**Component 4: Prose Study**

**CANDIDATE C: Band 4**

How are the themes of suffering and violence presented in *The Great Gatsby* and *The Kite Runner*?

**Wording of task**

* An interesting pairing and topic but the task might have been worded more carefully so as to help the candidate structure the material into a tighter argument. The rather open-ended instruction and the focus on both violence and the relatively abstract ‘suffering’ make it less easy for him to pinpoint exact meaning.
* There is a clear steer towards AO2 in the use of ‘presentation’ but an accessible critical opinion might have been useful in narrowing the focus and allowing the candidate to take a stance and make an argument, for example:

***‘The novels rob violence of any glamour: while the act itself may be fleeting, the effects are inescapable, long-lasting and potentially devastating.’***

**With this view in mind, compare and contrast the ways in which the writers present violence and its effects in…**

**AO1: Secure Band 4 – 15 marks**

* The candidate demonstrates ***sound understanding and good, secure knowledge*** of the texts. There are some quite impressive sections but the wide remit of the task perhaps means that, while the **content is structured and generally well-focused**, there is not the effective organisation into a thoroughly convincing argument nor the sophisticated overview characterising a Band 5 response. There are times when the relevance or placing of a point could be made clearer, as correctly highlighted by the primary markers (lines 54- 59; 88 – 93).
* There is use of ***relevant terminology*** and ***expression is very accurate*** on the whole with an appropriate ***academic register***. There are some slight lapses, however, when the candidate’s meaning is not completely clear.

**AO2: Band 4 – 14 marks**

* The candidate demonstrates a ***sound grasp of implicit meaning*** and chooses ***appropriate textual support*** to develop claims (lines 65 – 68)
* There is some relevant consideration of the effects of language choice and symbolism but there is **scope for more detailed analysis** by ‘digging’ into quoted evidence.

**AO3: Low Band 5 - 17 marks**

* A range of contextual references is considered and generally **effectively integrated demonstrating a** solid ***understanding of their importance to both texts from the outset.*** The candidate does well to keep an appropriate balance between text and context so that the focus is on AO2 and literary appreciation, rather than using the novels to illustrate socio-political attitudes, a trap many candidates fall into with these novels in particular.
* The quality is a little uneven but the use of context is ***always purposeful and secure*** with some ***glimmers of confident discussion***, especially in relation to the political and cultural background to Hosseini’s novel.

**AO4: High Band 4 - 8 marks**

* The texts are **linked from the start** in the opening paragraph and these are then developed in the main body as the backbone of the essay.
* There are explicit, generally ***sound*** links (lines 124 – 128; 196-7) and there are some well-developed, ***purposeful connections***, especially in lines 60 – 68.

**AO5: Band 5 – 9 marks**

* There is ***purposeful and sound use of other views*** at key points in the argument used to support the candidate’s own interpretation.
* There are also ***some useful attempts at discussion*** of other readers’ views, ***quite confidently*** in lines 24 – 8 and 122 -126, but less convincingly in the more assertive claims at the top of page 5.
* This engagement with alternative views means that a mark just inside Band 5 would be appropriate.

**TOTAL MARKS: 63**

**NB: The centre’s detailed and focused annotation is evidence of very good practice, showing clearly in the dialogue between markers how decisions have been reached. The assessment is well-judged, fair and closely linked to the criteria and its accuracy is helped by a willingness to identify relative weaknesses as well as quite rightly highlighting strengths. The summative comments at the end make clear that this is a sound, rather than a sophisticated, response placing the candidate securely in Band 4 overall.**