



GCE Examiners' Report AS/ADVANCED

Welsh Second Language
GCE AS/ADVANCED
Summer 2024

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Introduction

Our Principal examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each unit.

This report opens with a 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 then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.¹

The information found in this report provides valuable 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	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	WJEC offers an extensive 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.	https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
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 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page
Grade boundary information	<p>Grade Boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.</p>	For unitised specifications click here: Results, Grade Boundaries and PRS (wjec.co.uk)

¹ 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.

Exam Results Analysis	WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
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.	https://resources.wjec.co.uk/
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.	Portal by WJEC 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 valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Become an Examiner WJEC

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Executive Summary

In Unit 1 this year a total of 327 candidates were entered, of which 70.6% were 17 years old, 25.7% were under 17 years old and 2.8% were over 17 years old. The Principal Examiner noted that the best candidates were able to communicate confidently and discuss complex concepts using refined language. It was also noted that it was a pleasure to hear less confident candidates discussing with enthusiasm.

In Unit 2 this year a total of 337 candidates were entered, of which 68.5% were 17 years old, 25.5% were under 17 years old and 5% were over 17 years old. The Principal Moderator noted that this unit gives candidates the freedom to pursue an area of personal interest to them and that many are to be commended for choosing different and interesting topics.

In Unit 3 this year a total of 346 candidates were entered, of which 66.8% were 17 years old, 25.7% were under 17 years old and 6.6% were over 17 years old. The Principal Examiner noted that the best candidates used the conditional tense correctly in the first question of Section A. In terms of language errors, the most common were prepositions, mutations and verbs.

In Unit 4 this year a total of 168 candidates were entered, of which 88.1% were 18 years old and 7.1% were under 18 years old. The Principal Examiner noted that the interaction element is improving gradually. The best candidates had mature discussions. Candidates in the lower bands made a good attempt using simple language, but struggled to express themselves.

In Unit 5 this year a total of 169 candidates were entered, of which 88.2% were 18 years old and 7.1% were under 18 years old. Section A question 1 (i) provided the best responses this year and it is clear that centres spend time looking at the topics of interest to candidates. In Section B (Translanguaging), most were able to use the information in the piece and modify it in order to respond, but there was too much English in some responses.

In Unit 6 this year a total of 169 candidates were entered, of which 88.2% were 18 years old and 7.1% were under 18 years old. In Section A 1(i) a number of candidates managed to use the bullet points, but everyone needs to be encouraged to use them as they offer a structure for the response. It was noted that many had lost marks in Section A question 1(ii) due to unnecessary miscopying, for example "â'r" without the circumflex accent, omitting the "i" in "ymweliad". The best candidates responded well to Section B question 2 (iii). The Principal Examiner noted that it was good to see that some centres had studied more extensively and referred to literature / visual literature such as Hedd Wyn, Branwen Dadeni and Yr Amgueddfa. It was noted that the synoptic element continues to improve.

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

Areas for improvements	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Unit 1: Discussing the content of the NEA	GCE Welsh Second Language Oral Handbook. Unit 1 Mark Scheme PL training materials on Portal.	You can find all of these things on our webpage on the WJEC website, on Portal or on WJEC's digital resources website
Unit 4: Section C: Synoptic	Blended Learning resource Unit 4 Mark Scheme PL training materials on Portal.	You can find all of these things on our webpage on the WJEC website, on Portal or on WJEC's digital resources website
Units 3, 5 and 6: Grammar	Units 3, 5 and 6 mark schemes and past papers Blended learning resources, exam walkthroughs and knowledge organisers	You can find all of these things on our webpage on the WJEC website, on Portal or on WJEC's digital resources website.

WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE

GCE AS/A LEVEL

Summer 2024

UNIT 1 – FILM AND ORACY

Overview of the Unit

This unit comprises two parts:

Section A – Discussing the film Patagonia (Group/Pair assessment)

Section B – Discussing the non-examination work (Individual assessment)

A warm welcome was had again this year by all members of staff in all centres. Candidates were also welcoming, polite and enthusiastic. I would like to thank everyone for this and for the hard work during the year preparing candidates for their assessments.

Arrangements

A suitable room was provided in all centres. However, there were some instances where noise could be heard in the room when changing lessons or during break time and lunch time. Clear signs were displayed in nearly all centres instructing pupils and staff not to disturb the exams that were being recorded. Incidents obviously need to be avoided where individuals unknowingly enter the room during recording.

Administration

Marking sheets were provided on arrival at the vast majority of centres. Teachers are reminded that examiners only require one mark on the marking sheet which is the one that will be placed in the “Centre's Assessment” column, which is the first column for candidates' marks. There was some confusion in a few centres where candidates were involved in ‘e-sgol’ provision. We kindly ask centres who participate in such arrangements to be aware that teachers across the ‘e-sgol’ provision need to provide candidate mark sheets, so that they can be presented to the examiner on the day of the examination at the examination centre.

Centres' marking

Although it is the examiner who decides the candidate's mark on the day of the exam, it was good to see that centres had marked carefully following the marking scheme closely. The mark scheme provides a robust guide for teachers to refer to when determining candidates' marks.

Standards

It was very pleasing to see the top performing pupils discussing confidently and easily, using Welsh idioms and patterns of an extremely high standard. The stronger candidates could discuss complex concepts using eloquent language at times. They could respond to open ended questions and develop discussions amongst themselves. Less confident candidates were keen to discuss their ideas in a way that showed significant effort to learn and prepare to the best of their ability.

Scripting and memorising

There is evidence that centres have learnt the dangers of allowing candidates to create and learn a “script” for the exam. When scripts have been prepared, candidates find it extremely challenging to respond naturally to a more open discussion.

