

# Principal Examiner Feedback

## Summer 2010

GCSE

GCSE English A (1203)  
Paper 5H Media unseen (higher)

Edexcel is one of the leading examining and awarding bodies in the UK and throughout the world. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers.

Through a network of UK and overseas offices, Edexcel's centres receive the support they need to help them deliver their education and training programmes to learners.

For further information, please call our GCE line on 0844 576 0025, our GCSE team on 0844 576 0027, or visit our website at [www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com).

If you have any subject specific questions about the content of this Examiners' Report that require the help of a subject specialist, you may find our **Ask The Expert** email service helpful.

Ask The Expert can be accessed online at the following link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/Aboutus/contact-us/>

Alternatively, you can speak directly to a subject specialist at Edexcel on our dedicated **English** telephone line: **0844 372 2188**

Summer 2010

Publications Code UG023808

All the material in this publication is copyright  
© Edexcel Ltd 2010

## GCSE English 1203 5H

### Section A (Reading)

#### Question 1:

The two travel brochures provided ample material for analytical comment. The North Cornwall brochure was the more favoured; candidates responded positively and in detail to the variety of activities, the range of photos and the lively and informal language, and analysed its effectiveness as a brochure with some overall degree of success. Useful comments on the intended audience were also made throughout the range. The Vassiliki text proved more challenging and there was some confusion in some responses about the use of words such as "reputation" and the wind called 'Eric'; weaker candidates were unsure whether this was a wind or a windsurfer. Overall the language analysis was reasonably well handled, though some candidates still wrote generally about texts without specific or textual reference (for example "The photographs draw our attention"). Weaker candidates tended also to write almost exclusively about one text, usually North Cornwall, focusing on the design elements, but making a few generic comments on language. Stronger candidates discriminated precisely between the two texts, and made insightful comments on the all-embracing nature of the North Cornwall brochure and the apparent exclusivity of the Vassiliki extract and its use of specialised language (e.g. "a katabatic wind"). The best responses also picked up nuances of language in the texts, especially in relation to tone, for instance in comments on the use of humour in the North Cornwall and, in the Vassiliki text, the personalised wind and this brochure's attempts to broaden the resort's appeal to 'beginner' windsurfers and other enthusiasts, whilst noting the limiting comments on dinghy sailing.

### Section B (Writing)

#### Question 2:

This was the more popular question in the section. Many candidates recycled the Question 1 brochure information (usually from the North Cornwall text) with a few personal words of recommendation and encouragement; some weaker responses paraphrased or simply plagiarised a brochure text without any reference to the audience of friends. Many candidates opted to write letters to their friends, an approach which worked well as in most instances it provided a clearer sense of audience. Some of the most effective answers advocated destinations other than North Cornwall or Vassiliki, and profited by personally inspired descriptions of these places. Such answers also tended to be more effectively addressed to the specified readership, though some became little more than the text for promotional holiday advertisements themselves.

#### Question 3:

This question gave rise to strong debate on both sides of the argument. Candidates tended to favour the kind of school they were accustomed to, though there were notable exceptions. Girls mainly (but not exclusively) were more divided about the desirability of single-sex classes, some stating that they achieved higher grades without the distraction of male misbehaviour or the desire to impress the opposite sex. Those against single-sex classes argued equally strongly and usually on social and economic grounds. Both sides used statistics (sometimes improbably - "65% of girls get pregnant in mixed classes") and expert opinion to support their case and, overall,

strong opinions made for lively essays. The weakest answers tended to be emotional, personal responses rather than logically argued essays. At the upper end of attainment there were some very authoritatively argued responses; some followed a scheme of challenging the statement, using authentic statistics, making historical references, time shifting, personal anecdote, balancing viewpoint and so on.

### Section C (Writing)

#### Question 4:

This question produced some useful answers, mainly from boys but there were also significant numbers of girls who attempted it. Overall (and particularly in the middle range of ability) there was a tendency for responses to become formulaic, usually listing the desirable qualities for team success, and then discussing and illustrating each of them paragraph by paragraph - a sensible procedure but one which gave limited scope for individuality. Many answers, quite appropriately, discussed business teams as well as sporting ones, though inevitably much attention was paid to football and the World Cup. At the upper end of the ability range, there were some fascinating responses, often in significant detail and with interesting ideas.

#### Question 5:

This question was, it seemed, more often chosen by girls, though a few boys also attempted it, with rather mixed results, and sometimes demonstrating, in over-polemical rather than thoughtful commentaries, that 'traditional' attitudes still prevail. Girls' responses tended to be more balanced, with many pointing out that previous generations of women campaigned strenuously for the rights and opportunities now available to women in Western society; credit was also given to males who share, or even assume, domestic responsibilities. Many responses were notable for their optimism, particularly female candidates who expected to be able to choose the path - whether domestic or commercial/professional or both - they wished to follow and to cope with its pressures. Stronger answers tended to be those which were objective in approach and considered the quotation from all sides; these provided genuine commentaries rather than polemic. A few brilliant responses deconstructed the title, arguing that it was in itself sexist and outmoded.

## GCSE English: 1203 Grade Boundaries

### Option 1 - 1A, 1B, 2F, 3F

C	D	E	F
60	47	34	22

### Option 2 - 1A, 1B, 4H, 5H

*	A	B	C	D	E
82	72	62	52	41	35

### Option 3 - 1AT, 1B, 2F, 3F

C	D	E	F
60	47	34	22

### Option 4 - 1A, 1BT, 2F, 3F

C	D	E	F
60	47	34	22

### Option 5 - 1AT, 1BT, 2F, 3F

C	D	E	F
60	47	34	22

### Option 6 - 1AT, 1B, 4H, 5H

*	A	B	C	D	E
82	72	62	52	41	35

### Option 7 - 1A, 1BT, 4H, 5H

*	A	B	C	D	E
82	72	62	52	41	35

### Option 8 - 1AT, 1BT, 4H, 5H

*	A	B	C	D	E
82	72	62	52	41	35

**Note:** Grade boundaries may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper.

Further copies of this publication are available from  
Edexcel Publications, Adamsway, Mansfield, Notts, NG18 4FN

Telephone 01623 467467  
Fax 01623 450481

Email [publications@linneydirect.com](mailto:publications@linneydirect.com)

Order Code UG023808 summer 2010

For more information on Edexcel qualifications, please visit [www.edexcel.com/quals](http://www.edexcel.com/quals)

Edexcel Limited. Registered in England and Wales no.4496750  
Registered Office: One90 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH