



INTERNATIONAL SECONDARY CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION
MAY 2025

ENGLISH PRIMARY LANGUAGE: PAPER I

MARKING GUIDELINES

Time: 3 hours

100 marks

These marking guidelines are prepared for use by examiners and sub-examiners, all of whom are required to attend a standardisation meeting to ensure that the guidelines are consistently interpreted and applied in the marking of candidates' scripts.

The IEB will not enter into any discussions or correspondence about any marking guidelines. It is acknowledged that there may be different views about some matters of emphasis or detail in the guidelines. It is also recognised that, without the benefit of attendance at a standardisation meeting, there may be different interpretations of the application of the marking guidelines.

The Marking Guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the Generic Descriptors.

QUESTION 1 COMPREHENSION

- 1.1 The urgent tone in the title is created through the use of the phrase 'trial by fire', which typically denotes a severe test or challenge. This implies that the climate crisis poses a significant threat to democracy, emphasising the seriousness and immediacy of the situation.

[Candidates must refer to the specific diction and link it to the urgent tone.]

- 1.2 The writer's argument is summarised by the concept that a government must 'guarantee the safety and survival of its citizens' because the authority of every system of government relies on fulfilling this essential duty. If democratic governments fail to protect their citizens from harm, it undermines the value of democratic institutions and practices, leading citizens to question their legitimacy.

- 1.3 The writer believes that climate change will be the test democratic governments need to pass because the potential impacts, such as food and water insecurity, extreme weather events, and mass migration, pose a severe threat to the health, safety, and prosperity of democratic populations. The rapid escalation of these catastrophic impacts, as highlighted by leading scientists, underscores the urgency for effective action.

- 1.4 The writer has chosen to use a rhetorical question at this stage in the passage to prompt readers to reflect on whether democratic governments are adequately equipped to meet the challenge of climate change. It invites readers to consider the capability and preparedness of democratic systems in the face of such a significant threat.

[Candidates must refer to the specific content of the rhetorical questions for full marks.]

- 1.5 The writer has included direct quotations from researchers to lend credibility and authority to the argument. By citing experts, the writer strengthens the case for the seriousness of the climate crisis and underscores the need for urgent action. The quotations provide concrete evidence of the severity of the situation and support the writer's assertions.

- 1.6 The writer's use of parenthesis enhances his intention by providing additional context and elaboration on the consequences of democratic governments failing to address climate change. It allows for a more nuanced exploration of the potential impact on citizens' perceptions of democracy and the potential rise of authoritarian sentiments.

- 1.7 Paragraph 9 could be seen as a 'call to action' as it suggests specific steps that can be taken to address the climate crisis. The writer advocates for entrenching citizen participation in climate policymaking, evolving democratic systems to better suit times of crisis, and fostering a spirit of democratic solidarity. The writer suggests that a 'start [is] entrenching citizen participation' when referring to policymaking. These suggestions urge readers to take proactive measures to address the imminent threat of climate change. He also refers to 'the spirit of democratic solidarity'. His use of 'solidarity' reinforces his call to action.

[Candidates must show their understanding of a 'call to action' and link their understanding to the specific details.]

- 1.8 The writer does not use 'fearmongering' to further his argument. While the passage highlights the severity and urgency of the climate crisis, it does so by presenting factual information and logical arguments rather than deliberately arousing public fear or alarm. The writer acknowledges the seriousness of the situation and urges action but does not resort to sensationalism or manipulation of emotions.

[Candidates may suggest that it is an example of fearmongering and achieve full marks.]

- 1.9 The speaker in *Lost or Found World* might be motivated by **TEXT 1** to change their worldview by recognising the urgency and severity of the climate crisis described in **TEXT 1**. As outlined by the writer, the catastrophic impacts of climate change may prompt the speaker to reconsider their perspective on environmental issues and the importance of taking action to address them. The extract's imagery of 'skies of truth' and 'curtain eyes' may symbolise a desire to confront reality and take responsibility for addressing environmental challenges, aligning with the urgency conveyed in **TEXT 1**.

[Candidates must refer to specific details from TEXT 1 and link their ideas to the extract from the poem.]

QUESTION 2 SEEN POETRY

- 2.1 The speaker's mood is resolute, uplifting, and even hopeful in these lines and is reinforced by the imagery of freedom and longing. The image of 'Love' with 'unconfined wings' and 'divine Althea' whispering at the 'grates' creates a sense of yearning and desire for freedom. The speaker feels trapped within the confines of prison but finds solace in the imagined presence of Althea, emphasising the contrast between captivity and the freedom of love.

[Candidates must refer to the mood directly and then link it to the imagery in the lines. Award 1 mark for identifying the mood and 2 marks for linking the imagery.]

- 2.2 The imagery of drinking and festivities adds to the speaker's intention by contrasting the joyousness of external revelry with the speaker's internal imprisonment. The flowing cups, roses, and loyal flames evoke a sense of celebration and merriment, highlighting the stark contrast between the carefree indulgence of others and the speaker's confinement. This emphasises the speaker's longing for freedom and normalcy amidst his imprisonment.

[Candidates must refer to the speaker's intention.]

- 2.3 The simile comparing the speaker to 'committed linnets' highlights the speaker's plight by depicting him as a captive bird. Linnets are small birds known for their melodious singing, but here, the speaker likens himself to these birds in captivity, suggesting a sense of confinement and restriction. This effectively emphasises the speaker's sense of imprisonment and longing for freedom.

[Candidates must unpack the simile for full marks.]

- 2.4 Lines 25–32 show a shift in the speaker's tone from resignation to defiance. The speaker asserts that 'Stone walls do not a prison make, / Nor iron bars a cage,' suggesting a rejection of physical constraints as the true definition of imprisonment. This shift in tone indicates the speaker's resilience and determination to maintain his sense of freedom and autonomy, even within the confines of prison.

[Candidates must refer to the shift in these lines for full marks.]

- 2.5 Both speakers express attitudes toward imprisonment based on hope, albeit in separate ways. In *To Althea, from Prison*, the speaker finds solace and freedom through his love for Althea, as evidenced by the imagery of 'Love' with 'unconfined wings' and the assertion that 'Minds innocent and quiet take/ That for an Hermitage.' Despite physical captivity, the speaker maintains a sense of inner freedom and resilience, symbolised by his freedom in love and soul. In contrast, in *Touch*, the speaker's hope is rooted in the desire for human connection and sensory experience after years of isolation and abuse. The speaker longs to be touched again, expressing a yearning for emotional and physical rejuvenation. The imagery of being untouched for years and the desire to feel alive again underscore the speaker's hope for renewal and restoration through touch. Both poems portray imprisonment as a temporary state that can be transcended through love, resilience, and the restoration of human connection.

[Candidates must refer to specific imagery from each poem and show how it is linked to hope for full marks. Candidates who refer to only one poem cannot achieve more than 2 marks.]

QUESTION 3 UNSEEN POETRY

- 3.1 The poet's use of 'If' in the opening lines of *A Good Man* positions the reader to approach the poem as a guide or a set of criteria to identify a good man. It creates a conditional framework that engages the reader in a search or evaluation process, implying that the characteristics to follow are essential for finding a good man. This conditional phrasing prompts readers to reflect on the attributes they value in a good man.
- 3.2 The repetition in lines 6–7 ('You'll find him in an outstretched hand, / You'll find him listening to another's story.') emphasises the speaker's tone of certainty and assurance. By repeating 'You'll find him,' the speaker underscores the reliability and consistency of the good man's behaviour. This repetition reinforces the idea that these qualities are definitive and recognisable, creating a tone of conviction and clarity.

[Candidates must refer to the speaker's tone explicitly.]

- 3.3 In lines 8–11, the speaker describes a good man as someone who walks among friends, tests paths others fear, includes you in his prayers, and finds joy in your success. In other words, a good man is courageous, compassionate, supportive, and selfless. He is willing to take risks for others, is spiritually thoughtful, and genuinely celebrates others' achievements.

[Candidates must use their own words in their summary.]

