

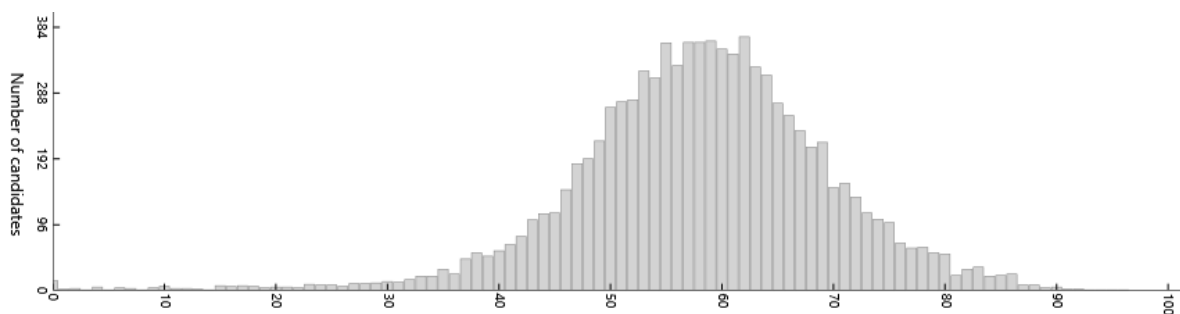


Summary report of the 2022 ATAR course examination report: English

Year	Number who sat	Number of absentees
2022	9088	164
2021	9955	152
2020	9823	150
2019	10 275	102

The number of candidates sitting and the number attempting each section of the examination can differ as a result of non-attempts across sections of the examination.

Examination score distribution–Written



Summary

Attempted by 9075 candidates Mean 57.76% Max 96.00% Min 0.00%

Section means were:

Section One: Comprehending	Mean 53.46%		
Attempted by 9051 candidates	Mean 16.04(/30)	Max 29.50	Min 0.00
Section Two: Responding	Mean 59.12%		
Attempted by 8997 candidates	Mean 23.65(/40)	Max 40.00	Min 0.00
Section Three: Composing	Mean 60.24		
Attempted by 9029 candidates	Mean 18.07(/30)	Max 30.00	Min 0.00

General comments

Although the texts provided in Section One appeared accessible and engaging, many candidates did not fully attend to the requirements of Questions 2 or 3. A broad vocabulary and knowledge of metalanguage would have allowed for greater analytical precision in candidate responses, particularly in relation to written texts.

For Section Two this year, candidates demonstrated good understanding of their texts as well as the ability to access the questions. As in previous years, a varied range of texts were discussed and candidates seemed able to discuss syllabus concepts in relation to these studied texts more than to the unseen ones of Section One. Overly long and uncontrolled essays were a continuing issue noted by markers.

Section Three attracted the highest mean, with candidates composing a varied and interesting range of responses. Connections to the question were sometimes tenuous and candidates must remember that engagement with the question is a key criterion for success

in this section as in the others. Further time spent on planning and editing would have resulted in higher quality responses. Although marked as a first draft, frequent or simple errors detracted from the quality of the composition. Originality and the clear development of ideas or aspects of construction were also rewarded and could have been improved through more careful crafting of responses.