There were some examples where individual candidates had memorised large chunks which impacted the interaction and general discussion. The art of engaging others in the discussion or developing points introduced by other members of the group needs to be practised.

Grouping

Occasionally, grouping candidates of significantly different abilities is unavoidable due to the numbers that will be sitting the exam at a centre. Having said that, grouping candidates of similar abilities is far more desirable.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A – Discussing the film Patagonia

Presenting the content of both stories and discussing the characters were the two strongest elements seen by candidates. The vast majority could recall the narrative of both stories and present them clearly and also describe and express an opinion on the main characters.

Candidates found that discussing the content of the film and its two stories was a good way to start their discussion and they gained confidence in their ability to contribute to the discussion by starting in this way. Good discussions were had across the ability range. The top performing candidates discussed in depth and fluently but some of the less confident candidates provided worthwhile comments as well. Having said this, some have a tendency to discuss the less significant events in too much detail and this can lead to using up time which would be better spent on discussing other aspects of the film.

With candidates that were examined as a pair, centres are advised to prepare in a way where both candidates can discuss the two stories together rather than one candidate specialising in the Welsh story and the other specialising in the Patagonia story.

Detailed, perceptive and mature discussions were had at the top of the ability range when considering the characters. This year the secondary characters, Sissy and Martin, were discussed in more detail than has been seen in previous years and some could give an intelligent analysis of how these personalities influenced the more prominent characters in the film. The less confident candidates were also very willing to discuss the characters and more of them this year would support their opinions with specific examples from the film itself.

Although the discussions by the most confident candidates were strong throughout their assessments, less detail was provided when elements such as plot, sound, music, camera shots, irony or symbolism were discussed.

The top performing candidates expressed opinions with quotes or clear examples from the film to support their views. Developing the ability to discuss these aspects more widely amongst less confident candidates would be a good way of raising the standard of their discussions as well.

Collaboration

The ability of groups to collaborate continues to be an element that requires development. Naturally, candidates will be keen to demonstrate their understanding. As a result, candidates will tend to respond to the examiner more specifically rather than respond to the contributions of other group members. The balance between responding to a stimulus given by the examiner and developing a viewpoint based on the contributions of other candidates is something that needs to be developed further.

Some centres had fully grasped what was meant by collaboration on all levels of ability. There were times where some individuals would ignore the contributions of other group members instead of taking advantage of the opportunity to develop a viewpoint through joint discussion.

Section B – Discussing the non-examination work in Unit 2

A wide range of topics were selected for the non-examination work which was used as the basis for discussions in this section. Topics included: Tryweryn; Wales and the Second World War; Local Area; The Welsh Language; Welsh Sports and famous Welsh people among many others. Again, as in previous years, it is not the challenge level of the topic that has the greatest impact on the quality of candidates' discussions but their interest in their chosen topic.

The most confident candidates had lively, confident and detailed discussions. These candidates could indeed convince the examiner that they had enjoyed the process of researching and producing their work for Unit 2. They enjoyed presenting their topic and this was also the case amongst the less confident candidates who had enjoyed creating their packs.

For those candidates who found the task more challenging, their presentations and discussions were flat and superficial. Their responses lacked detail and they also struggled to recall the content of the work they did in their Unit 2 pack.

When preparing for this section, it should be kept in mind that a more extensive use of verb tenses is necessary especially when discussing what type of research was done when creating the work for Unit 2. It is also more likely that there will be more variety in the types of questions asked and that candidates need to be confident with their use of positive and negative answers. Even though the work for Unit 2 may not have been completed by the time of the oral examination, candidates need to be able to discuss what they would like to do when completing their non-examination pack.

Of the two elements in this exam, this is the one where a significant number of candidates have less confidence. There were examples where candidates could not remember the title or content of their non-examination packs with certainty. Many had trouble understanding what the different writing forms were that were used in their work. A number of them had difficulty remembering and pronouncing basic things such as: 'erthygl', 'llythyr', 'dyddiadur' and 'cyfweiliad'. It is also important that candidates understand that the words "darn/darnau" and "tasg/tasgau" are used when discussing individual elements of their non-examination work.

Stronger responses were seen in this task in the centres where candidates had prepared written pieces and then practised discussing the individual pieces orally immediately after they had been completed on paper.

Summary

- When discussing the film, try to improve the quality of candidates' responses on elements beyond the content of the story and the nature of the characters; elements such as themes, plot, symbolism, camera shots, sound and music are topics that can improve the standard of discussions.
- Ensure that candidates practise discussing their non-examination work very soon after they have completed the individual pieces. Continuing to discuss the pieces regularly afterwards then while completing the course can lead to greater confidence when discussing in the final exam.
- Practising the skill of interacting when discussing and developing discussions and viewpoints early in the preparation process, would be a good way of strengthening this element of the exam.

Language – elements to be developed

- Nominative clauses; that is, not combining “bod” with other forms of the verb *Bod* e.g. *bod + mae neu bod + dw i'n*.
- Using the correct forms when giving positive or negative responses to a question. Understanding the types of questions where “Ie” or “nage” are appropriate answers.
- A clear understanding of the difference between and how to use the verb forms: *gallu*, *gwneud* and *digwydd*.
- Expanding candidates' vocabulary especially with regards to adjectives and adverbs. Try to expand beyond using “iawn”, “diddorol” and “diflas” all the time. Avoid using the pattern: Roedd o'n “hwyl iawn”.

UNIT 2 – NON-EXAMINATION ASSESSMENT

Candidates must be praised for choosing personal and creative topics, with their teachers' guidance, which lead to the opportunity to research and deepen their learning in wider contexts. Unit 2 is a natural progression from Unit 1, where candidates share their ideas orally about the folio and discuss their specialist areas. This unit therefore develops several key skills in Welsh – oral, reading, writing, proof-reading, digital skills, language tools and creativity.

