Category 2 - Language & Literature: Assessment Criteria

	Level 5-6	Level 3-4	Level 1-2	Level 0
Criterion A: Focus & Method **Language & Lit** For all three categories of studies in language and literature essays, the term "research" should be interpreted as "research material(s)" or "area of investigation" or "the topic under investigation". In terms of the choice of topic, the research question must be specific and sharply focused. It should be formulated as a question, not a statement or proposition for discussion. Its purpose should be made clear to the reader and be related to the knowledge and understanding in context. **Cat 2:** include a brief rationale for the pairing of the texts chosen, indicating what might be gained from the comparative study being undertaken. Students should avoid taking an approach where such texts are dealt with in two separate discussions.	**The topic is communicated accurately and effectively.** • Identification and explanation of the research topic is effectively communicated;the purpose and focus of the research is clear and appropriate. • The introduction should state briefly why the student has chosen that particular research question and what it has to offer. It should also indicate clearly how it relates to existing knowledge on that topic. **The research question is clearly stated and focused.** • The research question is clear and addresses an issue of research that is appropriately connected to the discussion in the essay. **Methodology of the research is complete.** • An appropriate range of relevant source(s) and/or method(s) have been applied in relation to the topic and research question. • Planning of the essay and its focus for discussion should involve analysis of the text(s) in the light of the research question. The essay should also include a critical perspective on secondary source material so that the views of critics are used to support the students' own arguments. The sources used must provide sufficient material to develop and support an argument and a conclusion relevant to the research question. • There is evidence of effective and informed selection of sources and/methods: Appropriate sources include the literary text or texts that form the focus of the investigation and secondary sources such as published criticism on those texts.	**The topic is communicated.** • Identification and explanation of the research topic is communicated; the purpose and focus of the research is adequately clear, but only partially appropriate. **The research question is clearly stated but only partially focused.** • The research question is clear but the discussion in the essay is only partially focused and connected to the research question. **Methodology of the research is mostly complete.** • Source(s) and/or method(s) to be used are generally relevant and appropriate given the topic and research question. • There is some evidence that their selection(s) was informed. *If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered no more than four marks can be awarded for this criterion. This applies to language A essays that are based on inappropriate texts.*	**The topic is communicated unclearly and incompletely.** • Identification and explanation of the topic is limited; the purpose and focus of the research is unclear, or does not lend itself to a systematic investigation in the subject for which it is registered. **The research question is stated but not clearly expressed or too broad.** • The research question is too broad in scope to be treated effectively within the word limit and requirements of the task, or does not lend itself to a systematic investigation in the subject for which it is registered. • The intent of the research question is understood but has not been clearly expressed and/or the discussion of the essay is not focused on the research question. **Methodology of the research is limited.** • The source(s) and/or method(s) to be used are limited in range given the topic and research question.•There is limited evidence that their selection was informed.	**The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.**

	Level 5-6	Level 3-4	Level 1-2	Level 0

Criterion B: Knowledge and understanding **Language & Lit** the context should be established succinctly and should not be an excuse for padding out an essay with a lengthy account of the historical or biographical context of a literary text: the quality of the student's understanding of the primary text is the main concern. The use of secondary source materials is helpful in terms of establishing a wider framework for the discussion; however this should not replace the student's personal engagement with the primary text(s).	**Knowledge and understanding is excellent.** ● The selection of source materials is clearly relevant and appropriate to the research question. ● Knowledge of the topic/discipline(s)/issue is clear and coherent and sources are used effectively and with understanding. **Use of terminology and concepts is good.** ● The use of subject-specific terminology and concepts is accurate and consistent, demonstrating effective knowledge and understanding. ● Clarity and precision of communication in a studies in language and literature essay includes the correct use of language. Students should be able to convey their ideas fluently and articulately. They should also be able to use subject-specific terminology appropriate to the discipline and apply it to their chosen topic with discernment.	**Knowledge and understanding is good.** ● The selection of source material is mostly relevant and appropriate to the research question. ● Knowledge of the topic/discipline(s)/issue is clear; there is an understanding of the sources used but their application is only partially effective. **Use of terminology and concepts is adequate.** ● The use of subject-specific terminology and concepts is mostly accurate,demonstrating an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding. *If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered no more than four marks can be awarded for this criterion.This applies to language A essays that are based on inappropriate texts.*	**Knowledge and understanding is limited.** ● The selection of source material has limited relevance and is only partially appropriate to the research question. ● Knowledge of the topic/discipline(s)/issue is anecdotal, unstructured and mostly descriptive with sources not effectively being used. **Use of terminology and concepts is unclear and limited.** ● Subject-specific terminology and/or concepts are either missing or inaccurate,demonstrating limited knowledge and understanding.	**The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.**

		Level 7-9	Level 4-6	Level 1-3	Level 0
Criterion C: Critical Thinking **Language & Lit** Students should aim for a detailed and critical consideration that develops their own argument rather than simply adopting the views of critics. Second-hand interpretations or viewpoints that are derived solely from secondary sources, or purely descriptive essays, will not score highly. The conclusion should present a considered evaluation of the topic in the light of the discussion as well as findings or results from the research (as appropriate). Students are also encouraged to take a critical perspective on secondary sources: in particular, if students make use of internet-based sources, they should do so critically and circumspectly in full awareness of their potential unreliability.	**The research is excellent.** ● The research is appropriate to the research question and its application is consistently relevant. **Analysis is excellent.** ● The research is analysed effectively and clearly focused on the research question; the inclusion of less relevant research does not significantly detract from the quality of the overall analysis. ● Conclusions to individual points of analysis are effectively supported by the evidence. **Discussion/evaluation is excellent.** ● An effective and focused reasoned argument is developed from the research with a conclusion reflective of the evidence presented. ● This reasoned argument is well structured and coherent; any minor inconsistencies do not hinder the strength of the overall argument or the finalor summative conclusion. ● The research has been critically evaluated.	**The research is good.** ● The majority of the research is appropriate and its application is clearly relevant to the research question. **Analysis is good.** ● The research is analysed in a way that is clearly relevant to the research question; the inclusion of less relevant research rarely detracts from the quality of the overall analysis. ● Conclusions to individual points of analysis are supported by the evidence but there are some minor inconsistencies. **Discussion/evaluation is good.** ● An effective reasoned argument is developed from the research, with a conclusion supported by the evidence presented. ● This reasoned argument is clearly structured and coherent and supported by afinal or summative conclusion; minor inconsistencies may hinder the strength of the overall argument. ● The research has been evaluated, and this is partially critical.	**The research is adequate.** ● Some research presented is appropriate and its application is partially relevant to the Research question. **Analysis is adequate.** ● There is analysis but this is only partially relevant to the research question; the inclusion of irrelevant research detracts from the quality of the argument. ● Any conclusions to individual points of analysis are only partially supported by the evidence. **Discussion/evaluation is adequate.** ● An argument explains the research but the reasoning contains inconsistencies. ● The argument may lack clarity and coherence but this does not significantly hinder understanding. ● Where there is a final or summative conclusion, this is only partially consistent with the arguments/evidence presented. ● The research has been evaluated but not critically.	**The research is limited.** ● The research presented is limited and its application is not clearly relevant to the RQ. **Analysis is limited.** ● There is limited analysis. ● Where there are conclusions to individual points of analysis these are limited and not consistent with the evidence. **Discussion/evaluation is limited.** ● An argument is outlined but this is limited, incomplete, descriptive or narrative in nature. ● The construction of an argument is unclear and/or incoherent in structure hindering understanding. ● Where there is a final conclusion, it is limited and not consistent with the arguments/evidence presented. ● There is an attempt to evaluate the research, but this is superficial. *If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered no more than three marks can be awarded for this criterion.*	**The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.**

Note: straightforward description of a literary text through plot summary or narration of the action does not usually advance an argument and should generally be avoided.

