



Entry Level Certificate 2010

ENGLISH

Chief Examiner: Marilyn Walters

Entries

Total Entry	6977
Entry 3	2546
Entry 2	3069
Entry 1	1023
Ungraded	339

Introduction

This year brought the death of Dilys Ralph, who had been joint Chief Examiner since 2003. Dilys suffered a long illness but continued working for the WJEC until the end. She will be remembered not only for her great professionalism and amazing memory but also for the unstinting support she gave to teachers and her wonderful generosity of spirit. She is sadly missed.

Themes for both the examination ('Healthy Eating') and the controlled task ('Going Green') were both very popular and current.

Access Arrangements

Most centres follow the access arrangements to be found in the JCQ regulations. These regulations are also made clear on the front of the task and the examination, as well as in the course specification. However, there continues to be a small minority who still scribe for candidates in the Writing section, which means that no marks can be awarded for this section; this also applies when the Reading section is read to the candidate.

Examination

- The subject matter of the 2010 examination paper 'Healthy Living Roadshow' seemed to interest most candidates and most were able to make informed, personal responses. The more able candidates were able to use details from the resource material in their final essay and all appeared to know how beneficial healthy eating and exercise are!
- The paper again used symbols to draw the candidates' attention to the relevant section but more leeway was given this year to those students who found answers elsewhere on the paper.
- The form was completed well by most candidates although many are still unaware of block capitals.
- Most candidates gained full marks in the cloze exercise.

- Question 4, which asks the candidates to choose three people to go with them giving reasons for their choice, is the task which many find demanding; repetition is not rewarded and the reasons should relate to the task i.e. saying why these people would enjoy an activity weekend.
- The story appealed to all abilities and will be remembered for the candidate who was entranced by the 'posh' hotel, with its marble floors, golden lift and smell of *Shake 'n Vac!*

Controlled Task

The Controlled Task is an increasingly popular alternative to the examination. This year, for the first time, centres were not asked to mark the scripts which must have been a relief to all hard-pressed teachers.

- Questions 1 a – g were answered well by most candidates. However, question 1(h) and 1(i), which demand that candidates are aware of the difference between factual and persuasive writing, were less satisfactory. Centres need to do preparatory work with candidates before they attempt the task. In 1(h) candidates must not copy phrases from the resource material, but must write their answer in a sentence. Also, in 1(i) the reason given must explain why the chosen word/phrase/graphic is persuasive – it must not explain a fact.
- The poster was well attempted by most candidates but some had not read the instructions carefully i.e. that this was an activity in their school, not at Elm Road School. This was put in place so that candidates would not rely on the resource material as this is a task to demonstrate Writing skills, not Reading skills.
- Some of the stories were highly entertaining, although the one suggesting that their school save energy by stopping the lifts from working may have led to more problems than foreseen! A day without electricity seems to strike terror into the hearts of many, not because of the lack of light and heat, but the thought of going out without using hair straighteners is too much for some.
- Examiners were delighted to receive controlled task before the deadline and would like to pass on their thanks to the centres which managed to do this.
- If the Reading section is undertaken orally, then the candidate's exact words must be written down by a scribe. It should be noted that a scribe may only be used for question 1 where reading is being assessed.
- Question 2, the poster and envelope are always a pleasure to see. Most candidates are now aware that ten pieces of information are being sought and use the planning box wisely. The envelope must be completed using the candidate's own name and address (or the address of the school) and in the correct line format.

Coursework

It is always a privilege to see the work sent in by centres, most of which are unstinting in their efforts to get the best out of their students.

Administration

- Many centres are now submitting their coursework before the due date which is very helpful for the moderators.
- The E2 form had to be downloaded from the WJEC website (www.wjec.co.uk). Thankfully, some centres still photocopied it on A3 paper, using it to wrap around the five pieces of written work. It would be very helpful if all centres could do this or hold together each candidate's folder with a treasury tag. Some centres use files and plastic wallets but this is not necessary. All the work, though, should be marked En2:1, En2:2 etc so it can be easily identified.
- Very few centres forgot to authenticate students' work this year.

