stage 6 English courses and were substantial in length. They attempted analysis of paradigms, issues and texts. Many were purely descriptive, with no evidence of insight in the investigation. Control of expression, structure and form was poor and some footnotes were superfluous and/or too extensive.

Some of the requirements for the Reflection Statement were addressed.

E Range

E Range Critical Responses attempted a Major Work. Many were superficial, purely descriptive, insubstantial or incomplete. There was little evidence of a concept behind the Major Work. Some were not appropriate English investigations, even if they showed other strengths not evident in other E Range responses. Historical, sociological, philosophical or political overviews are not appropriate for English Extension 2 projects.

Some of the requirements for the Reflection Statement were addressed.

Scripts — Radio, Film, Television and Drama

General Comments

Candidates were required to develop a script of a complete work for an "intended performance time of 20–30 minutes" *(Stage 6 English Syllabus,* p 133*)*. Students must demonstrate extensive investigation into the required conventions for their particular format, especially as more candidates are submitting scripts for film or television production. Most candidates complied with the script conventions appropriate to the particular form chosen. Candidates need to ensure they investigate the conventions for formatting.

Appropriation of both literary texts (including canonical texts) and such forms as television shows and *anime* were popular. Many students were enthusiastic about developing an absurdist drama. While experimentation is to be encouraged, postmodern or absurd scripts must be carefully constructed to ensure the intention is clear.

While many candidates wrote insightful and critical Reflection Statements which fulfilled the marking criteria, others were not specific enough in their identification of audience or in explaining the links between independent investigation and the realisation of the finished product. The intention of the work should be well justified. The Reflection Statement needs to examine the effects of research on meaning, specifically identifying how this research and investigation has changed the student's insights into their production and the language used.

Strengths

- Students engaged with a diverse variety of styles. Many students produced scripts satirising aspects of contemporary life and on the whole this was done effectively.
- The more engaging drama scripts were able to integrate stage directions appropriately.

Weaknesses

- Insufficient investigation into script forms and script development process. Extensive investigation is important for both long and short forms of scripts.
- There were many lengthy scripts (some up to twice as long as the required time). The ability to sustain scripts was often compromised through this choice. It is important to comply with the Major Work specifications.
- Dialogue was not always shaped and manipulated in an effective and sophisticated manner. In some candidates' responses dialogue was too long and confused. The more engaging film and television scripts were able to integrate visual images with well edited dialogue. Radio scripts require auditory cues to engage listeners.
- Many stage scripts incorporated video back projections. While these may be effectively integrated into the scripts they should not dominate. There should not be reliance on describing the content of back projections rather than using the stage and script effectively.
- Some candidates provided additional material (such as audio material, bibliographies, annotated bibliographies, extensive prefaces, epigraphs) as part of the script. In many instances a bibliography was included but this is not within the specifications. All information which markers read must be in the Reflection Statement. The correct place for all other material is in the journal. Some major works used foreign language/s without purpose, which impeded the reader's engagement with the script.
- Candidates should note that if they choose to refer to theorists and theories, these need to be represented with clarity and insight. Many candidates attempted to represent philosophical ideas and concepts without explicitly conveying their relevance or applying this investigation to the theatrical demands of the medium.

- Some scripts were over length or contained too many characters, or attempted to include too broad a range of ideas, thus demonstrating limited research into the 'nature' of short film (as opposed to feature film) or short plays (as opposed to full-length dramas). Scripts must comply with the stated performance time.

A Range

Scripts in this range were highly original and sustained, demonstrating textual integrity. Visuals, dialogue, sound, camera angles and/or stage directions were expertly integrated throughout the script, creating highly visual and engaging Major Works. The level of technical proficiency, particularly when constructing the *mise en scene* in film scripts, was outstanding. Other sophisticated methods of manipulating techniques included the use of rhythms and cadences of speech effectively to create elements such as mood, tension and characterisation. These elements were discussed in the Reflection Statement. A Range scripts demonstrated a superior understanding of the script form, both as it reads on the page and as it is intended to appear on stage, radio or screen.

A Range scripts demonstrated a clear sense of the importance of extensive investigation into both the concept and particular script form. This investigation was broad and deep, and was clearly evident in the work as well as being documented and analysed in the Reflection Statement. Insights and concepts were developed in the Major Works through careful composition and fluent integration of script elements such as tension, conflict, characterisation, plot development, sound, lighting, visual design, camera angles and shot types. These elements were explored appropriately in relation to purpose, audience and medium.

Reflection Statements presented a sophisticated, critical and analytical evaluation of the process and the Major Work. The extensive investigation of the medium and the concepts was clearly articulated as were the purpose and audience. Links between the project and the Advanced and/or Extension 1 courses were clearly discernible.

B Range

Scripts in this range were original and sustained with a clear focus and skilled integration of meaning(s), value(s) and form. There were some lapses in complexity and refinement, but ideas were generally presented with clarity. B Range candidates were able to use their understanding of purpose, audience and medium to shape their scripts. Structure, characterisation, development of conflict, staging, setting and editing, as appropriate to form, were used effectively with some minor lapses. Script conventions were appropriate to the style. For example, candidates who composed a drama script demonstrated an understanding of appropriate theatrical conventions such as naturalism and realism. Interesting concepts were typically supported by effective and clear vocabulary and language choices. However, language choices sometimes lacked refined subtlety.

Reflection Statements showed a critical understanding of process and explained the intention, development and realisation of the work. Candidates demonstrated thorough research of the concept but often presented a weaker investigation of the medium.

C Range

Scripts in this range were substantial and coherent. There were some lapses in the development of characters and concepts, or ideas. Often investigation into concepts was limited, sometimes relying solely on personal experience, without broader investigation. For the most part, candidates demonstrated effective use of language and conventions of the form (drama, radio or film). Students were often unable to sustain their *mise en scene* or stage directions.

Stereotyped characters and cliched situations demonstrated organisation, but not development of insights or concepts. Characters were sometimes used as a vehicle for expounding a particular philosophical or moral position in a forced and unconvincing manner. Awareness of the need for audience engagement was mostly evident.

Reflection Statements in C Range Major Works addressed most required areas but without thorough critical reflection or explanation of how aspects of investigation were realised in the script. At times, aspects of the works in this range were derivative, and sources were not acknowledged in the Reflection Statement. Claims need to be substantiated through realisation in the actual work.

D Range

Scripts in this range made some connections between meaning(s), value(s) and form. Structure was confusing or there was a limited understanding of theatricality (in stage plays) and unclear *mise en scene* in film or television scripts. Radio scripts were often characterised by poor delineation of characters and an absence of engaging sound effects. The focus of the script was often unclear or not sustained. Insights and ideas were often predictable. Candidates demonstrated some effective control of language, skills and conventions for their medium and intended audience. However, lapses in these areas interfered with audience engagement.

Reflection Statements explained some aspects of the work in a limited way, lacking critical reflection. There were inconsistencies between the Reflection Statement and the work, usually in the form of the work failing to meet the intent outlined in the Reflection Statement. Claims need to be substantiated through realisation in the actual work. Reflection Statements were often descriptive or simple recounts of the process.

E Range

Scripts in this range were superficial and/or incomplete, or if complete, fell well short of the parameters for the work *(English Stage 6 Syllabus* p 133). The Major Works lacked focus, with simplistic ideas and limited investigation. Language, technical skills, conventions and medium were often inappropriate for the purpose and intended audience. Confusing and contradictory plotlines were common.

Reflection Statements identified some aspects of the script; however, there were significant inconsistencies between the work and the claims made in the Reflection Statement. Reflection Statements in this range were descriptive, often cataloguing what was included in the script rather than critically analysing the work. Some candidates presented derivative scripts or mirrored familiar characters or plotlines without acknowledging their source(s) or offering explanation for this in their Reflection Statement.

SOUND MEDIUM

Speeches

General Comments

Overall, the speeches were sustained and demonstrated insights gained through extensive investigation. The best speeches showed rigorous investigation into both concepts represented in the speeches and in the form, together with adept vocal skills. Most candidates used SFX and/or music to add intensity to their Major Works and many students used technology to vary the delivery of their voices to effect changes in personae.

There was a strong tendency in 2006 to present a series of 2–4 speeches rather than one sustained speech. Delivering a series of speeches allowed candidates to present a range of perspectives, thoughts, ideas, personae and characters, and thus demonstrate extensive independent investigation successfully. Most speeches were thoughtfully structured, contributing to the production of coherent and integrated works.

Most candidates submitted their work on CD-ROM in 2006.

Students should note that 'the audience for the speech(es) must be specified'. Students should not assume that the audience(s) for their work is self-evident. Speeches which carefully and clearly set out their context(s) at the beginning of their speech or separate speeches were more engaging, showing conscious and successful shaping of the form. Better speech(es) used language authentic to the context of the Major Work.

Use of technology to manipulate voices, especially gender, is to be documented in the Reflection Statement. This includes use of specific recording equipment, programs or professional recording studios. Decisions for technological choices should be explained.

The purpose of the Major Work Journal is for 'recording of research, analysis, critical, imaginative and speculative reflections and development of process' and requires 'an annotated bibliography' (pp.130-131 of the syllabus). Students are not required to include a separate bibliography as part of their Major Work.

Concepts explored in the Major Works in 2006 were broad ranging, with a clear preference for social justice issues. These concepts were not always an extension of the courses. Few candidates presented speeches with an imaginative component. Speeches which were wholly analytical or informative were sometimes tedious or limited. Some concepts presented as speech(es) would have been better realised as multimedia or video/DVD works so as to include visual components and large amounts of information in an easy to view format.

The time limits of 15–20 minutes should be strictly adhered to. Students should edit their work carefully, using time more purposefully and judiciously.

Strengths:

- demonstrated effective research into the form
- were well structured with a clear development of the concept(s)
- used vocal manipulation varying modulation, pace, pause and expression convincingly
- showed scope for creating and experimenting with different personae
- developed rapport with the audience, balancing evidence research with ability to engage
- presented sustained, clear and cohesive theses
- exuded a sense of passion, commitment and interest in chosen concepts
- had congruent and critically composed Reflection Statements.

Weaknesses:

- went overtime; were made up of speeches which could have been more tightly edited
- did not show sufficient evidence of research into concept
- did not show sufficient evidence of research into form (overreliance on prescribed texts in the Advanced course, overreliance on Martin Luther King and Hitler as model texts)
- were swept away by their own rhetoric, providing little content, asserting rather than proving

- conversely were so full of content that contexts of meaning, rapport with audience and delivery were neglected
- used clichés, were derivative, or superficial
- were too focused on content rather than revealing how the content is linked to the English syllabus
- did not use Standard English where the context required it
- needed more development of the concept in the Reflection Statement
- used monotonous voices, overused clapping sound effect, were unrehearsed in recording
- repeated ideas, rather than developing them.

A Range

A Range speeches demonstrated understanding and expert use of the form. Candidates had selected a concept, researched it thoroughly and then approached it in a highly original manner. Speeches demonstrated a clear sense of personal engagement with the concepts and shared this with their audience(s). Their delivery was convincing, highly engaging and contextually authentic. The creation of personae was inventive, sometime ingenious or experimental. The works were highly lucid and often eloquent. Deliveries of speeches in this range were enthusiastic and passionate and students manipulated voice and sound effects successfully to subtly enhance and shape meaning. These speeches avoided being didactic or assertive in tone and nature. The focus of the works was well sustained throughout, irrespective of whether the student chose to present a single speech or a collection of speeches.

The Reflection Statements were sophisticated and critical. They demonstrated the same control as the work, were congruent with it and explained its development, how it was informed and its realisation astutely. They were highly self-referential and showed a significant understanding of the chosen concepts. They articulated the relationship between the concept and the study of Advanced and/or Extension 1 English very clearly.

B Range

Speeches in this range were original and sustained, but less well integrated in terms of form, values and meaning, demonstrating skill rather than sophisticated execution and expertise. They were less artistic or lyrical than A Range scripts.

Candidates effectively manipulated the various elements of speech to shape meaning and engage audiences. Major Works in this range were well investigated; however, investigation tended to be analytic rather than evaluative and synthesised.

B Range scripts showed evidence of thorough investigation and developed concepts with complexity. However, this complexity was not always sustained across the speech or speeches.

While speeches in this range showed evidence of conscious shaping of meaning, there was a less consistent focus on audience and/or context. Rhetorical devices were used purposefully and skilfully but there was a more limited range.

Major Works in the B Range could be more tightly edited and understand that the whole 20 minutes need not be utilised.

The candidates' Reflection Statements clearly represented the scope of the independent investigation and the relationship the work had to the students' study of Advanced and/or Extension 1 English. However, there was less evidence of evaluation and conscious shaping of meaning to communicate developed ideas.

C Range

Speeches in this range were substantial but sometimes more problematic in terms of establishing genuine contexts. As a result, there were lapses in tone, voice, register and pace and that impacted negatively on the integration of meaning, value and form. In this range candidates tended to be less conscious of how values are explored in texts and the manipulation of techniques to achieve this representation was uneven.

Speeches often became too didactic and hectoring without demonstrating a clear purpose for being so, or limited their persona to only didactic roles. Some of these speeches were in effect, 'essays on tape'. The works showed less analysis and more description than better works. Popular culture was a prime source for investigation and restricted students' ability to demonstrate insight or complexity. Focus of the works tended to be narrow.

Manipulation of voice was uneven, although there was a conscious shaping of meaning throughout the works. Speeches needed to reflect more enthusiasm about the subject matter or show choice of more inventive and varied personae so as to engage the listener more fully. Depth of investigation was not always evident. Works were simply but carefully structured.

Reflection Statements in this range did cover most of the elements of development, realisation and intention of the Major Work. They did communicate relatively effectively the impact the independent investigation had on the realisation of the work as a whole. These Reflection Statements articulated to some extent the relationship between the student's study of Advanced and/or Extension 1 and the Major Work.

D Range

Speeches in this range were not substantial and made only some connections between meaning, values and forms. These speeches demonstrated limited investigation into form resulting in works indicating misunderstanding of the limitations, characteristics and conventions of speech.
D Range speeches tended to be predictable and derivative, failing to offer any new insights. The exploration into concept tended to be simply an assertion about an idea or issue rather than a genuine and thoughtful development. Sometimes the ideas and issues explored in these Major Works were better suited to another form particularly multimedia or DVD. D Range speeches usually showed only tenuous links to Advanced and/or English Extension 1.

