

English
Lang & Lit HL

Written Task Pack



written tasks

Weighting: 20%

A written task demonstrates the student's ability to choose an imaginative way of exploring an aspect of the material studied in the course. It must show a critical engagement with an aspect of a text or a topic.

Students complete at least four written tasks, two of which are submitted for external assessment.

The written tasks are assessed according to the assessment criteria published in this guide. The maximum mark for each written task is 20.

As part of the learning process, teachers can give advice to students on a first draft of the task. This advice should be in terms of the way in which the work could be improved, but this first draft must not be annotated or edited by the teacher. After making general comments on the first draft, teachers should not provide any further assistance.

Formal requirements for tasks 1 and 2

- One of the tasks submitted for external assessment must be a critical response to one of six prescribed questions (task 2).
- One of the tasks submitted for external assessment must be based on a literary text studied in part 3 or part 4 of the course. The other must be based on material studied in part 1 or part 2 of the course.
- Each task must be 800–1,000 words in length; task 1 should be accompanied by a rationale of 200–300 words, while task 2 should be accompanied by an outline, completed on the designated form that can be found in the *Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Programme*. If the word limits are exceeded, the assessment will be based on the first 1,000 words of the task for both tasks 1 and 2, and on the first 300 words of the rationale for task 1."

Formal requirements for task 1

- The content of task 1 must relate to one of the four parts of the course.
- Students are free to choose a text type that is appropriate to the content of the task.
- A rationale must precede task 1.

Note: A formal essay is not an acceptable text type for task 1. Students are required to write an essay in paper 2 and in written task 2.

Rationale

The rationale is not included in the word count (800–1,000 words) for the written task and should be 200–300 words in length. Text titles or topics recorded on the rationale are expected to match those recorded on the coversheet.

In their rationale students must explain:

- how the content of the task is linked to a particular part of the course
- how the task is intended to explore particular aspects of the course
- the nature of the task chosen
- information about audience, purpose and the social, cultural or historical context in which the task is set.

The rationale should not only include knowledge about the text or topic studied, but also about the formal conventions of the text type produced and how they relate to the aims of the task.

Practical requirements for task 1

Students may include illustrations in support of their work where this is appropriate. These must always be electronically embedded, not separately reproduced and physically attached. Written tasks submitted for assessment must be word processed and the electronic files must not exceed a maximum size, including any images, of 2 MB.

On the coversheet that precedes the task, students must include:

- student details
- examination session details
- the course summary (including details of each of the four parts studied)
- the total number of words for the task.

Both the student and teacher must sign the coversheet as a declaration that the task is the authentic work of the student.

The task must be written in the language A studied.

Students must acknowledge all sources used. Where appropriate—for example, when the task relies on the reader referring to stimulus material such as a key passage in a literary text, or an illustration, in order to understand what the student is attempting to do—the source material must be clearly referenced in a bibliography. These sources may be referred to by the examiner but will not be taken account of in the assessment; nevertheless they are important information for the assessor. In addition, this promotes good academic practice on the part of the student.

The role of the teacher

- Provide guidance to students on the selection of the task, its development and level of challenge.
- Discuss the relationship between the written task and the stimulus material.
- Ensure that the topic is of an appropriate level of challenge and suitable to the length and focus of the task.

Examples of task 1

The following are examples of possible written tasks. These are intended for guidance only and are neither exhaustive nor compulsory.

- A short story exploring a minor character's view of the main action of a literary text
- A public information document explaining the effects of new legislation on a community
- A diary entry in which a character from a work of fiction reveals his or her true feelings about another character or any aspects of the action of a literary text
- An episode from a literary text rewritten to place the action in another setting
- An opinion column that emphasizes the pervasiveness of female stereotyping in advertising and how these stereotypes are promoted for the purpose of raising company profits

Aims of task 2

Task 2 takes the form of a critical response and is a requirement of the HL course only. The aims of task 2 are:

- to consider in greater detail the material studied in the four parts of the language A: language and literature course
- to reflect and question in greater depth the values, beliefs and attitudes that are implied in the texts studied

- to encourage students to view texts in a number of ways
- to enable students to give an individual response to the way in which texts can be understood in the light of the prescribed questions.