En1: Speaking and Listening

- Tapes and CDs were sent this year. These must have a running order and individual marks for the presentations must be included also as the moderator only has the global mark for Speaking and Listening if the student's written work has not been included in the sample.
- The option of witness statements for En1: Speaking and Listening was not taken up by many centres. When witness statements are submitted, however, they must be on the E5 form.

Tasks

- The appropriateness of tasks continues to be a problem; it is not enough to use a text as a stimulus for creative writing and then submit it for En2: Reading e.g. reading a short play and then writing a script. Such work belongs in the En3:3 range.
- The study of leaflets is also still problematic; if a leaflet is studied for En2: Reading, the candidates must be able to comment on its appeal, how it persuades, etc. To be able to write a leaflet by themselves does not show a response to their reading. Similarly, if the candidates design a leaflet for En3: Writing, they should be able to write an extended piece deconstructing it i.e. explaining why they designed it in such a way. It is never enough just to submit a leaflet on its own for either element.
- The inclusion of drafting evidence is accepted by most centres now as is the clear annotation of the students' work; without these, moderation is extremely difficult, if not impossible, as the moderator has to see how much help/support the candidate needed in order to produce the final draft. For the same reason, all writing frames/worksheets should be included with the work.

Assessment

- The majority of teachers' marking is fair and consistently applies the criteria. When moderators disagree with the assessment it is made clear in the moderator's report. Exemplar material is available and also the INSET days in autumn always address this issue. The most frequent mistake is made when effort is rewarded rather than achievement.

- Unfortunately, there were a number of cases of plagiarism this year that had to be reported to the WJEC Malpractice Committee for investigation. Centres should be vigilant against candidates copying work from the Internet, or other materials used in class, and passing it off as their own. Whilst students may discuss and prepare for tasks in class, coursework is not to be a collaborative effort and should represent the individual's response. Practice where a group response is submitted is to be wholly discouraged.
- Centres are advised to use 'the printed word' for assessment of EN2: Reading rather than 'the moving image'. Analysing a film or television programme does not allow candidates to demonstrate the assessment criteria, or constitute 'reading' in the context of an English qualification, so 'media texts' as referred to by the specification document should be interpreted as articles from magazines or newspaper, print advertisements, leaflets/brochures and so on.

Administration

Generally the administration of all elements of the course was carried out effectively. However, a number of issues did come to light through the assessment period:

- It was disappointing that so many centres missed the submission date for the coursework. Moderators only have a three week window to moderate all the centres in their allocation and any delays can impact on the schedule for results being sent to centres, in addition to the extra work for moderators and WJEC in chasing up missing coursework. Adherence to deadlines is required from all centres.
- All 'C' forms should be sent directly to the WJEC, not to the moderator.
- Centres should keep a record of all postings, and a photocopy of the E1s or 'C' form, as work can occasionally go astray.
- Examination Officers are informed of deadlines for controlled tasks and coursework. These dates are not arbitrary and should centres have any difficulty in meeting these deadlines, the WJEC Entry Level office should be informed immediately.

Scaling

Fewer centres had their marks scaled this year. However, the size of some of the scalings would indicate that some centres need to receive further training on assessment at Entry Level, and attendance at the INSET is recommended.

INSET

Another successful and productive round of INSET took place in the autumn term of 2009 in Cardiff, Swansea, Birmingham, Manchester, Llandudno and London and these will also be the locations for the 2010 INSET. The meetings provide opportunities to train delegates in all aspects of the course, allow teachers to talk to other teachers, which helps them discover how colleagues have overcome certain difficulties in delivering the course, and provide updates and information relevant to the course. A full day was allocated for each venue this year and we certainly enjoyed meeting everyone and sharing good practice. We look forward to meeting teachers at the next round of INSET meetings this autumn. Centres delivering Entry Level English are strongly advised to attend INSET meetings.