

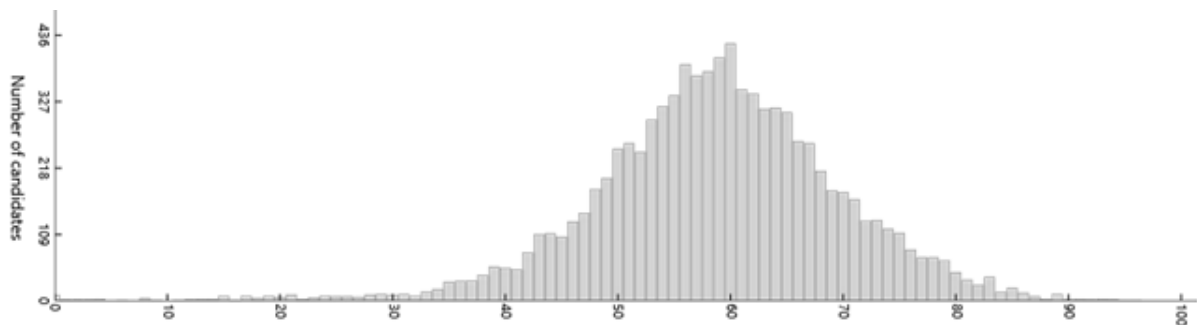


## Summary report of the 2023 ATAR course examination report: English

Year	Number who sat	Number of absentees
2023	9114	125
2022	9088	164
2021	9955	152
2020	9823	150

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



### Summary

Attempted by 9105 candidates      Mean 58.37%      Max 96.00% Min 0.00%

Section means were:

Section One: Comprehending	Mean 56.82%		
Attempted by 9066 candidates	Mean 17.05(/30)	Max 30.00	Min 0.00
Section Two: Responding	Mean 59.72%		
Attempted by 9054 candidates	Mean 23.89(/40)	Max 40.00	Min 0.00
Section Three: Composing	Mean 58.14%		
Attempted by 9084 candidates	Mean 17.44(/30)	Max 30.00	Min 0.00

### General comments

The 2023 paper functioned well to address areas of the syllabus and offer opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their understandings of texts and concepts. In Section One, candidates found both texts engaging and there was good comprehension and analysis in answers. In Section Two, candidates used a variety of texts and text types to address questions. However, overly long and uncontrolled answers showed that many candidates were deviating somewhat from the recommended working times and spending a disproportionate amount of time in the Responding section. In Section Three, the relationship between the questions and responses was often tenuous, or there was only a fleeting connection to the prompt at the start or in the close of the response.

### *Advice for candidates*

- Spend time carefully reading texts and planning answers in Section One in order to comprehend before you begin writing. The suggested working time of 60 minutes allows you to re-read, plan and think before you answer. Aim to show comprehension of the whole text rather than limit your discussion to one or two parts of it.
- Learn the vocabulary of the course, and metalanguage, to allow precise analysis and specific discussion.
- Consider every word in every question carefully.
- Read and plan carefully to make sure you are addressing all parts of the question as it is intended.
- Just because a question is shorter does not mean it is 'easier'. All questions are intended to be equally difficult. Select your question to best demonstrate your knowledge and skills.
- You will engage with many texts in your study of English. The Responding section of the examination requires you to know one or two in enough detail that you can provide textual evidence to support your points.
- You cannot hope to express everything you know about your studied texts, and the Responding section questions do not expect you to do so. Deviating from the question or writing overly long, unfocused answers will not be rewarded.
- Introductions and conclusions are significant textual features for essays and other forms of writing. Learn their features and structure to frame your answers effectively.
- Preparing whole answers may seem beneficial as study practice, however, the questions in the examination will be new to you. Clear, sustained engagement with the question is the path to success.
- Composing original texts under timed pressure is a skill that requires practice. Crafting answers in Section Three requires as much planning and thought as in Sections One and Two.
- To prepare, learn the features and style of your chosen forms of writing, rather than information about topics you hope to write on.
- While correct writing is important, Section Three assesses more than the mechanics of writing. Always consider the context, audience, and purpose in your answer.

### *Advice for teachers*

- Questions are framed from whole syllabus points and with careful consideration of how the pointer fits with the whole stem. Concepts such as 'voice', 'perspective' and 'genre' are broadly understood. More familiarity with the phrasing around these concepts in the examinable content is recommended.
- Clear connections between an interpretation of a text and its genre, purpose, audience and context should be encouraged.
- Application of the term 'context', as it is currently defined, needs attention.
- Discourage overly long answers. Appropriate paragraphing for all answers should be encouraged. Page-long paragraphs should be discouraged.
- There is no one preferred essay style in Responding answers. However, encourage an introduction that outlines the context, purpose, audience and genre of a studied text. Topic sentences need to be clear and direct. Emphasise the need for conclusions.
- Persuasive writing should demonstrate the use of more complex persuasive devices that show some rhetorical or generic specialisation.

## ***Comments on specific sections and questions***

### **Section One: Comprehending (30 Marks)**

The two texts provided for comprehending were well-understood and candidates' responses were well-constructed and concise, in keeping with the suggested approximate count of approximately 200–300 words.

### **Section Two: Responding (40 Marks)**

In general, candidates exhibited a solid understanding of the texts studied and a comprehensive grasp of the concepts outlined in the syllabus. Every question garnered responses with perfect scores, indicating that the questions were accessible, and candidates were adequately prepared to discuss the concept indicated in a question by applying it to their studied text. Depth of discussion provided a close focus on one text in answers. The excessive length of too many responses continued to be a problem in this section. Too many candidates needed to limit discussion to the question that they had selected. Higher scoring answers in this section were controlled, thoughtful and focused.

### **Section Three: Composing (30 Marks)**

Candidates provided a pleasing variety of text forms and confident approach to topics. These included podcast or interview transcripts, open letters, feature articles, personal essays, memoir, short story and other short fiction, scripts, opinion pieces and online writing, just to name a few forms. Successful responses started with a title, as is conventional for almost every text. Not all compositions made their form evident, however, and some candidates needed to work on constructing clearer features of their chosen form or genre. The temptation to reproduce prepared material is understandable, however the most successful candidates engaged with the prompt playfully and originally. Trying to use prepared content for new prompts rarely resulted in sophisticated, nuanced or original writing. As in other sections of the examination, planning and thinking through all aspects of the question was one means to success. Another was editing. Stronger answers also had a clear sense of audience and purpose.