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# **GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS**

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**GCE  
WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE  
AS/A LEVEL**

**SUMMER 2023**

## Introduction

Our Principal examiners' reports offer valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. They are written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and detail how candidates have performed.

This report offers an overall summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It goes on to look in detail at each question/section of each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.<sup>i</sup>

The information found in this report can provide invaluable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

## Further support

Document	Description	Contact
Professional Learning / CPD	WJEC offers an extensive annual programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	<a href="https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/">https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/</a>
Past Papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 6 months after the examination.	<a href="http://www.wjecservices.co.uk">www.wjecservices.co.uk</a> or on the WJEC subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level.  For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the overall subject, rather than for each unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: <a href="http://www.wjec.co.uk/Results_Grade_Boundaries_and_PRS">Results, Grade Boundaries and PRS (wjec.co.uk)</a>

Exam Results Analysis	WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	<a href="http://www.wjecservices.co.uk">www.wjecservices.co.uk</a>
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	<a href="https://resources.wjec.co.uk/">https://resources.wjec.co.uk/</a>
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	<a href="http://www.wjecservices.co.uk">www.wjecservices.co.uk</a> or on the WJEC subject page
Become an examiner with WJEC.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with invaluable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	<a href="#">Become an Examiner   WJEC</a>

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## Subject Officer's Executive Summary

For Unit 1 this year, a total of 287 candidates were entered and of these, 71.8% were 17 years old, 19.9% were younger than 17 and 2.4% were over 17. There was no advance information for this unit this year. The Principal Examiner noted that there were few examples of candidates who could not respond at all and that it was clear that most centres had followed the specification when preparing to discuss the film. They noted that it was encouraging to see improvement in the preparation work to discuss the NEA.

For Unit 2 this year, a total of 316 candidates were entered and of these, 65.2% were 17 years old, 27.5% were younger than 17 and 2.2% were over 17. In contrast to the 2022 series, candidates were required to write three different pieces of work, including the piece under special conditions. The Principal Moderator noted that the best candidates should be applauded for developing their independence skills and choosing challenging texts.

For Unit 3 this year, a total of 318 candidates were entered and of these, 66.0% were 17 years old, 21.7% were younger than 17 and 6.9% were over 17. Advance information was released for Section A this year. According to the Principal Examiner, it was encouraging to see that the majority of candidates had attempted every part of the paper. They also noted that responses this year were better than in previous years. In terms of language errors, the same type of errors undermine candidates' performance (e.g. the nominative clause, mutations).

For Unit 4 this year, a total of 164 candidates were entered and of these, 94.5% were 18 years old and 4.3% were younger than 18. There was no advance information for this unit this year. The Principal Examiner noted that it was pleasing to return to face to face examinations this year, referring to the courtesy and enthusiasm of most of the candidates. It was also pleasing to note a decrease in the old practice of rote learning. It was noted that the best candidates discussed very well but that they tended to respond to the examiner rather than each other. It would be pleasing to see centres coaching candidates to respond to each other. It was noted that the response to Section A was more mixed; this is possibly the section that centres focus on least. There were polished discussions and insightful analysis in Section B. The Principal Examiner noted that Part C had improved over the years and that the best candidates' discussions had been engaging and spontaneous. Linguistic errors included uncertainty regarding the nominative clause, mixing words up (e.g. 'siarad' and 'dweud'), Yes/No answers and overuse of English.

For Unit 5 this year, a total of 165 candidates were entered and of these, 93.9% were 18 years old and 4.2% were younger than 18. Advance information was released for Section B this year. According to the Principal Examiner, it was encouraging to see that the majority of candidates had attempted every part of the paper. They also noted that the comments of many of the candidates in Section A were encouraging, for example, it was pleasing to read about candidates going to Tafwyl and a Swami gig, guest speakers and using the Welsh language in part-time jobs. The Principal Examiner noted that candidates had responded well to the article in Section B. Almost all could respond and there were plenty of opinions. It was noted that the response to the expressing opinion question (Section B (ii)) was stronger than the response to the statistics (Section B (i)) in most cases. It was noted that language was important in this unit; the same type of linguistic errors were seen, for example, mixing up vocabulary (e.g. 'clywed' and 'gwrando', 'yn' and 'mewn'), uncertainty regarding the nominative clause, mixing up the tense of the verb (e.g. present / past) and negative sentences.

For Unit 6 this year, a total of 164 candidates were entered and of these, 94.5% were 18 years old and 4.3% were younger than 18. Advance information was released for Section B this year. The Principal Examiner noted that candidates need to be prepared for the instructions of the exam paper (e.g. Dylech chi) and that candidates need to be coached to read the questions carefully, paying attention to the format and/or the details (e.g. some had written a letter instead of an article in Section A (i) and some had used the 3rd person instead of the 1st person in Section B (i)).

Thank you very much to all the Welsh Second Language teachers and departments in the centres for all your hard work teaching, preparing, encouraging and inspiring this year's candidates.

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Unit 1 and Unit 4: Encourage candidates to interact	GCE Welsh Second Language Oral Booklet. Units 1 and 4 mark schemes	Both of these can be found on our page on the WJEC website.
Units 3, 5 and 6: Standard of candidates' language	Units 3, 5 and 6 mark schemes and past papers Blended learning resources, exam walk-through and knowledge organisers	All of these can be found on our page on the WJEC website, on the WJEC secure website or on the WJEC digital resources website.

**WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE**  
**General Certificate of Education**  
**Summer 2023**  
**Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced**

**UNIT 1 – Film and Oracy**

**General comments**

It was very pleasing to be back examining everyone face to face this year. It was a pleasure and a privilege to visit schools across the country and receive a warm welcome from teachers and candidates. Thank you to every centre for making careful preparations to provide a suitable examination room and for ensuring that staff were at hand to provide support when needed.

Once again this year, examiners noted that all the candidates were friendly and enthusiastic young people who wished to be as successful as possible in the assessment. The groups under examination, almost without exception, displayed evidence of careful teaching.

**Administrative**

The vast majority of forms for recording marks were completed in a well-organized and neat manner by centres. However, centres are advised to take care when recording the title of every candidate's non-examination work and to remember that only the total mark (60 marks) is required.

It is worth noting that great care must be taken when creating examination groups. Placing candidates of different abilities in the same pair or group is sometimes unavoidable, but it is better if individuals are as close as possible to each other in terms of ability. Where there are significant differences, there is a risk that less confident candidates will allow more confident candidates to take the lead and dominate the conversation.

It is clear that candidates understand the requirements of the examination in advance due to the careful preparation of their teachers. They understand the order of the test and the circumstances that would apply before entering the examination room.

It was also nice to have a short conversation with candidates before hand to calm their nerves before the examination work.

Naturally, the standard of the groups varied but it was a pleasure to see the same desire to discuss and converse across the range of abilities.

It was encouraging that there were no examples of pre-scripted dialogues this year. It is felt that centres now understand that candidates who do this run the risk of becoming stuck when the examiner asks them a question or asks for an explanation during the discussion.

Having said that, there were examples of candidates who presented significant chunks that they had learnt before hand and memorised to present individually. In itself, this is natural to an extent, providing that candidates do not come to rely on this at the expense of developing the ability to discuss and present views naturally using language that is within their reach. Candidates must be flexible in their responses and develop the ability to respond to the flow of the discussion.

The specification and mark schemes require candidates to develop the ability to interact with each other in their conversations. This element of the examination needs to be developed across the range of abilities. Although candidates interacted well with the examiner on the whole, they were less confident during interaction with candidates within their groups. Developing this skill is a challenge. In strengthening candidates' ability to interact, it must be ensured that everyone also feels that they are able to demonstrate their ability and knowledge.

The most successful interaction was seen amongst the strongest candidates. It was felt that the centres who performed strongly in this element had developed the skill from the outset when delivering the course. It should be noted that training materials for this element which may be useful in considering how to develop candidates' ability to interact in the future, are available on the WJEC website.

## **Comments on individual questions/sections**

### **Part 1 Discussing the film Patagonia**

The most confident candidates discussed the film in detail giving strong opinions on the content of the story; the characters; the themes; specific scenes and filming techniques.

It was good to see that almost all candidates could present the content of the film successfully. There were less detailed conversations on the content of the film from less confident candidates but the best candidates discussed the film intelligently examining how both stories intertwined and charting the characters' development. It should be remembered that this is the simplest part of the discussion and that it allows candidates to gain confidence in talking if they have sound knowledge of the film's content.

Candidates could discuss all the characters in detail and understand how they contributed to the success of the story. Some of the liveliest discussions occurred when considering the contributions of minor characters such as Martin and Sissy. Some candidates saw how they worked as catalysts to the actions of some of the main characters and their role in the flow of the plot.

The best candidates provided a detailed and full examination of the film's themes. They could link characters' behaviour and how that linked with specific themes. With the less confident candidates, the discussion tended to be superficial focussing on the most obvious topics.

Some groups could provide a very intelligent analysis of scenes in terms of their meaning and the use of filming techniques such as camera angles; the use of music and symbolism. Referring to evidence in the film and then using purposeful quotes raised the standard of discussions markedly. In terms of quotes, it is worth noting that it is better to quote what is said in the film in Welsh rather than the English subtitles.

The most successful discussions followed the convention of presenting a view; exemplifying and then discussing significance.

### **Part 2 Discussing the Non-examination Package**

This year like every other year, a very wide and interesting range of topics were chosen as the focus of discussion for the non-examination packages. It was also clear that the liveliest discussions came from candidates who had truly enjoyed researching and creating their packages. The quality of discussion was better when it was clear that the candidate genuinely liked the topic, regardless of their level of confidence.

There were discussions on topics such as: Sports, Hockey, Football, Legends, Tourism, the NHS, Welsh Stars, Heroes, Welsh Independence, the Aberfan Disaster, Cardiff, the Castles of Wales, Capel Celyn and very many more.

Natural conversations were often had about the package in terms of its content and the decision to choose the topic. The most confident candidates could converse confidently and in detail.

With the less confident candidates, their answers could be superficial at times and it was clear that the requirement to vary the tense and person of the verb was sometimes too much of a challenge. The best discussions occurred when candidates were passionate about their choice of topic and had thorough knowledge of the content of their package.

The less confident candidates gave elementary responses to the examiner's questions rather than providing spontaneous comments.

This task requires candidates to discuss confidently using a variety of verb tenses and persons. As well as presenting information using the present tense, the past tenses of the verb must be used to discuss the process of creating and researching the work. The most successful candidates did this confidently in a natural and relaxed manner. Candidates may be asked what they would change if they could present the package again or perhaps what they intend to present for their third task. Familiarity with using the conditional forms is useful here.

Although the vast majority knew which formats had been used in their work, there were examples again this year of candidates who did not understand whether they had written an article, blog, interview etc. There were a few very rare examples of candidates who were uncertain of the theme or topic of the package that they had created.