There was clear evidence that candidates had made a significant effort to produce pieces that demonstrated their language skills in areas that are of a personal interest to them. This was an opportunity for candidates to build on the language skills developed during the GCSE course, and through the lens of a specialist area of their choice. A folio therefore strengthens candidates' written linguistic continuum as they progress from GCSE to AS, developing their personal style and their independent, free writing skills.

Tasks

Comments on tasks/questions relating to candidate performance/meeting assessment criteria

Again, a conversation / interview, diary, article and portrayal were the most popular forms this year. There was a variety of topics but, as expected, a number chose the Local Area, Music or Sport as a theme. Several ambitious topics were also presented by the top performing candidates, and these were successful on the whole. Some very ambitious topics this year included *Ydy'r iaith Gymraeg yn derbyn ei thynged?*, *Bywyd enwogion hanesyddol fel David Lloyd George*, *Trychinebau yng Nghymru*, *Branwen*, *Y Mabinogi*, *Annibyniaeth Cymru*, *Dwy hunaniaeth, tair iaith a fi*, *Crefydd yng Nghymru*, *Iechyd Meddwl ym myd Amaethyddiaeth*, and *Tolkien a Chymru*.

As expected, there were popular topics such as *Rygbi yng Nghymru*, *Eisteddfod* and *Ardal Leol*, but a number of these were presented from a new angle that has not been seen before (for example, a pack on football in Wales included a letter to the school Head teacher complaining that there was not enough attention given to girls' football).

Centres where everyone had chosen the same topic were an exception. The wide range of themes this year must be praised, but it should be noted that there was sometimes evidence that less confident candidates had chosen a topic or a form that was too ambitious for them. Candidates perhaps would have benefited from choosing a topic that was of genuine interest to them or an area that was within their linguistic ability in terms of terminology and concepts.

Thorough research was evident in the majority of packs. A bibliography at the end of the pack is helpful to the moderators and demonstrates further reading and the importance of translanguaging skills when handling and discussing a variety of sources in Welsh and English. Extended reading therefore expands new ideas and offers broader perspectives of the area in question.

At times, there was evidence of some candidates recycling information and content from pieces that were very similar in terms of language patterns and information, and without expanding much on the content, context or form. Candidates' linguistic confidence is an obvious factor here, and it is completely natural to see candidates who are less confident linguistically sticking to the same stock of patterns throughout the piece. This is evidence of the natural differentiation that takes place within this unit, with candidates' written skills continuing to develop within the different bands.

Every year, the standard of the piece under examination conditions can vary. Some candidates successfully create creative, personal and interesting extended pieces. For others, this was the most challenging piece in the pack. It is clear that independent extended writing and maintaining accurate basic language skills is challenging for some candidates, especially those whose language skills are not as strong. Overall, the piece was a fair reflection of the work in the rest of the pack, but sometimes correct, formal language was seen which was very different from the style and standard of the other pieces in the pack. A **lack of consistency** can therefore be a cause for concern for the moderator when assessing work and deciding on a mark for the candidate's natural language.

The aim of the piece under examination conditions is to give candidates an opportunity to produce **one piece independently** and without the use of Cysill / dictionaries or other spell-checking systems. Candidates are expected to write this piece rather than type it so that they cannot use such checking systems. There were examples where the standard of the language in the task under examination conditions was very different to the rest of the pieces in the packs – **the candidate's natural expression and language needs to be seen throughout the pack.**

Most candidates presented three standard forms and the majority of centres had encouraged the pupils to include three extended pieces as well as an introduction, short conclusion and bibliography. It is good practice to identify the word count for each individual task, and follow the conventional folio format, namely cover, content page, stimulus / notes used for the task under examination conditions. Some candidates had prepared packs which included a series of short pieces (like a magazine). Again, the guidelines given in the specification must be followed, which is to produce three **pieces of a sufficient length** to give all candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their writing skills within the framework of the three different forms.

Task marking

Comments on approaches to internal marking

As stated in last year's report, annotating individual tasks is very important in a non-examination assessment, as well as including comments on the individual pieces. Some were very detailed and beneficial to the moderation team. Comments and annotations provided by others were a little limited, and some centres presented the coursework with no annotation, comments and without correcting errors. Consistent annotations is important in terms of providing candidates with formative feedback and paying particular attention to common language errors.

The marking this year was fairly accurate overall, but there were some examples of generous marking. Again, we would like to encourage all heads of departments to read a standardisation report on the packs and the guidance offered here in terms of marking and the content of individual packs

Higher band: the strongest candidates showed maturity in both writing and ideas. There were a number of articles of a very high standard this year which demonstrated the appropriate personal style confidently. Within this cohort a wide variety of language tools was shown and a very good grasp of grammar and syntax. Some presented the two sides of a specific argument in a skilful and confident manner. Others were seen experimenting with their language skills, demonstrating mature and rich language tools, the use of rhetorical language, dialect, and varying the tone effectively.

Candidates in the middle bands also presented good work on the whole. Some pieces in this cohort were similar to GCSE work but included positive aspects in terms of the use of standard, simple and correct language. It was clear that they had planned their work carefully and were clearly writing about subjects which were close to their hearts. One of the main weaknesses seen in this cohort was the repetition of facts and even whole sentences within the three pieces. Some works also listed facts / place names / names of rugby or football players and included these within the word count. If these elements were to be removed from these pieces, the pieces would not be substantial enough.

Among the candidates within the lower bands, there was at times an over-reliance on direct translations from English and a number of these appeared to have used translation websites. In some instances their introductions to the pack were far more correct and natural than the pieces themselves, which therefore suggested that they had used unfamiliar language in the pieces. The same kinds of errors were seen again this year – omitting the verb, omitting capital letters and punctuation errors, *bod* and *mae*, spelling errors, the negative and a lack of correct mutations.

The packs were well-presented and the majority had included a cover page, an introduction and a bibliography. Some were colourful and included pictures. Candidates were almost always seen to show pride in their work.

Recommendations:

Encourage the candidates to produce **3 extended pieces** and that the pieces in the pack are of a consistent length **in order to gain marks in the higher bands**. Extended background reading leads to the opportunity to produce extended pieces and original and interesting content.

Purposeful annotations to provide feedback to the pupils (Assessment for Learning) and also useful feedback for the moderators. **Identifying a mark for each individual task** helps the moderators who assess each piece separately.

Avoid the misuse of online translation tools / Google Translate / AI systems which can lead to **unnatural language and inconsistency in style**. Pupils must be encouraged to stick to their own natural language tools in order to develop a suitable personal style. Using spelling and grammar checking systems / dictionaries / Cysill is a mature skill which calls for sophisticated grammar skills. The aim of this unit is to **develop learners' personal writing skills** and linguistic confidence in order to lead to personal progress.

The importance of research and reading widely in Welsh and English. It is clear that candidates are given guidance on the nature of different forms and language conventions for a range of genres by their teachers. The next natural step is to build on these frameworks, enriching them and personalising them with research and wider reading in Welsh and English. This also enhances the pupils' bilingual skills and their ability to switch between languages successfully.

To conclude, it must be noted that the candidates' enthusiasm towards the Welsh language was clear to see in this year's packs. Everyone who was involved in teaching them must be congratulated as well as the candidates themselves for their linguistic progress in this unit.

WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE

GCE AS/A LEVEL

Summer 2024

UNIT 3 – THE USE OF LANGUAGE AND POETRY

Overview of the Unit

The purpose of this unit is to give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their written Welsh language skills by responding to questions on using the language (Section A) and responding to poetry (Section B).

In Section A, the candidates' awareness of Welsh language grammar is assessed (correcting errors/changing the tense) as well as their personal writing skills in the form of an informal letter.

In Section B, the candidate's personal response to a specific poem is assessed, addressing the following aspects: the poem's content, specific style aspects and responding to the subject matter of the poem.

It was encouraging to see that most candidates were prepared to attempt every part of the paper. Minor language errors hindered the performance of several candidates and many struggled to write grammatically correct meaningful sentences. Overall, candidates' performance compared well with previous series.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A, Question 1: Text translation

All candidates attempted this question and, overall, commendable efforts were seen to translate the piece.

Many thanks to the teachers for giving candidates clear and purposeful guidance.

The majority successfully translated the first sentence correctly.

Candidates are encouraged to take care when translating and ensure that they check their work.

Some had difficulty when translating the following:

- The conditional tense – 'Hoffet ti /chi', 'Faset ti'n/chi'n hoffi' – several candidates used 'wyt ti eisiau'.
- Many candidates forgot to mutate after the compact verb – hoffet ti **ddod**.
- Forgetting the verb at the beginning of the sentence – 'Mae/Bydd Elis...'
- Confusion between 'mynd' and 'dod'
- Misspelling 'sinema', 'ffilmiau'

Section A, Question 2: Changing the tense

A vast number of candidates made an encouraging attempt to answer this question. Most of them were able to gain marks.

Candidates must be reminded not to rewrite the paragraph. Only the verbs that are identified need to be changed.

The most common errors were:

- Ces/cefais i – using ‘cafais’
- Arna i/arnaf i – unable to conjugate the ‘ar’ preposition correctly
- Forgetting to use the article, ‘y/r’: Mwynheuais i’r
- Misspelling ‘mwynheuais’
- Hoffwn i – using ‘hoffais’

Section A, Question 3: Writing a formal letter

A fair attempt was made by all candidates to respond to the job advert with the Urdd. All candidates attempted to write a formal letter and it was pleasing to see that marks could be awarded in all cases. It was great to read carefully crafted letters clearly stating why they were the ‘perfect candidate’ for the job.

A large number of candidates had structured their letters based on the bullet points. There were articulate responses with language of a very good standard among the top performing candidates. Phrases and idioms were used purposefully in the responses, e.g. ‘a dweud y gwir’, ‘a bod yn onest’, ‘heb os nac oni bai’. The top performing candidates provided responses using rhetorical phrases, including rhetorical questions, changing the verb tense and person in order to speak from personal experience and promote themselves to get the job.

It is important that candidates use a good standard of Welsh when responding to this question.

Once again, candidates are encouraged to check and proof-read their work carefully.

Language points that should be considered when preparing candidates for this question:

- Using the correct preposition: *ysgrifennu atoch chi*
- How to use the nominative clause, e.g. *rydw i’n meddwl fy mod i’n.../rydw i’n meddwl bod y swydd...*
- Soft mutation after a conjugated preposition, e.g. *i Gaerdydd, o waith*
- Using the plural instead of the singular – ‘plant’ rather than ‘plentyn’
- Using verbs correctly in a sentence
- Understanding when to use ‘gwaith’ and ‘gweithio’ in a sentence

Section B, Question 1

The majority of the candidates could demonstrate a basic understanding of the poem's message and meaning. Overall, responses were varied. Several candidates could only provide a very superficial response to the content of the poem. The top performing candidates successfully explained the content of the piece on the paper and explained how it was relevant to the rest of the poem, quoting purposefully. However, few candidates identified that the main theme of the poem was deception.

It was good to see a significant number responding directly to the question when stating the main message of the of the verse on the exam paper and its relevance to the rest of the poem. Awkward expressions and language errors posed difficulty for the weaker candidates. The following should be considered when preparing candidates for this question:

- That they know the difference between a poem and a poet
- Ensure knowledge of the genitive case, e.g. *neges y gerdd ydy, ar ddiwedd y gerdd, yn llinell pump y pennill*
- Mutating correctly, e.g. *ym mhennill, y gerdd, yr ail bennill*
- Using the nominative clause correctly, e.g. *rydw i'n meddwl bod...*

Section B, Question 2

Nearly all candidates attempted this question this year and responded to the requirements of the question by discussing the techniques stated on the exam paper. The top performing candidates managed to convey an understanding of the techniques in question, quoting purposefully from the poem and then explaining why the technique is successful or effective.

This question challenges candidates but good teaching was seen in the way they had structured their answer, e.g. recognising the technique, providing examples and giving an explanation.

Even though only a minority discussed techniques that were not specified on the exam paper, candidates must be reminded to answer the question on the paper in order to meet the requirements of the criteria. It is also important to avoid discussing the content of the poem.

In addition to what is stated in Section A, question 1, when preparing candidates for this question, teachers should consider:

- Introducing general language patterns, e.g. *'mae'r bardd yn defnyddio...yn y gerdd, mae'r dechneg yn effeithiol achos..., dyma enghraifft o..., yn fy marn i...*

Section B, Question 3

There were very interesting and mature responses from some candidates discussing buying locally, considering our carbon footprint and the importance of supporting farmers in this country and the third world. It was very pleasing to read responses where personal, political and economic aspects were combined. It is clear that this is a hot topic in many areas of Wales!

However, many candidates provided superficial responses, focussing on personal experiences of where they go food shopping.

Most candidates successfully followed the guidance given in the question and a clear understanding of Fair Trade principles was seen.

In addition to what has already been stated, consideration should be given to supporting candidates to:

- Understand when to use 'yn' and 'mewn'
- Using the correct preposition after an infinitive: *siarad â, dweud wrth*

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GCE AS/A LEVEL

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UNIT 4 – THE PLAY AND ORACY

Overview of the Unit

This unit includes three parts:

Section A: Living through the medium of Welsh

Section B: Discussing a play

Section C: Personal response and Synoptic Assessment

When assessing the candidates in the Oral Examination, their ability to demonstrate specific knowledge of the play and its background, listen attentively to others, ask questions, develop points of view, interact and draw conclusions is considered. In addition, their ability to speak the language correctly and to a high standard using the appropriate tone is considered, taking into account the purpose and the audience.

It was an interesting and pleasant examination period again this year with the examiners thanking centres for the welcome they had in all instances. The examination rooms were suitable on the whole and it was nice to have the opportunity to meet polite, enthusiastic young people and, more often than not, young people who were eager to please. The vast majority of candidates were familiar with the requirements and the arrangements for the exam. A large number of them enjoyed the experience of studying the literature included in the specification (and a few centres gave candidates the opportunity to enjoy wider experiences) and becoming more fluent and confident in their use of the Welsh language. It was also pleasing to hear that many of them are intending on going on to study the Welsh language at university.

The informal session with the examiner before the exam continues to be welcomed by candidates. This gives an opportunity to calm the candidates' nerves, for the examiner to outline the expectations and also to respond to any question that may arise.

The paperwork was in order overall but remember that you only need to note the total mark on the sheet and that you do not have to divide the marks by section – those columns are for the examiner. As there are so few candidates in the majority of the centres, it was inevitable sometimes that candidates of differing abilities were paired or grouped together. Despite this, there was evidence that most teachers had understood the mark scheme and had marked fairly.

It was evident that several centres had provided good and skilful teaching with exceptional performances from a number of candidates. These candidates could discuss without being prompted, sharing their opinions and experiences freely and naturally. However, it was felt at times that not all of the requirements of the specification had been met and some candidates had not been challenged sufficiently.

In terms of the oral exam, it is vital that the exams go as smoothly as possible, with the candidates leaving the exam feeling that they have succeeded at their level. The examiners emphasise the positive aspects of the process, namely giving the candidates opportunities to demonstrate their strengths, share their ideas and express their opinion.

The pair/group discussions are improving gradually and it is pleasing to report that the old habit of learning 'off by heart' appears to be disappearing. As a result performances are generally far more natural and of a higher standard. This year, it was felt that candidates were generally presenting information and a personal opinion that they understood and could therefore 'discuss' very well. However, in the vast majority of cases, they respond to the examiner rather than each other. Naturally the candidates are nervous and they want to demonstrate their knowledge to the best of their ability and ensure that everything they have learned comes out and therefore lose sight of the collaboration element. It is not easy, but the interaction element continues to be weak, often even within the top performing candidates, and it is something that should be addressed in detail in future. They must be instructed to discuss as a pair / group in a way that ensures the highest possible marks.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A: Living through the medium of Welsh

Last year it was stated that "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".

I am very pleased to say that there has been a significant improvement overall in this section this year and that a large number of candidates enjoyed researching the Welsh Language in Society. The majority of candidates responded successfully to a number of the bullet points in the specification and some could discuss Welsh-language theatrical performances, television programmes and films meaningfully and in great detail. Some centres had managed to get Welsh speakers to visit the school/college and candidates definitely benefited from the experience and could discuss the visits to a high standard. When candidates had the opportunity to see a live performance, this clearly made an impression on them and they discussed it enthusiastically.

One thing I would suggest is that candidates are given the opportunity to learn about and listen to bands / artists who sing in Welsh rather than bands from Wales who perform mainly in English. There are plenty of bands / artists available these days that would appeal to everyone. It is important that candidates are given the opportunity to listen to Welsh bands and watch some television programmes that interest them during the course. (An event such as Welsh Language Music Day can provide a very interesting topic for discussion.) It would also be very easy to play this music when they arrive in class in order to grab their attention.