Formal requirements for task 2

There are two prescribed questions for each of the areas of study listed below. Task 2 is a critical response to **one** of these six questions. The prescribed questions are designed to be as open as possible and are intended to highlight broad areas within which students can explore and develop their responses to the texts. The prescribed questions remain the same from session to session. See the section “Task 2—questions” in this guide.

The critical response is based on material studied in the course. This material could be a longer work such as a novel or a group of poems. It could also be a shorter text or texts such as a newspaper article or a sports blog. A rationale is **not** included with task 2. Instead, students are expected to complete an outline on a designated form that can be found in the *Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme*. This outline is submitted with the task for external assessment.

This outline must be completed in class time and must include:

- the prescribed question that has been chosen
- the title of the text(s) for analysis
- the part of the course to which the task refers
- three or four key points that explain the particular focus of the task.

Where appropriate, task 2 must reference, in a bibliography, the relevant support documentation such as the newspaper article or magazine advertisement on which it is based.

Where a complete shorter text is chosen (for example, a newspaper article or an advertisement from a magazine) students may refer to other texts to support their response.

The critical response is in the style of a formal essay and must be clearly structured with an introduction, clearly developed ideas or arguments and a conclusion.

Practical requirements for task 2

In addition to these noted for task 1, students are required to:

- include, where appropriate, bibliographic reference to the text(s) on which the critical response is based when submitting the assessed work.

Areas of study for task 2

In preparation for task 2, students must address one of the following areas of study, which correspond to the topics and material studied in the four parts of the course.

Reader, culture and text

Students are encouraged to consider that a text’s meaning is determined by the reader and by the cultural context. The interpretation of a text is dependent on various factors, including:

- the reader and producer’s cultural identity or identities
- age
- gender
- social status
- the historical and cultural settings of the text and its production
- aspects of language and translation.

Power and privilege

Students are encouraged to consider how and why social groups are represented in texts in particular ways. In addition, consideration may be given to who is excluded from or marginalized in a text, or whose views are silenced. Social groups could include:

- women
- adolescents
- senior citizens
- children
- immigrants
- ethnic minorities
- professions.

Text and genre

Students are encouraged to consider the genre in which a text is placed. Certain textual features belong to a particular genre and can be identified by a particular reader or audience. Writers make use of, or deviate from, particular conventions of genre in order to achieve particular effects. Students may also explore how texts borrow from other texts, and how texts can be re-imagined or reconstructed.

Examples of conventions of genre include:

- structure
- storyline
- characterization
- stylistic devices
- tone, mood and atmosphere
- register
- visual images and layout.

The following table gives examples of a possible range of tasks that could be selected for the four HL written tasks. This shows the wide range of ideas and texts that can be explored in a number of varied ways.

Written task and syllabus section	Possible title and description	Learning outcomes
Task 1, part 3 Submitted for assessment	"From a Doll's House to a Wasteland?", adding a scene to <i>A Doll's House</i> , exploring the consequences of Nora's decision to leave	Changing historical, cultural and social contexts in which texts are written and received Attitudes and values expressed by texts
Task 2, part 1	"The Climate Change Debate", writing two pieces—one in the style of a left-of-centre ecology magazine, the other a right-wing political magazine. In the outline, explaining how language and argument are used differently	How audience and purpose affect the structure and content of texts How language and meaning are shaped by culture and context
Task 3, parts 3 and 4	"Another Life", exploring aspects of a character in a literary text	Explore literary works in detail Attitudes and values expressed by texts Analyse theme and moral values in a text

Task 4, parts 1 and 2	Task 2, question 1: Reader, culture and text	How language and meaning are shaped by culture and context
Submitted for assessment		How audience and purpose affect the structure and content of texts
		How mass media use language to inform and persuade
		Political and ideological influence of the media

Task 2—questions

Note: Literary texts used can be any of the texts studied in the course and may be from the prescribed literature in translation (PLT) list.

Reader, culture and text

1. How could the text be read and interpreted differently by two different readers?

The following are examples of texts that may be studied for student responses to question 1.