### **Language and Grammar**

- The nominative clause. Bod + mae/ Roedd + mae/ Bydd + mae
- Mixing up “dweud” and “siarad” – “Fel dw i wedi siarad...” instead of “Fel dw i wedi dweud...”
- Mixing up words that may be assumed will be used during the discussion in part 2 e.g. llyfr/llythyr; cyfweliad/cyfrifiadur (“cyfriadur”)
- Question and answer forms. Avoid “Ie/Na” as an answer to various questions.

### **Summary of main points**

There is a need to:

- consider carefully the confidence and ability of individual candidates when creating examination groups or pairs to avoid significant differences in ability.
- continue to develop candidates' ability to interact with each other in their discussions and extend their conversations so that they do more than respond to the examiner's questions only.
- rehearse the practice of presenting a point, exemplifying and then explaining in order to improve the quality of discussions.
- ensure that candidates know about the topic and content of their non-examination packages and that they are aware of the different types of written formats (blog, conversation, letter etc).
- reinforce the use of the nominative clause.

## **WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE**

### **General Certificate of Education**

**Summer 2023**

### **Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced**

## **UNIT 2 – Non-examination Assessment**

### **General comments**

It was very pleasing to see Unit 2 restored to its full glory following last year's adaptations, and to read the various pieces written by candidates this year. There was clear evidence of candidates striving to produce pieces which test their linguistic skills in areas of personal interest to them. Although the school-time lost during the Covid pandemic continues to leave its mark on this creative work, the scope of the extended writing which underpins Unit 2 must be applauded. Candidates are seen progressing from GCSE standard to a commendable standard which can be seen consistently in the packages, all within around two terms of work. Unit 2 offers opportunities to strengthen candidates' written linguistic continuum progressing from KS4 to KS5, while developing their personal style and independent free writing skills.

### **Content, skills and themes:**

There were several different formats this year, but conversations/interviews, diaries, articles and portraits were certainly the most popular ones.

There was a variety of topics but, as expected, a number chose the area, music or sport as their theme. The best candidates chose several very ambitious topics and these were very successful on the whole. There was a mature and creative selection of topics from several candidates. This year, for example, themes included the Senedd, the translation of the Bible, the NHS, Shakespeare and Wales, legends, traditions, 'Traditional Welsh Gifts', 'Welsh Independence' and 'Cymraeg 2050 - Is it possible or not', Homelessness and Formula 1 in Wales. Packages on themes were therefore extremely natural and personal. It was clear that the choice of topics reflected these candidates' genuine interests. However, less confident candidates sometimes chose an overambitious topic and they may have benefited from selecting a topic that was of genuine interest to them.

Thorough research work could be seen in many packages. It is good practice to include a bibliography where there is evidence of background reading to enhance the content of the different pieces. Extended reading therefore expands new ideas and offers wider perspectives on the area in question. At the other end of the spectrum, a small percentage of candidates had used more or less the same content in the three tasks and had adapted that content in different ways. The best candidates succeeded in delivering very ambitious work but with some candidates, the content of the work was somewhat repetitive.

This year, the piece under special conditions was reintroduced. The standard of this piece varied with some candidates producing creative, personal and engaging extended pieces. To others, this was the most challenging piece of the package. It is clear that writing extended pieces independently and maintaining correct basic language skills was a challenge for some candidates, particularly those with weaker language skills. In general, the piece was a fair reflection of the work in the rest of the package.

Candidates are expected to write the piece under special conditions rather than type it. This prevents candidates from redrafting work using checking applications such as Cysill or Google Translate.

There were three formats in each package and the majority of centres had encouraged pupils to include extended formats as well as an introduction, a short conclusion and a bibliography. It is good practice to provide a word count for the different tasks, a cover, a contents page, the stimuli / notes used for the task under special conditions, providing a clear and standard framework for the package as a whole. The majority of centres had recorded the completion date for the tasks, which is useful in contextualising the submission dates of the different pieces.

### **Annotation and marking:**

Annotation of individual tasks is very important in non-examination assessments. Almost all centres had included comments on the individual pieces. Some were very detailed and useful to the moderation team. Comments and annotation from others were rather limited and some centres submitted pieces without any annotation, comments or evidence of correcting errors. This is a valuable opportunity to provide formative feedback to candidates and to focus specifically on common language errors. Feedback is therefore crucial in improving language, eliminating errors and ensuring candidates make progress on their linguistic writing journey.

The marking this year was accurate in general but several examples of generous marking were seen. Once again, we encourage all heads of departments to read the moderation report on the packages and the guidance provided here on the marking and content of individual packages.

**Standards:** Upper bands: The strongest candidates showed maturity in both writing and ideas. There were some excellent creative and formal pieces which demonstrated the appropriate personal style confidently. Within this cohort, a wide range of language tools was shown and there was a very good grasp (excellent in some pieces) of grammar and syntax. Some presented the two sides of a specific argument in a skilful and confident manner. Some candidates made good use of rhetorical questions. The work of the best candidates was very polished, and their grasp of the language is to be greatly applauded.

As expected, the work of candidates in the middle bands was weaker in terms of personal language tools and effective communication. This cohort's work sometimes resembled GCSE work yet there were positive aspects. It was evident that many candidates had planned their work carefully and were clearly writing about topics which were close to their hearts but they lacked the language tools and accuracy which characterise the upper bands.