There was limited deliberate engagement of audience through the manipulation of structural elements or other techniques such as variation of voice, use of motif, sound effects and so on. There was misuse or overuse of rhetorical devices. Major Works in this range sometimes did not recognise and purposefully engage the audience, including the examiner, in order to realise their purpose and manipulate response.

Reflection Statements in this range were descriptive and at times superficial. There was limited evidence of extensive independent investigation in both the work itself and the Reflection Statement. Investigation into both form and concept and consideration of how this shaped the work as a whole was underdeveloped.

E Range

These speeches were characterised by lack of preparation, simplistic delivery and lack of research. They were padded rather than developed. Reflection Statements were very simplistic and limited. There was only superficial research into concepts and little into form.

Radio Drama

General Comments

Works were presented in a variety of ways and most were competently completed. Some works were presented on CD-ROM while others were audio taped. The quality of production was generally strong and integration of music and sound effects was often seamless. Layering of sound and music was well done. Stronger Major Works validated their choices of special effects and/or music in their Reflection Statements. Investigation into the form Radio Drama is needed to develop the work.

Concepts explored included: satire, ways of reading texts, crime fiction, social and political commentary, comedy and science fiction. A number of Crime Fiction satires were neither experimental nor inventive. Forms appropriated included narratives, allegory, film noir and traditional dialogue-based radio drama.

Strengths:

- effective use of humour and word play to engage the listener
- intellectually stimulating and thoughtfully developed concepts
- depth of research which was broad based, wide ranging and across media, including research into radio drama
- use of a variety of forms/structures or concepts within a piece
- effective and stimulating use of parody, satire and allegory
- effective use of intertextuality
- manipulation of individual voices (often candidate's own) in a range of contexts
- well rehearsed acting, seamless transitions
- good use of sound effects which added to the impact of the work
- development of narrative through dialogue with little recourse to voiceover
- authentic vernacular or dialectal voices.

Weaknesses:

- poor recording quality
- dialogue that was flat and demonstrated little delineation between voices
- dialogue that sounded unrehearsed and unconvincing
- discrepancies between the print and aural versions of the text
- depth of research into the concept not evident
- disorganised and confusing sound effects
- little research into form
- hackneyed concepts or plots.

A Range

Major Works in this range demonstrated:

- artistically integrated and suitable sound, music, voice/s
- inventive use of the form incorporating factual, poetic, literary and other styles
- seamless integration of special effects and music, often overlaying each other
- excellent choice of music to enhance plot
- justification for choices validated and elaborated in the Reflection Statement

- sustained focus on sophisticated concepts
- well sustained and beautifully developed, well edited pieces
- well sustained and witty satirical pieces, clever word play
- good use of intertextuality
- smooth transitions between scenes
- thoughtful underpinning of conceptual material with extensive and rigorous independent investigation
- clear relationship between the Major Work and the Advanced and/or Extension 1 courses
- expert delineation of voices in duologue/dialogue
- consciously structured work which was explained in the Reflection Statement
- intellectually engaging and emotionally evocative work.

B Range

Major Works in this range demonstrated:

- well developed pieces with an explicit research base
- less wide ranging investigation
- effective use of humour especially slapstick
- focused and sustained point of view
- use of aural puns, with some use of metaphor, satire and allegory to promote point of view
- astute understanding and social commentary on contemporary issues
- use of absurdist techniques to carry action
- less subtlety than A Range scripts but a sense of refinement still evident
- interesting concepts or structures, not always explored in depth
- characterisation well depicted but less sophisticated than A Range.

C Range

Major Works in this range:

- were derivative but nonetheless well-structured and in the most part coherent
- focused too closely, limiting the development of a concept
- investigated concept satisfactorily but investigated the form less, limiting students' ability to use the conventions of the form to develop their concepts
- defined characters but their 'voices' at times were not well delineated
- used stereotypes and clichés
- used absurdist conventions inconsistently
- included contexts of radio dramas which were not always authentic
- had a propensity to 'tell the listener' rather than reveal the themes through the dialogue
- often had clumsy transitions between scenes
- did not indicate how work was an extension of other English courses in the Reflection Statement
- defined audience less effectively
- explained influence of human resources clearly
- consciously shaped meaning, used conventions in a satisfactory manner, attemped to use emotion, dialogue, music in an engaging manner.

D range

In Major Works in this range:

- there was very limited use of music; often repetitive and/or not well integrated
- choices of stylistic devices, music and form were not justified in Reflection Statements
- works did not display originality
- works were literal and concrete in matter, form and concept
- works tended to be very didactic and therefore less engaging
- attempts at humour sometimes degenerated into confusion and silliness
- used stereotypical voice(s) and overused American accents, for no reason
- were sometimes unintentionally melodramatic
- transition between scenes difficult to detect
- used inappropriate and confusing sound effects
- Reflection Statements were descriptive. Candidates did not explain the relationship between investigation and the process of composition.
- not enough time had been allowed for the recording and editing of work
- limited research into the medium was mentioned in Reflection Statements and/or evident in the composition itself
- there was discrepancy apparent between the ideas expressed in the Reflection Statement and the work itself
- there was little thought given to structure of the work
- print scripts were quite bare (lacking character lists, instructions to actors etc) and sometimes discrepant with the aural text
- time limits were not complied with.