	Level 5-6	Level 3-4	Level 1-2	Level 0
Criterion D: Presentation This criterion assesses the extent to which the presentation follows the standard format expected for academic writing and the extent to which this aids effective communication.		**Presentation is good.** ● The structure of the essay clearly is appropriate in terms of the expected conventions for the topic, the argument and subject in which the essay is registered. ● Layout considerations are present and applied correctly. ● The structure and layout support the reading, understanding and evaluation of the extended essay.	**Presentation is acceptable.** ● The structure of the essay is generally appropriate in terms of the expected conventions for the topic, argument and subject in which the essay is registered. ● Some layout considerations may be missing or applied incorrectly. ● Weaknesses in the structure and/or layout do not significantly impact the reading, understanding or evaluation of the extended essay.	**The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.**
Criterion E: Engagement This criterion assesses the student's engagement with their research focus and the research process. It Will be applied by the examiner at the end of the assessment of the essay, after considering the student'sReflections on planning and progress form.	**Engagement is excellent.** ● Reflections on decision-making and planning are evaluative and include reference to the student's capacity to consider actions and ideas in response to setbacks experienced in the research process. ● These reflections communicate a high degree of intellectual and personal engagement with the research focus and process of research, demonstrating authenticity, intellectual initiative and/or creative approach in the student voice.	**Engagement is good.** ● Reflections on decision-making and planning are analytical and include reference to conceptual understanding and skill development. ● These reflections communicate a moderate degree of personal engagement with the research focus and process of research, demonstrating some intellectual initiative.	**Engagement is limited.** ● Reflections on decision-making and planning are mostly descriptive. ● These reflections communicate a limited degree of personal engagement with the research focus and/or research process.	**The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.**

Note: Essays in studies in language and literature would normally be presented as a continuous body of text, although some category 3 topics may benefit from a section and subsection structure to their essays, with appropriate informative headings.

Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E
Demonstrates effective research skills resulting in a well-focused and appropriate research question that can be explored within the scope of the chosen topic; effective engagement with relevant research areas, methods and sources; excellent knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the relevant discipline; the effective application of source material and correct use of subject-specific terminology and/or concepts further supporting this; consistent and relevant conclusions that are proficient analysed; sustained reasoned argumentation supported effectively by evidence; critically evaluate research; excellent presentation of the essay, whereby coherence and consistency further supports the reading of the essay; and present and correctly applied structural and layout elements. Engagement with the process is conceptual and personal, key decision-making during the research process is documented, and personal reflections are evidenced, including those that are forward-thinking.	Demonstrates appropriate research skills resulting in a research question that can be explored within the scope of the chosen topic; reasonably effective engagement with relevant research areas, methods and sources; good knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the relevant discipline; a reasonably effective application of source material and use of subject-specific terminology and/or concepts; consistent conclusions that are accurately analysed; reasoned argumentation often supported by evidence; research that at times evidences critical evaluation; and a clear presentation of all structural and layout elements, which further supports the reading of the essay. Engagement with the process is generally evidenced by the reflections and key decision-making during the research process is documented.	Demonstrates evidence of research undertaken, which has led to a research question that is not necessarily expressed in a way that can be explored within the scope of the chosen topic; partially effective engagement with mostly appropriate research areas, methods and sources—however, there are some discrepancies in those processes, although these do not interfere with the planning and approach; some knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the discipline, which is mostly relevant; the attempted application of source material and appropriate terminology and/concepts; an attempted synthesis of research results with partially relevant analysis; conclusions partly supported by the evidence; discussion that is descriptive rather than analytical; attempted evaluation;satisfactory presentation of the essay, with weaknesses that do not hinder the reading of the essay; andsome structural and layout elements that are missing or are incorrectly applied. Engagement with the process is evidenced but shows mostly factual information, with personal reflection mostly limited to procedural issues.	Demonstrates a lack of research, resulting in unsatisfactory focus and a research question that is not answerable within the scope of the chosen topic; at times engagement with appropriate research,methods and sources, but discrepancies in those processes that occasionally interfere with the planning and approach; some relevant knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the discipline, which are at times irrelevant; the attempted application of source material, but with inaccuracies in the use of, or underuse of, terminology and/or concepts; irrelevant analysis and inconsistent conclusions as a result of a descriptive discussion; a lack of evaluation; presentation of the essay that at times is illogical and hinders the reading; and structural and layout elements that are missing. Engagement with the process is evidenced but is superficial, with personal reflections that are solely narrative and concerned with procedural elements.	Demonstrates an unclear nature of the essay; a generally unsystematic approach and resulting focused research question; limited engagement with limited research and sources; generally limited and only partially accurate knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the relevant discipline; ineffective connections in the application of source material and inaccuracies in the terminology and/or concepts used; a summarizing of results of research with inconsistent analysis;an attempted outline of an argument, but one that is generally descriptive in nature; and a layout that generally lacks or incorrectly applies several layout and structural elements. Engagement with the process is limited, with limited factual or decision-making information andno personal reflection on the process.