- 3.4 The repetition of 'It is enough' in line 14 reinforces the theme of humility and contentment in the poem. By repeating this phrase, the poet highlights that simple, genuine friendship and support are sufficient qualities of a good man. This repetition underscores the idea that true goodness doesn't require grand gestures or recognition but lies in modesty and sincere connection.

[Candidates must identify what they believe the theme of the poem to be and link it to the repetition.]

- 3.5 The quotation 'Waste no more time arguing about what a good man should be. Be one.' aligns well with the poet's intention in *A Good Man*. Both emphasise action over discussion. The poem focuses on the quiet, humble actions of a good man rather than on boastful claims of or arguments about goodness. The quotation supports the poem's message that embodying goodness through simple, sincere actions is more important than debating its definition.

- 3.6 The speaker in *My Last Duchess* is not an example of a good man as described in *A Good Man*. The Duke exhibits qualities opposite to those valued in Everson's poem. While a good man is humble, supportive, and selfless, the Duke is arrogant, controlling, and possessive. In *My Last Duchess*, the Duke's speech is filled with possessiveness and jealousy, as shown by phrases like 'I gave commands; Then all smiles stopped together' (lines 45–46), indicating his control over his late wife's expressions and interactions. In contrast, *A Good Man* describes someone who 'will lay [praise] with thanks at the feet of his God' (lines 12–13), highlighting humility and gratitude. The Duke's actions, motivated by pride and a desire for dominance, starkly contrast with the selflessness and humility of the good man described in Everson's poem.

[Candidates must identify why the speaker in 'My Last Duchess' is not an example of a good man. The candidates must refer to specific diction from both poems to support their answer.]

QUESTION 4 CRITICAL LITERACY

- 4.1 The visual details in the advertisement enhance the reader's understanding of *Happy Children's Day* by creating a vibrant and joyful image associated with children's health and happiness. The image of a young child kicking a ball, depicted as if made from the drinking yoghurt, suggests that the product is integral to a child's active and healthy lifestyle. The all-white visual, emerging from a glass of yoghurt, symbolises purity and nutrition, emphasising that FreshYo is a wholesome choice for children. Additionally, the bright and playful colours of the yoghurt bottles (blue, pink, and purple) evoke a sense of fun and appeal to children, reinforcing the celebratory tone of Children's Day.

[Candidates must refer to the visual details and link them to the idea of celebrating Children's Day.]

- 4.2 4.2.1 The sentence 'Nourished today for a brighter tomorrow' is not a complete sentence because it lacks a subject and verb combination that forms a full independent clause. It is a dependent clause or a phrase that conveys an idea but does not stand alone grammatically. The phrase is designed to be a slogan, providing a succinct and memorable message rather than a complete sentence.
- 4.2.2 Logo and leaf symbol: The company's name and the green leaf above it, positioned at the top left, immediately convey a sense of health and natural goodness. This placement ensures brand recognition and sets the tone for the rest of the advertisement.

Slogan and celebratory message: The text 'Nourished today for a brighter tomorrow. Happy Children's Day' is placed below the logo, ensuring that the message of health and celebration is prominent and connected to the brand's identity. This placement reinforces the idea that the product supports children's growth and happiness.

Visual foregrounded: The central visual of the child kicking a ball, crafted from the yoghurt, captures attention and symbolises the product's benefits. This creative and playful representation makes the advertisement visually appealing and memorable, directly linking the product to an active, healthy lifestyle for children.

Product display: The three bottles of yoghurt at the bottom left, with different colours representing various flavours, visually communicate variety and choice. The tagline 'Nutritious Goodness Everyday' placed below the bottles ties the product benefits directly to daily consumption, reinforcing the idea of consistent nourishment.

[Candidates must refer to the layout and link the various aspects to the intention. Candidates may refer to other aspects not considered above which should be considered.]

4.3 The words 'I WANT' in the advertisement emphasise the celebration of Children's Day by capturing the voice and desires of children directly. This phrase makes the message personal and relatable, as it mimics the way children express their preferences and desires. By using 'I WANT,' the advertiser taps into the natural assertiveness and enthusiasm of children, suggesting that Pizza Jungle caters to their adventurous and playful tastes. It aligns the product with the idea of fulfilling children's wishes and celebrating their individuality and spirited nature on Children's Day.