Amongst those at the bottom of the language bands, a number of them displayed evidence of reliance on direct translations from the English; and the use of translation websites. In some instances the introductions to the package were far more naturally correct than the pieces themselves. In being overambitious, there were examples of countless errors which affected the flow of pieces. Candidates must therefore be encouraged to use and practise familiar, simple and accurate language tools to reinforce their personal basic language skills.

All packages were neatly presented and most had included a cover page for the package, an introduction and a bibliography. Some were colourful and included images. Almost without exception, candidates demonstrated pride in their work.

## Summary of main points

Encourage candidates to produce pieces which are of sufficient length, and the pieces in the package should be of a consistent length in order to reach the upper bands. Extended background reading leads to the opportunity to produce extended pieces and original and engaging content.

Purposeful annotation to provide feedback to pupils (Assessment for Learning) and also to provide useful feedback to moderators.

Avoid the use of online translation tools as they can lead to unnatural language and inconsistency in style. There was evidence this year of the impact of translation systems and candidates using technical and flawless language which is characteristic of a fully fluent cohort of Welsh speakers. Pupils must be encouraged to continue to use their natural language tools to develop a suitable personal style.

The importance of reading widely in Welsh and in English to enhance candidates' knowledge and understanding of the content of their area and expand their reading skills in Welsh. This will enhance our learners' language skills and expand their terminology and creative skills, and it will open up another world of reading sources which are an important part of personal linguistic development.

To conclude, the passion for Wales and the Welsh language was clear in the candidates' work. Congratulations to everyone involved in teaching them and to the candidates themselves for their linguistic progress in this unit.

## WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE

### General Certificate of Education

Summer 2023

### Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced

## UNIT 3 – The Use of Language and Poetry

### General comments

This unit is designed to give candidates the opportunity to showcase their written skills in Welsh by responding to questions on the use of language (Section A) and responding to poetry (Section B). Section A assesses candidates' awareness of Welsh grammar (correcting errors/changing the tense of the verb) as well as their personal writing in the form of an informal letter.

Section B assesses candidates' personal response to a specified poem addressing the following aspects: the content of the poem, specific aspects of style and a response to the topic of the poem. It was encouraging to see that most candidates attempted every part of the paper. Minor language errors affected the performance of several candidates and many had difficulty writing grammatically-correct and meaningful sentences. On the whole, candidates performed well compared to previous series.

### Comments on individual questions/sections

#### Section A, Question 1: Correcting language

This question received quite good responses on the whole and was attempted by all candidates.

Teachers must be thanked for providing clear and purposeful guidance to candidates.

In general, candidates followed the instructions in the question and provided the correct answer only. Very few candidates had written the whole paragraph in their response.

Most candidates corrected the following accurately: Hoffech chi, Does dim, bod and i'r.

Candidates had difficulty correcting the following:

- *Blywddyn* – several candidates didn't know how to spell the word correctly (blwyddyn)
- *Yn Canolfan yr Urdd* – a number failed to provide the nasal mutation (yng Nghanolfan)
- *Bydd ni'n* – many offered 'bydden' instead of 'byddwn'
- *Didordeb* – several candidates didn't know how to spell the word correctly (diddordeb)

#### Section A, Question 2: Changing the tense of the verb

The standard of the answers to this question was encouraging on the whole and most candidates managed to gain marks.

It is important to coach candidates to read the question carefully to learn whether the third person masculine or third person feminine is needed.

The most common errors were:

- *Ces i* – giving ‘*caeth*’
- *i* – a failure to run the preposition ‘*i*’ correctly (*iddo fe*)
- Forgetting to include ‘*y/r*’: *Mwynheudd e’r / Mwynheudd Iwan y*
- *Fy* – *ei*: uncertainty with the prefixed pronoun.

### **Section A, Question 3: Writing an e-mail to a friend**

All candidates made a decent effort and it was pleasing to see that there was something to reward in all cases.

There were several outstanding examples with enthusiastic and detailed invitations describing the possible attractions and activities with conviction using correct and polished language.

It was pleasing to see a large number of candidates making purposeful use of the suggestions on the paper. This was useful in ensuring a full and structured response.

Amongst the less confident candidates, there was an effort to respond to the question by describing their area rather than trying to persuade and entice their friend to stay. On the whole, these responses were rather superficial.

Although the writing format in the question this year was informal, students should be coached to use a high standard of Welsh when responding to exam questions. A number of examples were seen of candidates using very informal Welsh, without paying sufficient attention to language accuracy.

Some of the most common errors were as follows:

- Mixing up between ‘*ti*’ and ‘*chi*’
- Using the soft mutation following a conjugated preposition, e.g. *o fynyddoedd, i gastell*.
- Writing ‘*Mae...yn cael castell/hanes*’ instead of ‘*Mae castell yn.../Mae llawer o hanes yn...*’
- Listing attractions/restaurants rather than describing them.

### **Section B, question 1**

Most candidates demonstrated a basic understanding of the message and meaning of the poem.

A range of responses were seen and the best succeeded in explaining the content of the piece on the paper and explaining its relevance to the rest of the poem providing purposeful citations.

Several candidates had incorrectly linked the message of the poem with Tryweryn and Capel Celyn even though these are not mentioned in the poem.

Clumsy expression and language errors affected the weakest candidates. The main errors included misuse of the definite article, uncertainty in using verb forms and prepositions.

### **Section B, question 2**

Once again almost all candidates attempted this question.

The best candidates successfully understood the techniques, quoted purposefully from the poem and tried to explain why the technique was successful or effective.

This question is challenging for candidates but they can learn to structure their answer, e.g. identify the technique, offer an example and provide an explanation.