- The study and analysis of possible readings of the final pages of part 1 of the novel *The Outsider* by a French and Algerian reader at the time of the Algerian war of independence
 - The study and analysis of possible readings of an extract from the screenplay of *La Grande Illusion* by a French public in the early 1930s and late 1930s
 - The study and analysis of a political speech by a world leader that excludes references to certain groups or issues (those excluded will read the speech differently)
 - The study and analysis of different views of an article on obesity (this article may be viewed differently by someone from a country with problems of poverty and famine and by someone from a wealthy consumer society)
2. If the text had been written in a different time or place or language or for a different audience, how and why might it differ?

The following are examples of texts that may be studied for student responses to question 2.

- An article from a newspaper and how it would be written in a different newspaper
- A comic book or graphic novel for teenagers in the 1950s rewritten for teenagers in the 21st century
- The study and analysis of a literary work on the theme of prejudice that highlights different assumptions about race, religion, and so on
- The study and analysis of an article about social class from a country that has a very hierarchical class structure (the significance of language that identifies class distinctions is of primary focus)

Power and privilege

1. How and why is a social group represented in a particular way?

The following are examples of texts that may be studied for student responses to question 1.

- The study and analysis of an article in which an urban tribe is represented in a negative way
- The representation of social groups in the novel *The Yacoubian Building* by Alaa al Aswany

2. Which social groups are marginalized, excluded or silenced within the text?

The following are examples of texts that may be studied for student responses to question 2.

- Chinese fiction in which the figure of the intellectual is either revered or condemned
- Representations of the Roma in the contemporary popular press

Text and genre

1. How does the text conform to, or deviate from, the conventions of a particular genre, and for what purpose?

The following are examples of texts that may be studied for student responses to question 1.

- The study and analysis of an author's reworking of fairy tales
- The study and analysis of a novel that uses dramatic dialogue, poetry, letters, accounts of journeys
- The study and analysis of media texts with a particular format, style and register

2. How has the text borrowed from other texts, and with what effects?

The following are examples of texts that may be studied for student responses to question 2.

- The study and analysis of how a particular character from a work of fiction is re-imagined in a song lyric
- The study and analysis of religious imagery and references in political speeches
- The study and analysis of one of the stories from Borges's *Ficciones*
- The study and analysis of the use of the courtly love tradition in *Romeo and Juliet*

Criterion E: Language

- How clear, varied and accurate is the language?
- How appropriate is the choice of register, style and terminology? (“Register” refers, in this context, to the student’s use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and terminology appropriate to the task.)

0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Language is rarely clear and appropriate; there are many errors in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction and little sense of register and style.
2	Language is sometimes clear and carefully chosen; grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction are fairly accurate, although errors and inconsistencies are apparent; the register and style are to some extent appropriate to the task.
3	Language is clear and carefully chosen with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction despite some lapses; register and style are mostly appropriate to the task.
4	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with a good degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are consistently appropriate to the task.
5	Language is very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are effective and appropriate to the task.

Written task 1 (HL)**Criterion A: Rationale**

- Does the rationale for the written task explain how the task is linked to the aspects of the course being investigated?

Note: The word length for the rationale is 200–300 words. If the word limit is exceeded, 1 mark will be deducted.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The rationale shows some explanation and understanding of the aspects being investigated.
2	The rationale shows clear explanation and understanding of the aspects being investigated.

Criterion B: Task and content

- To what extent does the task show understanding of the topic(s) or text(s) to which it refers?
- How appropriate is the content to the task chosen?
- To what extent does the task show understanding of the conventions of the text type chosen?

A formal essay, such as that produced for paper 2, is not an appropriate text type for the written task. Submission of a formal essay will limit the marks available for this criterion.

0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	The task shows a superficial understanding of the topic(s) or text(s) to which it refers. The content is generally inappropriate to the task chosen. The task shows a superficial understanding of the conventions of the text type chosen.
3–4	The task shows a mostly adequate understanding of the topic(s) or text(s) to which it refers. The content is generally appropriate to the task chosen. The task shows an adequate understanding of the conventions of the text type chosen.
5–6	The task shows a good understanding of the topic(s) or text(s) to which it refers. The content is mostly appropriate to the task chosen. The task shows a good understanding of the conventions of the text type chosen.
7–8	The task shows an excellent understanding of the topic(s) or text(s) to which it refers. The content is consistently appropriate to the task chosen. The task shows an excellent understanding of the conventions of the text type chosen.