4.4 The words 'I WANT' and 'The ones with the wild taste buds' are not meant to be read as a single sentence because they serve different purposes within the advertisement.

'I WANT': This phrase is intended to capture attention and express a child's desire. It stands alone to convey the immediate, strong wish of a child, reflecting their straightforward and enthusiastic nature.

'The ones with the wild taste buds': This phrase is a description that follows, explaining what the child desires. It characterises children who enjoy bold and adventurous flavours, aligning with the playful and fun nature of Pizza Jungle.

The visual details support this interpretation. The image of the happy, smiling little girl covered in baby food and wearing a colourful dress suggests a sense of fun and messiness that children often bring to eating. This visual reinforces the idea of 'wild taste buds' and the playful, adventurous spirit that the advertisement celebrates. The separate positioning of the phrases also emphasises their distinct roles in conveying the overall message of celebrating children's unique and vibrant tastes on Children's Day.

4.5 4.5.1 The interests served in **TEXT 4** are those of the company despite their desire to supply donations for toys to less fortunate children on Children's Day.

4.5.2 The advertisement makes use of a visual metaphor by transforming the harbour scene with cranes and a container ship into a playful and whimsical environment filled with oversized plastic toys. This visual metaphor conveys the idea that just as the harbour is filled with these joyful elements, donating toys can transform Children's Day into a 'sea of joy' for children in need.

Harbour with toys: The usual industrial setting of a harbour, typically associated with commerce and work, is reimagined with giant toys, such as a mother duck with ducklings and a plastic submarine. This suggests that even places of business can contribute to spreading joy.

Oversized toys: The toys are exaggerated in size, indicating that their impact on children's happiness is significant. This visual exaggeration emphasises the transformative power of donations, suggesting that even small contributions can have a large impact.

Primary colours: The bright, primary colours of the toys (yellow, red, and blue) contrast with the typical muted colours of a harbour, further enhancing the metaphor of joy and playfulness infiltrating a serious adult world.

The visual metaphor effectively conveys the message that contributing toys can create immense happiness for children, transforming their environment and experiences, much like the playful transformation of the harbour scene. This aligns with the text, 'TRANSFORM CHILDREN'S DAY IN A SEA OF JOY,' reinforcing the impact of donations.

[Candidates must refer to their understanding of a visual metaphor and link it to the visual and verbal details.]

4.6 TEXT 3

Visual details:

A young girl with baby food on her face and arm, smiling and happy. She is wearing a colourful dress with flowers and holding a plastic spoon also covered in baby food. The playful and messy scene captures the carefree, joyous nature of childhood.

Verbal details:

'I WANT' in bold captures a child's direct and enthusiastic voice.

'The ones with the wild taste buds' adds to the playful tone, suggesting children's adventurous food preferences.

'Happy Children's Day' directly links the advertisement to the celebration.

Effectiveness:

The advertisement effectively captures the essence of Children's Day by showcasing a happy, carefree child. The use of 'I WANT' makes it relatable and appealing to both children and parents. The playful visual reinforces the brand's message that Pizza Jungle caters to fun-loving, adventurous children.

TEXT 4

Visual details:

A harbour scene with cranes and a container ship is transformed with oversized plastic toys (a mother duck with ducklings and a plastic submarine). The bright, primary colours of the toys contrast with the typical industrial setting of a harbour.

Verbal details:

'TRANSFORM CHILDREN'S DAY IN A SEA OF JOY' is printed in different fonts, emphasising transformation and joy.

'Look for our collection points and make your donation' encourages action.

The company logo with the message 'DONATE TOYS – BRING JOY FOR THOSE WHO NEED' reinforces the call to action.

Effectiveness:

The visual metaphor of toys in a harbour effectively communicates the idea of transforming ordinary environments into sources of joy for children. The direct call to action ('make your donation') is clear and compelling. The use of bright, cheerful visuals alongside the message of donation highlights the positive impact of giving.

[Candidates must refer to visual and verbal details from both advertisements, but candidates should ultimately judge which is more effective. Candidates can choose either advertisement with relevant justification.]