Advice for candidates

- Spend time carefully comprehending and analysing texts in Section One. Demonstrate a degree of textual understanding and skill that reflects the standard expected of the course. Avoid limiting your articulation of key ideas in the text to a single word repeated throughout your response (for example, the idea that growing up is 'inevitable'). Instead, offer a more detailed phrase, or at least a tricolon that you can unpack throughout your response.
- Read questions carefully. For example, comparing representations of young women rather than how the representations are constructed.
- Learn metalanguage, in terms of syllabus concepts and textual features. Avoid defaulting to the broad and often meaningless generalisations of 'characterisation', 'syntax' and 'diction'. You need to be able to unpack language and structural features, and generic conventions, with more specificity. Revise the features associated with written texts especially.
- Attempt each question within Section One. It is better to write something for each question rather than to miss one entirely because of a desire to write lengthy, complete responses for the others.
- There is a close correlation between questions and specific syllabus points, particularly in relation to Section Two. There is no trick to the exam; if you know the specific syllabus points that comprise the examinable content you will be able to recognise them within the examination questions.
- Overly long responses in Section Two rarely score highly; succinct, focused writing that attends only to the question selected is considered to be significantly more skilful and sophisticated than an excessively lengthy response that will be more likely to deviate off-track, contain repetitive points and/or include unnecessary plot recount.
- Out of all the texts you study throughout the year, you only need to demonstrate your understanding of one or two in the examination. You are expected to know well those you choose to discuss.
- Avoid re-writing 'prepared' responses for Section Two or Three. The questions you see in the examination will be new to you. Clear and sustained engagement with the question in front of you is a significant criterion for success. Simply making a reference to the question at the end of a paragraph is not evidence of engagement with the question.
- Plan your responses, including for Section Three. The quality of your skills of text construction, in terms of use of features of the form for purpose and audience and not just the mechanics of writing, are being assessed in Section Three. Ensure that your attention to the question is clearly evident. In this section, engagement with the question is a key criterion for success.
- Statements of Intent, however disguised, are not marked and should be avoided. As part of their planning, candidates should certainly consider their intended audience, purpose context and form, but they should not direct such statements to the marker or include them under their title. These aspects of their text should be made readily apparent through the construction and shaping of the text.
- Common issues to avoid in Section Three include:
 - Imaginative texts: incorrect formatting of dialogue, poor paragraphing, inconsistency in tense and narrative point of view, lack of characterisation of first-person narrators, and poor or inconsistent narrative structure

- Interpretive texts: emphasis on narration at the expense of offering clear interpretation of the subject matter, lack of clear form, and vague or underdeveloped perspectives and/or purposes
- Persuasive texts: use of only simple or obvious persuasive language devices, lack of attention to a specific audience, lack of context or a provocation for the text's creation, rare deviation from a simple three-point argument as opposed to a more complex rhetorical structure.

Advice for teachers

- Examination questions, especially in Section Two, are closely correlated with specific syllabus points. Ensure that students are familiar with the phrasing of the examinable content within the syllabus, including the stem that precedes each list of bullet points. The bullet points themselves do not stand alone; they are continuations of these stems. Many candidates seem to understand the broad concepts of the syllabus, but not the specifics of their representation within individual bullet points.
- Do not underestimate the significance of comparison, particularly within Unit 3. Many of the individual bullet points are preceded by a comparative stem.
- Discourage students from writing overly long responses in Section Two. These rarely reflect concise, controlled essays limited to the scope of the question. Some candidates write themselves out of sound marks by attempting to cover too much ground, often not required by the question.
- Ensure revision of the metalanguage associated with written texts, which frequently appears inadequate in comparison with students' understanding of visual language. Encourage students to drill down into broad terms such as diction, syntax, and imagery, identifying the specifics of word choice, sentence construction and so on.
- Perspective, a core concept within Unit 4 where it appears in the stem for two of the five sections of examinable content, remains an issue for many candidates, who neglect the contextual aspect of this concept. Voice, and particularly its construction, seems similarly problematic for many students as well, particularly in relation to multimodal texts. Attention to these concepts, and practise in phrasing their articulation, would be beneficial.
- In teaching composition, spend time specifically teaching more complex uses of imaginative and persuasive language features, as well as complex and varied syntax. Do not assume that in teaching students to identify these in studied texts they will automatically employ them within their own writing. The compositions of many candidates featured only simple, obvious or a very limited range of such features.
- Students seem to struggle with higher order command words, such as 'compare' or 'evaluate', despite their significance within the examinable content. Meaningful comparison requires more than simply discussing each text in turn, and evaluation requires some kind of judgement being made, which is rarely apparent in candidate responses.
- Continue to encourage students to give their compositions appropriate and meaningful titles and remind them that so-called Statements of Intent are not appropriate and are disregarded by markers. Context, purpose, audience and form must be evident within the composition itself, and titles may be a beneficial method of suggesting these factors.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Section One: Comprehending (30 Marks)