E Range

There were no scripts in this range in 2006.

Performance Poetry

General Comments

The number of students submitting Performance Poetry projects has increased again this year as more students appreciate the possibilities offered by this interesting and creative medium. Candidates completing projects in 2006 displayed a wide range of skill and ability. Successful performance poetry translated effectively from the page to performance.

A range of concepts was dealt with this year such as the nature of self, cultural clashes, mental illness and current political events. Most projects were concept-driven and these tended to work well except when ideas weren't developed and the work relied on repetition or strident delivery to make a point. Most candidates understood the importance of voice manipulation in performance poetry; however, weaker works presented poetry which did not allow for a range of expressive techniques, often resulting in a lacklustre performance even if the poetry itself had merit. Generally speaking, there was a correlation between poor poetry and poor performance.

Strengths

- The influence of cultural trends such as 'free-style' and 'slamming', not to mention hip hop, was evident in many works and was generally successful. The benefit of models is not to be underestimated.
- The production quality of most works was excellent, students having used sound accompaniment with discernment to enhance performance rather than to compensate for its absence.
- There was passionate and dramatically skilful use of voice.
- A high level of awareness of the conceptual framework of performance was noticeable.
- The use of established poetic forms such as mock-heroic, canto and ballad were often employed to deliver fresh and original insights into contemporary concerns.
- The skilful use of lyrical imagery in this aural medium was demonstrated.
- Articulate and sophisticated Reflection Statements demonstrating a depth and breadth of research into the form of performance poetry and the students' chosen subject matter were always features of the stronger performances.

Weaknesses

- Formless and shapeless poetry lacked an organising principle.
- A lack of understanding of the form of performance poetry was shown. Tonal variety was needed to engage an audience.
- An overreliance on background music to convey meaning or sounds did not significantly add to the quality of the work.
- A choice of clichéd or unsophisticated subject matter was evident.
- Limited investigation into the performance nature of the form was demonstrated.

A Range

- Original, sustained, coherent and intelligent Major Works showed a complex and sophisticated creation of meaning.
- There was evidence of a great deal of research which underpinned the intelligent and perceptive interpretation of the concept, tracking a range of concepts and insights, including the nature of schooling, feminism, body image and disempowerment.
- There was an outstanding use of voice apparent in the higher range scripts. The ability of candidates to utilise and manipulate voices is a key discriminating factor in this range. Those who incorporated external elements such as music, sound effects (eg reverb and echo) did so with balance, fluency and a clever integration. The poetry itself was of a high standard, demonstrating skill, insight and control over the material as 'performance'.
- Students at this level exhibited and explicated a deep and substantive understanding of the forms and features of performance and poetry, as well as integrated and extensive research.

B Range

- These were original and sustained Major Works which exhibited a structural coherence in the overall production of meaning and values.
- The insights and concepts of a Major Work in this range are often worthy, although usually lacking in perception and flair. The communication of these concepts showed some complexity, subtlety and refinement through a sound engagement with the extensive research.
- The performative aspects of the work may have been very strong, while the poetry itself may not have been effective.

- There was a strong engagement in the medium of production, demonstrating technical proficiency and a clear sense of audience and purpose. Often Major Works in this category were experimental in their use of voice, pace, rhythm and poetry.
- Reflection Statements demonstrated intelligent and extensive research. They tended to be more explanatory in their approach, looking towards justifying the work on a conceptual level and not clearly delineating the performative aspects of the work. This was often evident through a lack of self-referencing.

C Range

- The defining feature of a work in this category was a lapse in tone, register and voice.
- Concepts such as teen angst and world peace, while not inherently poor choices, needed to be clearly and extensively developed through substantial research and a fresh or novel interpretation. Major Works in this range are well-organised but are not sophisticated enough to develop the idea/concept.
- There was certainly some ability shown to control the form in this range. However, students seemed to rely on technical aspects to improve their work, often with annoying or clumsy results. They might have relied upon only one or two effects over the duration of the work, and as a result the work became repetitive and lacked consistent audience engagement. There is a lack of variety in the use of voice.
- Reflection Statements relied upon explaining the conceptual and philosophical underpinnings of the work, rarely seeking to critically examine the performance of the poetry. There is often a reliance upon listing and/or explaining the issues surrounding choice of hardware and software.

D Range

- The Major Work made some connections between meaning, value and form.
- The ideas communicated were predictable, relying upon clichéd and unoriginal insights. There was an evident lack of research into the form, and the focus then became unclear. A prevalence of personal insights – without extending these through research – was detrimental to the overall communication of ideas.
- There was some effective use of language, both in terms of the poetry and the performance. However, there was a lack of engagement with the overtly performance-based nature of this genre. It is not enough to merely write poetry in different forms or styles. It should be delivered with a sense of the medium and utilise a variety of performance techniques appropriate to the work.
- Reflection Statements in this range provide some explanation, but do not completely elucidate or examine the main elements of their Major Work. Often there was an inconsistency between the project and the Reflection Statement.

E Range

There were no Major Works in this range.

VISUAL MEDIUM

Video

General Comments

Increased production values were evident in a significant number of these Major Works, particularly in the areas of editing and the visual composition of shots. This may have been a result of candidates' increased confidence and competency with the medium, as well as technological advances that make it easier for candidates to work competently in the post-production stage. Very few projects fell outside the specified running time of 6 to 8 minutes. Works should be checked before submission date to ensure they can be viewed on ordinary DVD or video players. Overall the composition, editing and post-production skills were impressive.

One of the distinguishing features of the highly sustained projects was the deliberate and purposeful shaping of values recognising how film operates as a medium and how a film-maker can manipulate the expectations and/or reactions of the responders by the use of eclectic cinematic devices/ techniques/ conventions. These could include music, framing, specific shots, camera angles, appropriate acting, use of genre, structuring a short film in an appropriate manner and, perhaps most importantly, the sparing use of dialogue (including voice-over). Particularly, in 2006, the strong DVD films demonstrated an insightful use of music to underscore the emotions experienced by the characters and to create ambience. The use of rock music should be scrutinised closely to determine its appropriateness. Quite often its use is one of the distinguishing lapses between the integration of medium and intent.

There was a tendency in some projects submitted in 2006 to let technical manipulation of film language and technical prowess take a central position in the work, at the expense of a sophisticated concept that has been researched at length and in depth. For example, the use of excessive statistics and quotations at the beginning of the work was seldom successful.

Sophisticated control over technology, particularly editorialising collages, is still not compensation for weak ideas that are poorly developed. There needs to be clear evidence, both within the work itself and the Reflection Statement, of how the independent investigation has shaped the development of the Video/DVD project and how a student's own evaluative skills have also impacted on the shaping of the material. In some Reflection Statements, there was too much focus on the merits of particular software or describing the difficulties encountered in execution. Better Reflection Statements explained how each of the elements contributes to the overall unity and cohesion of the project.

The Reflection Statement must focus on the elements articulated in the Stage 6 syllabus. There should be investigation into the form of the short film itself in an analytical and meaningful way. Better major works considered the suitability of the form for the development of the concept; specifically, how the short film[1] is a subset of the full length feature. Investigation into film theory enhanced some of the better works.

Story-boarding is crucial not only to provide clear guidance for the production team but also to highlight problem areas in the overall 'look' of the work. Candidates should include their storyboards with their scripts. Significant discrepancies between the finished film and the script should be explained by information available in the journal. Details about the technical aspects of the post-production phase should also be available. When working within a particular genre, the better candidates provided evidence of adequate investigation of the characteristics, conventions and elements of the genre.

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[1] A 'short film' also refers to Videos and DVDs and it includes 'short features', 'short documentaries' and 'short animated works'.

The detective genre still remains popular for candidates. One of the stipulations of film projects is that the student must be the sole writer and director of the film and candidates should appraise the process of eliciting the best and most appropriate performance from their actors.

The Reflection Statement requires students to demonstrate and articulate how their Major Work is an extension of knowledge, understanding and skills developed in the English Advanced and Extension 1 courses. This must be evident in the project itself and be fully and explicitly explored in the Reflection Statement.

Concepts that were explored in 2006 videos ranged from satire to mood pieces in the film noir and speculative fiction genres and documentaries. Themes included alienation, military conflict, and adolescent themes such as depression, suicide and sexuality. Some candidates also focused on the exploration of alternate realities. A number of videos/DVDs were subversive, idiosyncratic and highly entertaining. It is pleasing to see the humour, satire and pastiche in a number of projects as these are often characteristics of the short feature medium, particularly in the area of animation. Some outstanding projects were highly cerebral and lyrical, often using landscape in a metaphorical sense.

Candidates should be wary of using a 'huge concept' as the focus of their work because often the development and exploration of this cannot be sustained within the 6–8 minute duration of the project.

One important aspect of Videos/DVD/Films is the identification of a relevant audience and how the project was reshaped/developed to appeal to this targeted audience. This is especially crucial when working with short films which are classified into suitable age brackets: G, PG, M, MA, R. This is useful to consider when trying to identify the targeted audience for the work.

Strengths:

- technical proficiency with both the camera and editing software giving the work a professional look
- a demonstrated and insightful appreciation and understanding of the elements of a short film feature, such as the focus on one single character, or idea, or event
- an outstanding control over technical video/film elements, and a fluent integration of the three processes of film production – pre, shooting and post, resulting in a consciously developed structure and careful manipulation of pace and tone
- short videos that concentrated on character undertaking only the one conscious new experience, thereby showing a sophisticated knowledge of the scope and conventions of the short feature
- a willingness to experiment purposefully with concepts and technology, resulting in works of high originality (for example a fully animated work and a musical)
- exploration of the development of concept and the impact that investigation into form had on shaping meaning and fulfilling purpose, evident in the Reflection Statements
- articulation of a clear relationship between the Advanced and Extension 1 courses, and the Extension 2 project, demonstrating the scope and breadth of the planning and investigative process.

Weaknesses:

- lack of investigation of the short film, with responses citing and exploring a range of full feature films but failing to evaluate the elements that distinguish a short feature film from a full feature film and how this distinction impacts on the development and shaping of their work

- not adhering to the instructions of the BOS memorandum that instructs them to reference all images and sound (including music) that was not originated by the student
- not adhering to basic guidelines such as the provision of scripts and the 6–8 minutes running time stipulated in the syllabus
- literal visual representations of what is being told to the audience through dialogue and/or voice-over
- highly developed technical skills, editing skills and camera work not always evident, or used purposefully to shape meaning
- videos within the confines of a particular film milieu or genre tending to be derivative or not appropriate within the parameters of 6–8 minutes
- failure to successfully integrate all the elements of film, sound, image and shots to effectively shape meaning and develop concepts
- purposeless repetition of images, and segments of the film tending to lessen the original impact.
- Some Reflection Statements made claims that were not realised in the work itself
- a small number of videos not involving any 'moving pictures' at all which should have been submitted as multimedia projects
- lengthy opening credits (more a characteristic of the full feature film).

A Range

Videos in this range were highly original and sustained and purposefully achieved a fluent integration of meaning, values and form. The majority were narrative driven and characterised by lyricism. There was a deliberate focus and awareness of how values are represented in video through the successful integration of all its elements – sound, *mise en scene*, motif, metaphor, lighting, colour, camera shots and editing techniques.

These videos demonstrated clear control and expertise over the medium. The employment of the medium was conscious in terms of the realisation of concept and purpose, and there was a sophisticated understanding of an audience and how to manipulate their expectations. Videos in the A Range pursued concepts that were appropriate to the form. These could be investigated, developed and presented within the confines of the short video/DVD. Some 'big picture' scenarios managed to restrict themselves to a single focus within this large concept.

Candidates in this range were able to clearly articulate the relationship between their independent investigation into both form and concept and the realisation of their Major Work. The relationship between the study of Advanced and Extension 1 English and the Major Work was demonstrated in a precise and sophisticated manner.

Where concepts were not necessarily always complex, the techniques used to develop them were original, inventive, clever, refined and engaging. There was a highly conscious consideration of audience and how to manipulate it. An appropriate understanding of film theory was often demonstrated in the Reflection Statements, and there was often evidence of experimentation, not only with video and editing techniques but also with sound and lighting.

B Range

Videos in this range were on the whole sustained, demonstrating coherence and a skilled integration of meanings and form. The importance of values was often not consciously explored within the project. Often videos within this range did not manage to maintain their focus, either through structure or through a problem with one element of video making. In most cases, this was allowing the spoken word to dominate the video to the detriment of the project. For example, long chunks of dialogue between two actors necessitated a number of close-ups and did not allow for any other inventive shots.

Works within this category were ambitious, impressive and dealt with a variety of concepts and/or issues. Sometimes the nature of the concept was inappropriate given the confines of the medium. Such concepts were too broad to be investigated with a degree of complexity in a 6–8 minute video.

Videos in this range demonstrated control over the medium and offered interesting ideas. Although the communication of the students' ideas was sound, it characteristically lacked refinement and/or complexity. Some videos worked within specific genres and at times explored these successfully. Appropriation needed to be referenced in the Reflection Statement.

Acting performances of the cast that were not complementary to the intent of the film were largely ignored in the Reflection Statement. Some lapses in elements of textual integrity may have affected fluency and/or weakened the development of the concept; this was more problematic when dialogue was not used sparingly. B Range works sometimes overused dialogue.

Reflection Statements reflected on the intention, development and realisation of the Major Work. Links to the English Advanced and or Extension 1 courses were sometimes not defined clearly. Audience was sometimes not clearly articulated.

C Range

Videos in this range demonstrated control in the integration of meaning and form and were generally substantial. Integration of the investigation into the form or some element of textual integrity was sometimes flawed.

Weaknesses:

- poor editing
- listing links to other Stage 6 English courses instead of showing a clear extension of Advanced and Extension 1
- heavy reliance on content that has been originated by other people and not acknowledged
- over use of voice-over in that the responder was told what to think and feel rather than being able to discover through the employment of other, more subtle or refined cinematic techniques
- pursued themes over concepts
- uneven or inappropriate use of sound, both diegetic and non-diegetic
- use of non-diegetic music was not adequately addressed or evaluated in the Reflection Statement
- a lack of planning in the pre-production stage.