QUESTION 5 EDITING SKILLS

- 5.1 The advertiser's use of pronouns 'you' and 'we' positions the reader to view the advertiser's focus as personal and reciprocal. 'You' addresses the reader directly, making them feel personally involved and acknowledged for their contributions to society. 'We' represents the advertiser, TIAA-CREF, emphasising their commitment to supporting the reader. This creates a relationship of mutual benefit, highlighting that while the reader helps others, the company is dedicated to helping the reader in return.

[Candidates must refer to the use of 'you', 'we', and 'ours', and may refer to YOUR (even though it is a possessive adjective).]

- 5.2 The punctuation mark used is a dash (–). In the context of the sentence, its function is to introduce and emphasise the term 'retirement' as the subject of discussion. It creates a pause that draws attention to the term, highlighting its significance and ensuring the reader understands that retirement is the focus of the discussed benefits.

- 5.3 'Low-fee' is an example of a compound adjective. It describes the structure (i.e. a low-fee structure) and modifies the noun 'structure' by combining two words to form a single descriptive term, indicating that the structure has low fees.

- 5.4 5.4.1 The advertiser has used 'It's' instead of 'Its' because 'It's' is the contraction for 'It is,' which fits the context of the sentence. 'Its' is a possessive pronoun, which would be incorrect in this context. The sentence 'It's simple really' means 'It is simple really.'

- 5.4.2 The company said that it was simple really.

[Candidates are awarded ½ mark per underlined word. Candidates who use inverted commas should be awarded no marks.]

QUESTION 6 SUMMARY

Global marking, giving credit for concise and coherent sentences expressed in the candidate's own words.

Very good	Good	Average	Below average	Very weak
10	8	6½	5	3
9	7½	6	4½	2
8½	7	5½	4	1

Very good: (10–8½)

- Candidates producing a very good summary, **which has adhered to all instructions**, will demonstrate that they can successfully select relevant information from the different parts of the texts.
- Candidates will expertly synthesise that information to suit the new context and fulfil the specific requirements of the summary task.
- **The register will be consistently appropriate to the relevant format**, and the summary will stand alone as a successful, cohesive text.
- Expression will be excellent and will demonstrate a mastery of the language.
- Full and coherent sentences will be used, resulting in a well-crafted, stylistically superior text.
- A summary in this category that exceeds the word limit can be awarded a maximum of 8½ marks.

Good: (8–7)

- Candidates producing a good summary will be able to discern which aspects of the texts are relevant and be able to synthesise these and convey them in their own words.
- **The summary will successfully meet most of the requirements specified in the instructions.**
- Candidates will **use the appropriate register for the relevant format**, which will be well-sustained throughout the summary.
- The expression in such summaries will demonstrate clarity that is not evident in the average summary.
- Full and coherent sentences will be used and be well-sustained throughout the summary.
- A summary in this category that exceeds the word limit can be awarded a maximum of 7 marks.

Average: (6½–5½)

- Candidates producing an average summary will demonstrate an ability to discern which aspects of the texts are relevant and be able to put these into their own words most of the time.
- **The summary might not take into consideration the most important requirements specified in the instructions.**
- There may be instances of lifting or lapses that display faulty selection, incorrect emphasis, or difficulty with synthesis.
- **The register will be mostly appropriate for the relevant format**, although minor lapses may occur.
- Expression will be merely competent, and there may be lapses in the construction of full sentences.
- A summary in this category that exceeds the word limit can be awarded a maximum of 5½ marks.

Below-average: (5–4)

- Candidates producing a below-average summary will demonstrate an ability to discern which parts of the texts are relevant some of the time but may not be able to put this into their own words effectively.
- In some instances, large sections of the original texts will be lifted and reproduced.
- **It is likely that the register will not be appropriate for the relevant format** or that the new text will not meet the requirements of the task.
- Expression is likely to be flawed but will not impede understanding.
- A summary in this category that exceeds the word limit can be awarded a maximum of 4 marks.

Very weak: (3–1)

- Summaries in this category will show extremely limited – if any – understanding of the texts.
- This will be evident through an inability to select appropriate parts of the texts to summarise or through excessive cutting and pasting.
- **Register will not be appropriate for the format.**
Expression is likely to be poor, impeding understanding.