The Comprehending section produced the lowest mean across the examination. This was at least in part affected by candidates failing to complete all questions. The lower mean and attempt rate for Question 3 in particular may suggest that candidates struggled with time constraints, or that they found the demands of Question 3, being a comparison question, too challenging. Pleasingly, many candidates were awarded high marks for questions within this

section, suggesting many were well-prepared to apply their understandings of the syllabus to the unseen texts.

At times, candidates' identification of central ideas or concepts within the texts were limited to a single word or brief phrase, repeated ad nauseum throughout the response (for example, 'the perspective that growing up is inevitable' or that 'young women are represented as empowered'. This resulted in a much more limited response than a candidate who offered various descriptors, or a detailed phrase, that they could then unpack.

Candidates' use of metalanguage varied significantly. Some candidates appeared to have a wide vocabulary at their disposal while others rarely strayed beyond the basic, and thus not at a level commensurate with Year 12 ATAR English.

Section Two: Responding (40 Marks)

Overall, candidates generally demonstrated a good knowledge of studied texts and a broad familiarity with syllabus concepts. Sometimes the application of that knowledge within the parameters of the question was lacking. Candidates needed to confine their answers to the requirements of their chosen question only, offering controlled and focused responses to the question. However, each question attracted candidates who achieved full marks for their response, suggesting questions were accessible and many candidates were well-prepared for their examination.

It was important that candidates were familiar with the phrasing of syllabus points and the ways in which broad concepts are framed within the syllabus. Issues arose when candidates took concepts out of context within the questions, such as disassociating controversy from the language features which generated it (Question 9), or how the evolution in conventions changes one's understanding of the text's specific themes, rather than the genre itself (Question 4).

A problem was essay length in this section, with many candidates producing very long essays. This rarely resulted in higher marks and in many cases actually detracted from the quality of a response, as it reflected a rambling and uncontrolled response. The reality of this section is that candidates were not asked to share all that they knew about a text, or that they had revised. While this may have been frustrating to candidates who spent hours on such revision, the 'best' responses are those that remain succinct and focused. Candidates should have spent time on planning and shaping those responses instead of simply writing more.

Candidates did not always engage with the specific command words within each question; 'evaluate' is not the same as 'discuss', for example. Comparison questions often lacked attention to real comparison, with candidates simply offering largely independent discussions of each text in turn.

Section Three: Composing (30 Marks)

The range of text forms produced by candidates was widely and impressively varied, comprised of podcast or interview transcripts, screenplays, open letters, feature articles, personal essays, memoir, short story and micro fiction, drama scripts, radio plays, social media threads and blog entries, just to name a few. It was pleasing to see most responses starting with a title, as is conventional for almost every text form that candidates attempted to write in. Not all compositions made their form evident, however, and some candidates needed to work on constructing clearer examples of their chosen form or genre.

Responses could have been improved by more thorough planning and editing. Although marked as a first draft, frequent or simple errors or inconsistencies detracted from the quality of the response, which should have been at a level commensurate with this course.

As in other sections, there were syllabus concepts inherent within each question which candidates needed to take care to address. Markers should not have had to search or read into the candidates' text to locate where they had done so. The temptation to reproduce previously composed texts is perhaps a natural one, but candidates were evaluated on the extent to which they addressed the question selected.

Common issues were evident in some responses, such as lack of characterisation of first-person narrators, unclear purposes of texts, lack of a recognisable genre or form, poorly structured narratives or lines of argument or discussion, or evidence of only basic language features (particularly in relation to persuasive texts). This may have suggested that candidates needed to employ more complex rhetorical devices and language features, rather than just analysing them in studied texts.