I mentioned earlier this year during the CPD meetings that the lyrics of songs could be used as informal 'literature / poetry' during the lessons and that they could refer to suitable options as part of the synoptic element.

Several showed that they enjoyed using Welsh on social media. They mentioned following Welsh celebrities from the world of sport, music or the media who tweet through the medium of Welsh. Many followed these on Instagram as well as forming their own discussion groups. 'Hansh' is a very popular online programme and many referred to it. Many of the candidates were aware of several websites / apps / podcasts that are available and felt comfortable using them.

Even though candidates watch television programmes and listen to the radio occasionally, it was evident that a number had not had the opportunity to watch many Welsh-language films. *Patagonia* was the only film that some had seen. Schools could expand candidates' experiences by watching other films in order to enhance learners' experiences.

A number referred to using Welsh in the workplace and they clearly enjoyed the fact that they could do so. It is encouraging to hear the effort made by many to speak Welsh outside of their centres.

In terms of reading, nearly everyone could refer to something they had read, usually in law or Lingo, and the top performing candidates could discuss an article from Golwg or a book they had read in a very enthusiastic manner.

I talked last year about the more English-speaking areas where there are minimal opportunities to hear the Welsh language being used. I suggested at the time that candidates must therefore be taught to say what they would like to see in the area in order to give learners the opportunity to practise/improve their language. Some centres had taken the suggestion on board and those candidates said they would welcome Welsh-language clubs and / or groups they could attend outside of school hours.

The lack of interaction was referenced previously which is still an element that could be improved. This is also the case here. It is fair to say that there was even less interaction in Section A than what was seen when discussing the play. At this level, candidates must be taught to contribute more than 'Dw i'n cytuno ... / anghytuno ... (even within the lower bands).

They need to ask each other's opinion, question that opinion, ask for more information, add to comments made by others, challenge, be willing to change their opinion / viewpoint ... This is at the heart of a pair/group discussion.

Although more succeeded in this section this year, quite a lot of work is required to develop it further.

Section B: Discussing a play

Overall, the discussion of the play was very satisfactory. There were very few candidates who said they had not enjoyed the play. Indeed, there were some exceptional examples with many giving a proficient discussion when analysing characters, discussing particular scenes, the message of the play, the themes and their personal opinion. The top performing candidates managed to discuss symbolism, irony, conflict and contrast in a very skilful way.

Some used impressive quotations which reinforced and supported their views. There were many mature and confident responses and, once again, it was a pleasure hearing striking ideas that have not been heard in discussions previously.

Less ambitious discussions tended to be shorter and more superficial without mentioning robust examples from the text to support their points. This cohort did not provide the same level of detail or depth but, on the whole, these candidates responded to the examiner's comments successfully and also they were mature enough to ask for help with a word(s) or to admit that they had not understood the question. Among this cohort it would have been good to hear further detail on the descriptions of the characters – some responses were very limited.

Unfortunately, as mentioned previously, the interactive element was lacking in a large number of discussions and it is something we ask you to consider carefully when preparing candidates for this exam.

Section C: Personal response and Synoptic Assessment

The standard of the response to the synoptic element improves every year and improvement was clear to see again this year. By now, both teachers and candidates have realised that responses must always link to the drama and a fair attempt was made to do this, even amongst the weaker candidates. There was evidence that some appropriate use was being made of the teaching and learning resources available on the WJEC website that were referred to last year.

The standard varied of course with a number discussing some topics on the theme in question very successfully, and referring to other sources in a meaningful and intelligent manner. There were some discussions of a high standard from candidates who had been well-prepared and these candidates avoided the temptation to refer to a large number of unrelated topics. The vast majority tended to refer to the short stories and the film *Patagonia*. It would be a good idea to encourage candidates to discover themes across a wider range of sources. A number of candidates had clearly watched television programmes and been to the theatre to see performances but opportunities were missed to discuss these within the context of the A Level course.

The weaker candidates made valiant attempts to address this element of the exam but struggled when trying to cross-reference the themes. For this cohort to improve their responses centres must ensure that they have the 'stock' sentences and the necessary skills and that they have had enough practise on this part of the exam.

The most popular topics included love, family and relationships, and the top performing candidates discussed these very articulately. The examples of a love triangle had piqued candidates' interest and most of them managed to respond to some rather challenging questions from the examiners. The weaker candidates tended to focus on one theme but it was pleasing to see everyone attempting to discuss this element.

Language/Grammar

The expected variety was seen in the standard of candidates' language with the top performing candidates displaying a high standard overall with a strong element of accuracy and a wide-ranging vocabulary.

Unfortunately, the same errors and linguistic mistakes were seen again this year with the most common being the misuse of the nominative clause – *mae / bod*.

Many used the word '*siarad*' instead of '*dweud*' and the relative clause continues to cause difficulty for a number of candidates.

Attention should also be given to responding to questions using the correct positive/negative forms – *Ydw/Ydy/Oes/Oeddwn/Do* etc. This year, some candidates were heard using the word '*syml*' instead of '*yn debyg*'. We can only assume that they have confused this word with the English word '*similar*'.

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

In summary

- Centres need to focus on the interactive aspect of discussions and prepare candidates to collaborate and discuss together as a pair / group in Section A and B. They must be taught to listen to each other and to provide far more ambitious contributions rather than simply '*Dw i'n cytuno / anghytuno*'.
- Centres must ensure that sufficient attention is given to each section.
- It is suggested that candidates are given plenty of opportunities to practise responses to questions using the correct positive / negative forms.
- All centres are encouraged to make use of the synoptic resource, and other resources, which are available on the WJEC website.

On behalf of myself and all other examiners, I would like to thank you and the candidates for your hard work and perseverance.

WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE

GCE AS/A LEVEL

Summer 2024

UNIT 5 – THE WELSH LANGUAGE IN SOCIETY AND TRANSLANGUAGING

Overview of the Unit

In Section A, candidates' awareness of the Welsh Language in Society is assessed.

In Section B, the candidates' response to translanguaging is assessed as well as their ability to express their opinion.

Thank you once again to the teachers for their work preparing candidates for this unit. It was encouraging to see that all candidates could respond to the themes that arose in this paper this year.

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 must be noted that the handwriting of a small number of candidates was very difficult to read and the importance of writing clearly and legibly should be emphasised for all candidates.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A: The Welsh language in Society

Q.1 (i) This is the question that produced the best responses. It was evident that the schools spent a great deal of time studying these subjects and that candidates were interested in them and very familiar with discussing them. Nearly all candidates had used the bullet points on the paper as a basis for their answers successfully.

The stronger answers used correct, polished and very mature language. Some candidates wrote simply, but correctly, and managed to provide a fair response to the question.

Despite this, it must be noted that basic language errors impaired the expression in the work of many candidates and a lack of language tools or an attempt to be overly ambitious impaired the quality of the work.

Technology is of course an integral part of young people's lives by now and interesting answers were given about how they use the Welsh language on their phones and how they use apps such as Duolingo to improve their language skills. Some of the more ambitious answers discussed using the websites and apps of public organisations such as Transport for Wales through the medium of Welsh.

It was pleasing to read that a number of candidates follow Welsh speakers such as Ellis Lloyd Jones and Bronwen Lewis and enjoy their posts, photos and videos. It was clear that the majority had enjoyed a taste of Welsh music with many talking about specific artists and some having had the opportunity to see live bands which clearly enriched their experiences of learning the language.

Q.1 (ii) The comments made under 1(i) about the standard of candidates' language is also relevant to question 1(ii).

There were a number of good responses but not as good as question 1(i). The majority of candidates expressed their opinion on the influence of education on the future of the Welsh language. The stronger answers referred to the lack of Welsh-medium schools, the shortage of Welsh-speaking teachers and the decreasing numbers of A Level candidates. Some mentioned the current number of Welsh speakers according to census statistics and expressed their concern about the decrease in the number of Welsh speakers according to the latest census.

There were responses discussing the important work being done by Menter Iaith and the Urdd and how they promote the language in the community with the most successful answers referring to business that respect the language and use it consistently, such as Aldi.

Unfortunately, a number of candidates struggled to link the bullet points to the question, talking about the content of the bullet points but with no attempt to explain how they would increase the number of Welsh speakers.

Unfortunately, some answers talked too much about irrelevant content about the background of the Government's vision.

Targets

Candidates should make use of the language tools they have, aiming to write clearly and correctly, rather than being overly ambitious in their use of the language. Attention needs to be given to grammar and syntax, for example:

- Mutation rules (e.g. soft mutation after prepositions (*am, o, ar*); *yr iaith Gymraeg*; no mutation after plural words)
- Verb tenses (using the past and present in suitable places; avoid omitting 'mae' and 'roedd' from the sentence; avoid mixing between 'bydd' and 'byddai')
- Correct use of the plural third person 'Maen nhw'n'
- The difference between 'erbyn/gan'; 'mewn/yn'; 'wedi/cael'
- The nominative clause
- Using correct prepositions, e.g. 'gwrando ar/siarad â/dweud wrth'

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

Section B: Translanguaging

This year, candidates were asked to write a letter in this question. The majority set their work out in the correct format with addresses and an appropriate opening and closing greeting. A small percentage had not set out the work in the form of a letter and others had used 'tŷ' rather than 'chŷ'.

Within the most successful answers, candidates had used the information in the text, adapted the information and responded to it personally and sensibly. They had planned their work carefully. They responded confidently with mature and meaningful answers using refined language. They managed to discuss their own personal experiences or those of a close friend.

It was good to see this year that there were very few examples of quoting sentences from the article, but English words were overused at times.

On the whole, as with the rest of the paper, linguistic limitations and language errors hindered the answers in this question. The same grammatical errors were seen this year as has been mentioned countless times in previous reports.

As well as the language errors listed in question 1, issues were noted with the following:

- *'Rhy gormod'*
- Mixing verbs and nouns e.g. *'digartrefedd/digartref'*; *'help/helpu'*; *'cefnogaeth/cefnogi'*
- *Bod dylai*
- Using *'siarad'* instead of *'dweud'*
- Misspelling *'ymhilth'*; *'sgilliau'*; *'pobol'*
- Starting sentences without *'Mae'* or without a capital letter
- *'Mae hwn ydy...'*

Summary of key points:

Candidates should pay attention to the required form (a formal letter this year) and set out their work appropriately. By now, they are expected to use the correct form for Units 3 and 4 in GCSE and therefore candidates should be familiar with the requirements of the question.

Attention needs to be given to grammar and syntax and the language points identified here should be practised.

Candidates should practise responding to similar questions during the year and their summarising skills need to be developed.

WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE

GCE AS/A LEVEL

Summer 2024

UNIT 6 – THE USE OF LANGUAGE AND THE SHORT STORY

Overview of the Unit

As usual, we are grateful to the teachers for their hard work and dedication as they ensure thorough teaching, learning and preparation for an undoubtedly challenging exam. However, as mentioned many times in the past, it is important to ensure that candidates are of the correct calibre to sit the Unit 6 exam. Unfortunately, there was a greater number of candidates who did not attempt to answer some of the questions this year (in Section B mainly). Nevertheless, the general view among the examiners again this year is that they enjoyed marking the work and they agreed unanimously that the 2024 paper was very fair and once again reflected the standard seen previously, giving everyone a fair chance. Same as last year, the colour images (Question 1i) were welcomed by centres.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A: Use of Language

- Q.1 (i)** The colour poster was attractive and helped candidates in the lower bands. It was clear that the subject was of interest to candidates and a large number managed to write an e-mail that followed the requirements of the question, namely:

When writing the e-mail **you should**:

e.g.