NOTE:

- Penalise 104 words and more by moving the mark to the bottom of the category (see descriptors). Include words from the descriptor to indicate your thinking.
- Stop reading at 110 words.
- Subtract 1 mark:
 - if no word count is provided, **or**
 - if an inexcusably inaccurate word count has been provided.

Total: 100 marks

DESCRIPTORS FOR EVALUATING RESPONSES DETERMINED BY MARK ALLOCATION AND COGNITIVE SKILL

A 5-mark question that requires extended abstract thinking. The response demonstrates understanding, application, analysis, complex inference, and/or synthesis, evaluation, or appreciation.	
Marks	Skills
5	The excellent response: - is complete and detailed, making specific reference to more than one element of the required text(s). makes insightful links between the question and the text(s). provides evidence that understanding can be transferred to a new context. integrates all elements, making connections, and demonstrating a clear understanding of how the parts contribute to the whole.
4½–4	The very good response: makes specific reference to the required text(s). - makes accurate links between the question and the text(s). - provides evidence that understanding can be applied to familiar contexts. integrates the key elements, making connections, and demonstrating a clear understanding of how the parts contribute to the whole.
3½–3	The average response: - refers to the required text(s) in a general way without addressing all aspects. - makes simple, underdeveloped links between the question and the text(s) - could be complete, but without the required references or evidence. does not demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the whole (does not clarify/establish the significance).
2½–2	The incomplete response: - refers to the text(s) in a general way. - is inaccurate or simplistic. - demonstrates concrete thinking and an incomplete understanding of the elements.
1½	The very partial response: refers to the text(s). - does not answer the question because of a lack of understanding.
1–0	The inadequate response: - attempts to deal with only one aspect of the question but does so very poorly. - displays very limited understanding.

A 4-mark question that requires relational thinking. Demonstrates understanding, application, analysis, complex inference, or synthesis. This answer requires evaluation, or appreciation.	
Marks	Skills
4	The excellent response: - is complete, addressing all aspects of the question and drawing them together accurately. links all the ideas and provides the required evidence. - demonstrates understanding applied to familiar contexts. integrates all elements, making connections and demonstrating a clear understanding of how the parts contribute to the whole.
3½–3	The good response: - shows that the significance of each element is understood, but an aspect of the answer is not clearly explained. or - addresses each element but does not successfully link them. - is not entirely convincing and/or does not convey a clear understanding of how the parts contribute to the whole.
2½	The average response: - is multi-structural but addresses the elements in an incomplete or flawed way. does not link elements or does not demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the elements. omits or misunderstands a key element.
2	The incomplete response: - is one-dimensional, omitting more than one element. - indicates a flawed understanding of the question and/or the text.
1½	The very partial response: attempts to address aspects of the question but indicates only partial understanding.
1–0	The inadequate response: - attempts to deal with only one aspect of the question but does so very poorly. - displays very limited understanding.

A 3-mark question that requires multi-structural thinking. Demonstrates understanding, application, analysis, and inferential comprehension of implied and figurative meaning.	
Marks	Skills
3	The excellent response: engages with all aspects of the question and provides the required evidence. - indicates a clear understanding of the significance of each element.
2½	The good response: - is multi-structural, but not integrated. or - is convincing but incomplete. provides evidence if required.
2	The average response: - is either one-dimensional, without sufficient evidence, or is superficial and general. - does not provide enough relevant justification. - demonstrates that the candidate understands the issue.
1½	The incomplete response: - demonstrates a flawed or incomplete understanding of what has been asked. - indicates an understanding of the text. attempts to use the text(s) to answer the question, but reasoning is concrete or simplistic.
1–0	The inadequate response: indicates only partial/limited/no understanding of this aspect of the text.

A 2-mark question that requires uni-structural thinking. Demonstrates understanding and application, literal comprehension, and reorganisation.	
Marks	Skills
2	The excellent response: is complete and accurate.
1½	The good response: - is partially complete and accurate. - or - is complete and mostly accurate.
1–0	The incomplete response: includes only one half of the required response or is inaccurate.