Some had discussed other techniques in the poem. Candidates must be reminded that they need to answer the question on the paper to fulfil the requirements of the criteria.

Several candidates had confused 'person cyntaf' (first person) and 'phersonoli' (personify) offering the same response to both techniques.

### **Section B, question 3**

The best candidates gave engaging and comprehensive answers with a number referring to the Wales is Not For Sale campaign, Cymraeg 2050, the duty on immigrants to learn the language.

Several used the suggestions on the paper to support them in shaping the question and this was certainly useful in structuring the response.

Unfortunately some only focused on learning Welsh and what is happening in their communities.

A number failed to consider the impact of inward migration and why people moving to Wales should learn the language.

The common written errors are:

- Difficulty in using the nominative clause, e.g. Rwy'n credu bod...
- Using pronouns correctly – ei fod e'n / ei bod hi'n...
- Mutations
- Using 'yn' before 'eisiau'
- Using bardd/barddoniaeth instead of cerdd.
- Writing 'mewn' Lerpwl instead of 'yn'

### **Summary of main points**

- Coach students to read every question carefully
- Coach students to use a high standard of Welsh when responding to exam questions
- Focus on the common writing errors identified above
- Focus on teaching the definite article, verb forms and prepositions.

**WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE**  
**General Certificate of Education**  
**Summer 2023**  
**Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced**

**UNIT 4 – Drama and Oracy**

**General comments**

There are three parts to this unit:  
Section A: Living through the medium of Welsh  
Section B: Discussing the play  
Section C: Personal response Synoptic Assessment

When assessing candidates in the Oral Examination, their ability to demonstrate specific information about the drama and its background, to listen attentively to others, raise questions, develop opinions, interact and form conclusions is considered. Consideration is also given to their ability to speak Welsh correctly and proficiently using an appropriate register for the purpose and audience.

It was a pleasure to conduct face to face examinations this year and meet the young people and their teachers. It is also pleasing to note that examiners referred to the courtesy and enthusiasm of candidates who were almost without exception eager to please. Suitable arrangements had been made for the examinations in the centres with the exception of a few cases where we had to ask for a more suitable room.

In general there was evidence of good teaching in most of centres and on the whole, teachers had understood the requirements of the specification with the old practice of 'rote learning' decreasing and consequently there were natural performances of a much higher standard.

Although the best candidates can discuss very well, the majority respond to the examiner rather than each other. This, unfortunately, is one of the biggest weaknesses in that even the best candidates are not taught to discuss as a pair / group in a manner that would achieve the highest possible marks.  
With some exceptions, the marks from the various centres were accurate.

**Comments on individual questions/sections**

**Section A: Living through the medium of Welsh**

It appears, unfortunately, that this is the section that receives the least attention. Evidence suggests that preparation for this part of the examination in a number of centres is a last minute affair which comes through studying the play and the synoptic elements. With thorough and timely preparation, a large number of the 20 marks available can be won. The specification states that candidates must discuss the Welsh language in society as well as refer to various aspects such as Welsh language films, theatre productions, Welsh language journalism and the Welsh language on social media.

I suggest that this work should start early on in the A Level course by, for example, setting homework such as watching a Welsh language television programme or reading a Welsh language article in Lingo / Golwg / local paper and then discussing them in the classroom. They are also expected to have watched a Welsh language film, in addition to Patagonia, and express their opinion on it. The best candidates could respond to a number of these points and some could talk meaningfully about what they had seen/watched. With things getting back to normal in our centres and in society, they were expected to have visited the theatre this year and to have received a visit from a guest speaker. Some centres had managed to arrange visits from Welsh speakers and in these cases, candidates had benefited greatly from the experience and could discuss it very well.

A number enjoyed talking about tweeting in Welsh, following Welsh speakers on Instagram and using Facebook and Snapchat together as a group.

In terms of reading in Welsh, a large number could refer to something that they had read, usually in IAW or Lingo and the best could discuss an article from Golwg in a very ambitious manner.

Of course, we sympathise with those in English-speaking areas where there are fewer opportunities to hear Welsh being used. These candidates must therefore be coached to say what they would like to see in their area in order to give learners the opportunity to practise/improve their language.

Although a number were successful in this section, a great deal of work is required for further development.

### **Section B Discussing the play**

On the whole, there was a favourable response to the play 'Crash' by Sera Moore Williams; the candidates, almost without exception, enjoyed studying it and discussing the characters Wes, Els and Rhys.

A high percentage could comment on almost all the bullet points in the specification but, of course, the standard varied greatly.

There were polished discussions from many who analysed characters and discussed specific scenes, the message of the play, themes and personal opinions. The best succeeded in discussing symbolism, irony, conflict and contrast in a very skilful way.

Some provided striking quotations to reinforce and shape their opinions. There were a number of mature answers and the examiners heard new ideas that had not been raised before. Again this year, there were meaningful discussions on mental health problems as a theme which arises from the play.

On the whole the weakest candidates succeeded in responding to the examiner's comments and they were also mature enough to ask for help with a word(s) or to admit that they hadn't understood the question. It would have been nice to see this cohort providing more detailed character descriptions – some responses were very fragmented.

Some candidates, however, used far too much English but these were a minority.

During the discussion on the play, as in Section A, very few could interact and ask questions while doing so, and come to conclusions. The requirement to work as a group/pair is something that the majority of centres should work on for the future.

### **Personal response Synoptic Assessment**

The synoptic element has improved over the years and there was further improvement this year. By now most teachers, and candidates, have realised that there must be a link with the play every time. Also, in general, the temptation to refer to a great many unconnected texts was resisted.