D Range

Video Major Works in this range were unsubstantial, demonstrating significant technical difficulties that impacted on the process of making meaning. These Major Works displayed some connection between meaning, values and form. However, at least one of these elements was extremely problematic. Fluency was lacking. These Major Works often displayed weaknesses in acting, editing or camera work. The critical role of the director was inadequately fulfilled in this range. The quality of acting should be evaluated in the Reflection Statement in order to fulfill the brief of a director. Evidence of investigation into either concept or medium was lacking, and the discussion of process was descriptive rather than analytical. The Reflection Statement explained some aspects of the intention, development and realisation of the Major Work.

The use of family histories as a vehicle to say something about contemporary living and contemporary values was problematic, causing overreliance on still photography. The closeness of the composer to the material did not allow for a critical appraisal.

E Range

These Major Works did not show an integration of form, value and meaning. They were, on the whole, not developed coherently, were incomplete, or only demonstrated an ability to carry out one aspect of video/film-making, in most cases editing, or assembling a series of thematically connected images which, in some cases, were generated by other people without acknowledgement. The basic premise of the videos in this range was often simplistic, lacked subtlety and there was little attempt to use the medium dynamically and purposefully.

The Reflection Statements of E Range videos were on the whole explanatory or simple in nature, dealing with some of the obstacles faced by the composers, summarising the intention, or in most cases, the subject matter, of the video but not articulating the intention, the development or the realisation of the Major Work.

Films

No candidates presented a film as their Major Work in the 2006 English Extension 2 Higher School Certificate.

Multimedia

General Comments

Types of multimedia presented by candidates were few in number and included websites, narratives and PowerPoint presentations. A limited number of concepts was explored and with narratives there was little attempt to do other than present a short story or poem on a CD-ROM accompanied by appropriate illustrations. Investigation into the form was not always discussed in the Reflection Statements and this fact was made evident through the difficulty markers had in accessing the works. Some works required internet access to accompany the material despite the syllabus outline of the requirements for the work indicating that all of the work must be included on the disc.

Strengths

- Control of the media was effective in combining sound, movement, images and written text and was appropriate to purpose.
- There was some attempt to be experimental in the use of available technology.
- Design elements were manipulated effectively and well linked to subject matter.
- Work was accompanied by thorough and detailed hard copy logic maps.
- Candidates effectively demonstrated the work as an extension of the Stage 6 English courses.

Weaknesses

- A lack of links between the concept of the Major Work and the candidates' knowledge and understanding of other English Advanced and English Extension 1 courses.
- Works were focused on Music or Society and Culture rather than the subject English; a lack of independent investigation informed the subject matter.

- Limited understanding of multimedia design (sound, movement, images and written text).
- Technical difficulties and failure to ensure that the work is efficiently and effectively accessible.
- Entire work not included on disc; need to go online for some elements of work.
- Failure to include a hard copy logic map.
- Reflection Statements incomplete or lacking analysis of independent investigation into both concept and form.

A Range

There was an effective manipulation of the form in works that were substantial and focused. These works made use of the full range of attributes of the form to skilfully create engaging texts. The works exhibited experimentation and there was evidence of extensive investigation into form and concept. These Major Works provided non-linear reading paths and exhibited strong understanding of the role of the audience in responding to the form.

Effective control of the medium demonstrated a deliberate approach to creative decisions that were appropriate to the audience. The Reflection Statements critically articulated and evaluated decisions made during the process of creation of the work and thoroughly analysed approaches to form, audience, concepts, development and realisation of the work.

B Range

In this range Major Works were focused and substantial and showed skilful control of the medium. There was a deliberate and conscious shaping of the features of the medium. These Major Works did not use the full range of attributes of the form, which led to works that were relatively static. There may have been technical flaws in the presentation of the medium.

The Reflection Statements treated the form, intention and development of the work but tended to lack critical self-reflection. There may have been minimal reference to investigation into the form.

C Range

Major Works were generally substantial and coherent. It was often the case that independent investigation did not consider the multimedia form in any detail. Attempts were made to explore a concept through this form but the medium was not used to enhance the exploration. Typically Major Works in this range were descriptive and there was insufficient use of the medium to creatively enhance the concept of the work.

Reflection Statements explained the intent, development and realisation of the Major Work, but lacked critical evaluation of the process.

D Range

Major Works in the D Range lacked extensive investigation of both the form and the concept. Difficulty in manipulating the multimedia form with the concept explored was evident. Logic maps may not have been provided. Works may have explored concepts with only tenuous links to English. Reflection Statements explained some aspects of the Major Work.

E Range

Major Works in this range were typically incomplete and superficial. They provided limited exploration of concepts and form. Reflection Statements were short and explained some aspects of the Major Work but were inconsistent with the multimedia composition.