- respond to the problem that's ruining our beaches
 - give your opinion on the idea of having a Beach Cleaning Weekend
 - say where you would like to volunteer and with who
- and so on.

Candidates should be encouraged to use these guidelines to help structure their response in order to reach the higher bands. The body of the advert also provides a lot of support with vocabulary, spelling and grammar.

It is important to remember that Section A is a *Using Language* Section, therefore when marking it is **the language** which is foremost even though the descriptors in the columns on the left-hand side of the Marking Scheme are also an essential part of the answer, 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 was pleasing to note that candidates had **read the question carefully** overall. Some had chosen the incorrect genre and wrote a letter rather than an e-mail, but fewer candidates did this this year.

Some truly worthwhile answers were provided which highlighted extremely confident, original and accurate writing. It was a pleasure to read them. The weaker responses, however, were over-dependent on the content of the poster and had used sentences without adapting them as required.

Errors that were commonly seen:

- lack of variety of suitable and effective sentences.
- copying the poster incorrectly, e.g. 'traethu' instead of 'traethau'
- using incorrect words, e.g. '*brifo* ein traethau'
- the genitive case e.g. 'yr effaith y sbwriel'
- difficulty forming simple sentences and problematic syntax as they omitted verbs

Also, the following errors were commonplace:

bod mae
mae ... ddim
yn eisiau/yn wrth fy modd
the genitive case
the impersonal
the irregular verbs of the short form past tense (ces i; aeth o; daethon ni)

- (ii) This was a very fair question which helped those in the lower bands with the use of capital letters while challenging the top performing candidates. An encouraging number of candidates managed to gain full marks even though too many lost marks as they copied some words from the question paper incorrectly!

e.g. omitting the circumflex – 'a' instead of 'â'r' (which changes the meaning of the word entirely).
traddodiadol ymweliad

The words which posed most difficulty were 'gawson ni', 'cafodd', 'mai/taw', 'â'r'. Some candidates had copied the whole letter. This is a waste of time especially if time is short and sometimes it makes it difficult to mark the question.

SECTION B – The Short Story

- Q.2 (i)** Again this year, similarly to Section A, question 1(i), candidates were expected to make suitable 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 once again this year.

Some answers were far too long and were therefore weak grammatically and were repetitive. 'About 100 words' is mentioned in the exam paper and therefore the need for candidates to be taught to be concise must be reiterated.

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 also in **2ii** (the techniques) and **2iii** (the synoptic), e.g. Any reference to the fact that the Narrator threatens to take Peter Tremeer's baby to Martha in the Black township at the end of the story is irrelevant to this question.

However, overall, a fair attempt was made to express a robust opinion, including strong arguments from the top performing candidates to support their choice between the Narrator and Mr Tremeer. Some of the best answers also provided a very successful evaluation, arguing that Mr Tremeer deserved some sympathy from the reader. Unfortunately, several candidates had misunderstood that the baby is Mr Tremeer's grandson, not his son.

(Refer to **p.7 of the mark scheme** for the kind of arguments that candidates could use to support their opinion in this question.)

(ii) We have the same comments on this question again this year.

This question has three parts:

- recognising the techniques in the **extract** (rather than the **whole story**)
- give an **example / examples of the techniques**
- **explain the effect** of the techniques

Also, in order to gain marks in the higher bands **every** technique in the question must be discussed. Candidates cannot be awarded marks above Band 3 unless they refer to all of the techniques listed in the question. It's evident which candidates have read the question carefully before starting the task.

Again this year, some candidates had not paid attention to the 3 techniques although 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, facts which often made little sense.

(Refer to **pages 8, 9 and 10 of the mark scheme** – these provide support with the third bullet point, which is 'how to do the techniques help the author convey the sadness of the Narrator's situation and the way this impacts her relationship with Mr Tremeer'.)

- (iii) The idea of making cross-references is usually a problem, and not only for weaker candidates either. It was encouraging that candidates in the higher bands had cross-referenced the **extract in question** with other texts that dealt with the same theme and they had the language tools to do so in most cases, e.g. 'gellir dadlau'; 'mae'n amlwg bod ...' and so on.

Many candidates had paid attention to the key words i.e., 'cysylltu **gyda'r darn ar dudalen 5**' ('linking with the extract on page 5') and they had the language tools to do so. In addition, it was clear that they had been taught to stick to the theme **in the question** despite some candidates referring to the theme of '**lack of communication**' or '**relationship**' rather than combining them, i.e. 'they way in which **lack of communication** destroys the **relationship between individuals**'. Once again this year, it was pleasing to see that candidates in some centres had been guided to read or watch texts which prove wider study. There were references to *Hedd Wyn*, *Solomon a Gaenor*, *Pe Bai'r Wyddfa i Gyd yn Gaws*, *Branwen – Dadeni*, *Yr Amgueddfa* etc.

It's important that candidates learn 'stock' sentences for **oral** and **written** synoptic responses and that they use them consistently in context. It is also vital that they are given clear guidance on how to answer this question, not only because of the level of challenge but also because of the number of marks that can be awarded.

As in question 2(i), there were numerous examples of long-winded writing which was repetitive and included language errors.

However, it is encouraging to note that the standard of responses to the synoptic question continues to improve among candidates who have been given clear guidance and plenty of opportunities to practise how to answer this challenging question.

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 02920265162

Email: sian.llewelyn@cbac.co.uk

Qualification webpage: https://www.cbac.co.uk/cymwysterau/cymraeg-ail-iaith-ug-safon-uwch/#tab_keydocuments

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