There were interesting and spontaneous discussions from the best candidates when comparing the selfishness of the character Els with the character Non (Pwy Fyth a Fyddai'n Fetel) and also Gwen (Patagonia). The best candidates greatly enjoy discussing these links and interpreted them assuredly.

Among the weaker candidates, the connections were somewhat lacking and this cohort could only provide one or two examples.

The themes which were discussed most often were relationships, love, family and responsibility. Some enjoyed discussing different kinds of love between characters including the love triangle which is so obvious in the texts and others chose to refer to relationships and family in a most skilful manner. Again this year, some referred to 'mental health' as a theme or sub-theme and could discuss this topic in an open and mature manner.

There was evidence in some centres that they had made use of the WJEC Synoptic Materials referred to during CPD training sessions. Every centre is encouraged to make use of this valuable resource.

As Section C is an individual examination it's easier to set the discussions at the candidate's level.

### **Language/Grammar**

The expected variety was seen in the standard of candidates' language with the best on the whole demonstrating a high standard with a strong element of accuracy and a wide vocabulary.

Unfortunately, one of the linguistic errors and mistakes seen again this year, and the most common, was misuse of the nominative clause – mae / bod.

A number used 'siarad' instead of 'dweud' and the relative clause still causes difficulty for several candidates.

Work is also required on responding to questions using the correct affirmative/negative forms Ydw/Ydy/Oes/Oeddwn/Do and so on.

Thanks once again to all the centres and candidates for their hard work and perseverance.

### **Summary of main points**

- Prepare students to interact and discuss with each other in pairs/groups in Section A and B.
- Give sufficient attention to every section.
- Regularly practise responding to questions using the correct affirmative/negative forms
- Make use of the synoptic resource.

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**UNIT 5 – The Welsh Language in Society and Translanguaging**

**General comment**

I would like to thank the teachers for their work in preparing candidates for this unit. It was clear that a number of centres had arranged guest speakers and visits to relevant festivals/organisations during the course. A number of candidates said that such experiences had made an impression on them, encouraging them on their language journey and igniting their passion. It was also clear that some had plenty of opportunities to speak and hear the language in their lessons, which was of great benefit to them.

As the marking scheme clearly shows, the criteria for this paper focuses mainly on the **standard of the language** used in answers. It is suggested that centres pay special attention therefore to the comments made below regarding the language.

It was pleasing to see that almost all candidates could respond to the themes that arose in the paper.

**Comments on individual questions/sections**

**Section A: The Welsh language in Society**

**Question 1(i)**

There were examples of very mature and polished language. A few other candidates had written simply – but correctly – and had succeeded in providing very acceptable responses.

However, basic language errors affected expression in the answers of a number of candidates. A lack of language tools and a tendency to be overambitious were the main obstacles to writing intelligently.

The strongest responses elaborated on specific examples of ways in which Welsh opens the door to a new culture. These candidates assessed which aspects of Welsh language culture were most valuable to them and why. They provided clear reasons and expressed opinion confidently, with some making suggestions about how to attract more young learners to enjoy Welsh language culture.

The majority of candidates successfully used the bullet points on the exam paper as a basis for their answers.

It was wonderful to read about some candidates' interest in Welsh language music, with artists such as Bronwen Lewis being highly praised. Some could talk about their love of seeing Welsh language bands and singers performing live. A number could refer to their personal experiences of going to the theatre to watch a Welsh language production and the pleasure it gave them. Almost all knew about the Urdd and its activities and could also provide very suitable examples of the Welsh language in the media, and the Welsh language and technology.

Although almost all candidates could provide examples of Welsh language culture, some tended to simply list them without providing sufficient detail.

A few candidates were unsure of the meaning of the word 'diwylliant' (culture).

Some candidates referred to Saunders Lewis, Gwynfor Evans and the Beasleys without linking them to the question.

### **Question 1(ii)**

The comments made under 1(i) regarding the standard of candidates' language also apply to question 1(ii).

It was pleasing to read that so many candidates use their Welsh skills in their part-time jobs and that take pride in their ability to converse with customers/colleagues in Welsh.

Some referred to family members where some knowledge of Welsh had been useful to them in their everyday work.

The best answers could discuss the role of the Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner in a knowledgeable and mature manner. In contrast, a number of candidates struggled to link this with the statement in the question.

As in 1(i), some answers discussed irrelevant content.

Some candidates confused the requirements for 1(i) and 1(ii).

### **Targets**

Candidates should make use of the language tools they have, aiming to write clearly and correctly, rather than being overambitious in their use of language.

Attention must be given to grammar and syntax, for example:

- the nominative clause;
- mutation rules (e.g. soft mutation following a preposition; aspirate mutation following the conjunction 'a'; yr iaith Gymraeg)
- the difference between 'mewn'/'yn'; 'adnabod'/'gwybod';
- the negative (e.g. 'dydy hi ddim' instead of 'mae hi ddim');
- the tenses of the verb;
- the definite article.

Every candidate must be clear about the role of the Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner and how this applies to the world of work in Wales.

Candidates must avoid discussing content that is not relevant to the question.

### **Section B: Translanguaging**

The most successful answers used the information in the piece, adapted the information and responded personally to it. These candidates had planned their work carefully. They used a variety of language tools and sound syntax and grammar.

Candidates, almost without exception, could respond to the text, referring to their own experiences or their friends' experiences. It was pleasing to read the personal accounts of some candidates – one relished the independence gained after passing the driving test but also missed her mother's company in the passenger seat! Another discussed the feeling of being an adult and being able to offer her parents a lift home after a night out. Such touches made an impression.