Criterion C: Organization

- How well organized is the task?
- How coherent is the structure?

Note: The word length for the written task is 800–1,000 words. If the word limit is exceeded, 2 marks will be deducted.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Little organization is apparent; the task has little structure.
2	Some organization is apparent; the task has some structure, although it is not sustained.
3	The task is organized; the structure is generally coherent.

4	The task is well organized; the structure is mostly coherent.
5	The task is effectively organized; the structure is coherent and effective.

Criterion D: Language and style

- How effective is the use of language and style?
- How appropriate to the task is the choice of register and style? (“Register” refers, in this context, to the student’s use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and idiom appropriate to the task; register is assessed on the task itself.)

Note: A student who writes an appropriate rationale but fails to achieve an appropriate register in the task cannot score more than 3 marks.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	There is little clarity, with many basic errors; little sense of register and style.
2	There is some clarity, though grammar, spelling and sentence structure are often inaccurate; some sense of register, style and appropriate vocabulary.
3	The use of language and the style are generally clear and effective, though there are some inaccuracies in grammar, spelling and sentence construction; generally appropriate in register, style and vocabulary.
4	The use of language and the style are clear and effective, with a good degree of accuracy; sentence construction and vocabulary are varied, showing a growing maturity of style; the register is appropriate.
5	The use of language and the style are very clear and effective, with a very good degree of accuracy; sentence construction and vocabulary are good; the style is confident and the register effective.

Written task 2: Critical response (HL)

Criterion A: Outline

- Does the outline of the written task clearly highlight the particular focus of the task?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The outline partially highlights the particular focus of the task.
2	The outline clearly highlights the particular focus of the task.

Criterion B: Response to the question

- To what extent is an understanding of the expectations of the question shown?
- How relevant and focused is the response to these expectations?
- Is the response supported by well-chosen references to the text(s)?

0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	The student has a superficial understanding of the expectations of the question. Ideas are frequently irrelevant and/or repetitive. The response is not supported by references to the text(s).
3–4	There is mostly adequate understanding of the expectations of the question. Ideas are generally relevant and focused. The response is generally supported by references to the text(s).
5–6	There is good understanding of the expectations of the question. Ideas are mostly relevant and focused. The response is mostly supported by well-chosen references to the text(s).
7–8	There is thorough understanding of the expectations of the question. Ideas are relevant and focused. The response is fully supported by well-chosen references to the text(s).

Criterion C: Organization and argument

- How well organized is the task?
- How coherent is the structure?
- How well developed is the argument of the written task?

Note: The word length for the written task is 800–1,000 words. If the word limit is exceeded, 2 marks will be deducted.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Little organization is apparent; the task has little structure and the argument is poorly developed.
2	Some organization is apparent; the task has some structure, although it is not sustained. The argument has some development.
3	The task is organized, and the structure is generally coherent. There is some development of the argument.

4	The task is well organized; the structure is mostly coherent and the argument is clearly developed.
5	The task is effectively organized; the structure is coherent and the argument is effectively developed.

Criterion D: Language and style

- How effective is the use of language and style?
- How appropriate to the task is the choice of register and style? (“Register” refers, in this context, to the student’s use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and idiom appropriate to the task; register is assessed on the task itself.)

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	There is little clarity, with many basic errors; little sense of register and style.
2	There is some clarity, though grammar, spelling and sentence structure are often inaccurate; some sense of register, style and appropriate vocabulary.
3	The use of language and the style are generally clear and effective, though there are some inaccuracies in grammar, spelling and sentence construction; generally appropriate in register, style and vocabulary.
4	The use of language and the style are clear and effective, with a good degree of accuracy; sentence construction and vocabulary are varied, showing a growing maturity of style; the register is appropriate.
5	The use of language and the style are very clear and effective, with a very good degree of accuracy; sentence construction and vocabulary are good; the style is confident and the register effective.