It was pleasing to see some making purposeful and correct use of phrases such as '*gyda phob parch*', '*sôn am ddurd*', '*mae'n hynod o bwysig*', '*ar yr un pryd*', '*er gwaethaf y ffaith bod...*'.

The majority of candidates made good use of the vocabulary on the exam paper.

Conveying information and facts posed the biggest challenges. Discussing the statistics and percentages proved to be a stumbling block for a number of candidates as they had difficulty conveying the information using intelligible syntax. Conveying disappointment/shock also proved difficult.

A small percentage failed to set out their work in the form of a letter.

A number of candidates failed to open their letter correctly (e.g. putting the addresses in English) and failed to use suitable phrases to close the letter.

It was good to see this year that there were very few examples of candidates quoting sentences and words in English from the article.

In general, as in the rest of the paper, linguistic limitations and language errors undermined the answers to this question. The grammatical errors seen this year are the same as those seen many times before in previous reports.

### **Summary of main points**

Candidates should focus on the format (formal letter this year) setting the work out appropriately.

Attention must be given to grammar and syntax. In addition to the language points listed under Section A, candidates should:

- avoid mixing 'ti' and 'chi' (e.g. '*Beth ydy dy farn di? Dych chi'n cytuno?*'). It should be remembered that 'chi' is customary in a formal letter;
- use the past tense when discussing things which have happened, rather than using the present tense;
- distinguish between words such as '*clywed*'/'*gwrando*'; '*nifer*'/'*rhif*'; '*gwyllo*'/'*gweld*'; '*ystafell*'/'*lle*'; '*hawdd*'/'*haws*'.
- use '*gormod*' instead of '*rhy gormod*';
- use '*maen nhw*' instead of '*mae nhw*'.

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**UNIT 6 – The Use of Language and the Short Story**

**General comments**

In general, the feeling amongst examiners again this year was that they enjoyed marking the work. Thank you to the teachers for their hard work and dedication in teaching, learning and preparing thoroughly for the exam which is, of course, challenging. Centres received advance information about the choice of short story to support their preparation for Section B. In addition, the coloured poster for Question 1 was welcomed by centres.

**Comments on individual questions/sections**

**SECTION A: Use of Language**

**Question 1i** – Write an article in response to the coloured poster on recycling.

The coloured poster was attractive and supported candidates in the lower bands. The question also arose from a theme studied as part of the GCSE course and this in turn gave them confidence at the beginning of the exam.

As usual with this question, the instructions are clear:

‘Wrth ysgrifennu’r erthygl **dylech chi:**’ (When writing the article, you should:)

This also provides structure for the content within the mark scheme. The body of the advert offers a great deal of support but, of course, the language must be adapted and copying whole sentences from the exam paper without providing an explanation is not acceptable.

It must be stated again that Section A is a *Use of Language* Section and therefore when marking it is the language which is foremost even though the descriptors in the columns on the left-hand side of the mark scheme are an essential part of the answer too.

e.g. ‘respond appropriately to **every aspect** of the question, showing **originality** and organising the work in a way which demonstrates an **awareness of the aim and the audience** and thus **creates an effect.**’

It is important that candidates **read the question carefully**. Some had written a letter and therefore they could not be awarded more than **Band 2** for their work.

**Common errors:**

- lack of variety of suitable and effective sentences
- unnecessary mutation
- failure to use the nasal mutation e.g. ‘fy nheulu’
- forgetting the soft mutation after the conditional
- nominative clause
- mixing up the conditional and the future (e.g. ‘byddwn i’ instead of ‘bydda i’)
- incorrect use of the preposition after ‘edrych ymlaen’ (‘i’ instead of ‘at’)
- ‘ti’ and ‘chi’ - sometimes using both in the same sentence.

Also, the following mistakes which have been identified in the past in reports by principal examiners -

bod mae

mae ... ddim

yn eisiau

the genitive

the impersonal

the irregular verbs of the short form past tense (ces i; aeth o; daethon ni etc)

**Question 1ii** – Write the correct form of the word or figure which are numbered and in brackets.

This was quite a challenging question if candidates did not have a firm grasp of verbal forms, feminine numeral forms and telling the time in Welsh.

This leads to the need to ensure that every lesson has a linguistic focus.

Very few candidates managed to win more than half of the marks.

It was surprising to see that candidates failed to cope with numbers 1 and 2 (in particular) and that they did not have a firm grasp of verbal forms; 4. Byddwn 6. Cawsom 7. Roedden.

It is easy to win 10 marks in this question if candidates know their grammar and hear, speak and use the language in their written work consistently.

## **SECTION B** – The Short Story

**2i** – Imagining that **you are Keflusker X**, write a response to the **nasty way that Non talks to you** and also **the disrespectful way that she treats you**.

As in Section A, question 1i, it was expected that candidates would make appropriate use of the bullet points in the question although the instruction given this time was 'yn eich llythyr **gallech chi**' ('in your letter you could'). Overall, several very commendable responses were provided and the use of the bullet points led the best candidates to write confidently and methodically.

Some answers were too long and were therefore grammatically weak and repetitive.

'About 100 words' is mentioned in the exam paper and therefore, once more, candidates need to be coached to be concise.

It is also important to note that the extract from the short story which appears on the exam paper, **rather than the whole story**, should be used as a basis for the responses in this question and question **2ii** (the techniques) **and 2iii** (the synoptic). Any reference to the relationship between Non and her husband Jack, his affair with Andy or her friendship with Mari did not meet the requirement of the question. Some had written long and repetitive responses using the third person and, unfortunately, the marks had to reflect this.

## 2ii – Discuss the techniques of the extract in question by:

- identifying the techniques in the **extract** (rather than the **whole story**)
- giving an **example / examples of the techniques**
- **explaining the effect** of the techniques

In order to gain marks in the upper bands **every** technique in the question must be discussed. Band 3 is the maximum that can be awarded unless reference is made to all the techniques listed in the question. Again this year, some candidates did not address all the techniques even though there were clear examples of each one in the extract. The majority succeeded in identifying an example/examples of the techniques but it is vitally important that candidates are coached to explain why a technique is successful. There was a tendency to repeat the same fact over and over again and they often made little sense.

## 2iii – The synoptic question

Item Level Data show that this question is less accessible to candidates. The issue in most cases is the concept of **cross-referencing**, and not only for weaker candidates. It was reassuring to see that candidates in the upper bands had cross-referenced the **extract in question** with other texts which addressed the same theme and they commonly had the language tools to do so e.g. it was clear that they had been signposted to WJEC resources which coach them to use sentences such as 'gellir dadlau'; 'mae'n amlwg bod ...' and so on.

A number of candidates had paid attention to the key words which were 'cysylltu **gyda'r darn ar dudalen 5**' (link with the extract on page 5) and they also had the language tools to do so. Additionally, it is clear that they were coached to keep to the theme **in the question** although some candidates referred to the '**perthynas/relationship**' theme specifically rather than 'y ffordd y mae **cymeriad hunanol** fel Non yn cael **effaith negyddol** ar berthynas' (the way that a **selfish character** like Non has a **negative impact** on a relationship). Once again this year, it was pleasing to see that candidates in some centres had been guided to read or watch texts which demonstrate wider study. References were made to *Hedd Wyn*, *Solomon a Gaenor*, *Pe Bai'r Wyddfa i Gyd yn Gaws*, *Pijin* and other theatrical performances.

It's important that candidates learn 'stock' sentences for oral and written synoptic responses and that they use them consistently in context.

### For information:

There is a (non-statutory) synoptic resource available on the WJEC website which provides a teacher-guided exercise and opportunities for candidates to work independently. Here are other examples of how to answer the synoptic question (How a character's selfishness can destroy a relationship) for the 2023 paper.

1. Non's selfishness and the way that this leads to her rude and nasty behaviour towards *Keflusker X* reminds us of the selfishness of Mr Tremeer, the policeman, in the short story *Angladd yn y Wlad*. The fact that Mr Tremeer is more concerned about his role and status within the police than he is about protecting his 15 year relationship with the narrator.
2. At the beginning of the film *Patagonia* it can be argued that Cerys behaves selfishly and takes advantage of Alejandro. She misleads him and deceives him by convincing him that he is going with her to Buenos Aires for a hospital appointment. This is reminiscent of Non's behaviour in the extract from *Pwy Fyth a Fyddai'n Fetal* as she tries to deceive *Keflusker X* by making him think that she is very religious.

3. Els in the film *Patagonia* is exactly like Non. Els's selfishness leads her to take advantage of her friend, Rhys. Of course, Rhys (and Wes) realises that everything revolves around her (which is also true of Non) and in the end, this has a negative and destructive impact.
4. In the short story *Beth os?* by Llio Mai Hughes, there are three extremely selfish character, Maldwyn, Ceri's boss and Ceri's parents. Due to his selfishness, Maldwyn takes advantage of the opportunity to give Ceri a kiss under the mistletoe even though he is aware of her fragile situation after her recent break-up with Gareth. Not only does Maldwyn's selfishness destroy the working relationship between Ceri and her boss but it also pushes Ceri to take a huge risk in leaving her job and travelling to Australia to spend Christmas with Marc (who she hasn't met yet).

Of course, Maldwyn isn't the only one to blame because Ceri's parents are just as selfish as they decide to spend Christmas and new year in New York rather than keep Ceri company as she faces the festive period on her own.

Like Non and her behaviour towards *Keflusker X*, the selfishness of Maldwyn and Ceri's parents shows that they only care about themselves.

I trust that these words will be useful to you in preparing for future Unit 6 papers.

Once again, I would like to thank everyone involved in the process in 2023 and especially my co-markers for their thorough and professional work.

## Summary of main points

### Section A and B

Coach candidates to read the question carefully before starting the task

#### Section A

Identify opportunities to improve the standard of candidates' grammar

#### Section B

##### Question 2ii - Techniques

Extend opportunities to practise answering this type of question using the following 3 steps:

1. identify the techniques in the **extract** (rather than the **whole story**)
2. choose an example / examples of **every** technique in the **extract**
3. explain the effect of the techniques on the content of the **extract**

##### Question 2iii - Synoptic

Signpost candidates to resources which will provide guidance on each aspect of the question to ensure that they have 'stock' sentences and the necessary skills to **cross-reference** between different aspects of the topic and the **extract** from the story which is in the exam paper, rather than the **whole story**.

## Supporting you

### Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team are on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 02920265162

E-mail: [sian.llewelyn@wjec.co.uk](mailto:sian.llewelyn@wjec.co.uk)

Qualification webpage: [AS/A Level Welsh Second Language \(wjec.co.uk\)](http://www.wjec.co.uk)

See other useful contacts here: [Useful Contacts | WJEC](#)

### Professional Learning / CPD Training

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: <https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/>

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<sup>i</sup> ***Please note: where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.***