Mark Scheme – Results

January 2025

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the last candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the first.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme - not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification/indicative content will not be exhaustive.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, a senior examiner must be consulted before a mark is given.
- Crossed out work should be marked **unless** the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.
- Plans in the lined response area of the question paper/answer booklet should not be marked unless no other response to the question has been provided. This applies whether the plan is crossed out or not.

Specific Marking Guidance

When deciding how to reward an answer, examiners should consult both the indicative content and the associated marking grid(s). When using a levels-based mark scheme, the 'best fit' approach should be used.

- Examiners should first decide which descriptor most closely matches the answer and place it in that level.

- The mark awarded within the level will be decided based on the quality of the answer and will be modified according to how securely all bullet points are displayed at that level.

- Indicative content is exactly that – they are factual points that candidates are likely to use to construct their answer.

- It is possible for an answer to be constructed without mentioning some or all of these points, as long as they provide alternative responses to the indicative content that fulfils the requirements of the question. It is the examiner's responsibility to apply their professional judgement to the candidate's response in determining if the answer fulfils the requirements of the question.

Placing a mark within a level

- Examiners should first decide which descriptor most closely matches the answer and place it in that level. The mark awarded within the level will be decided based on the quality of the answer and will be modified according to how securely all bullet points are displayed at that level.

- In cases of uneven performance, the points above will still apply. Candidates will be placed in the level that best describes their answer according to the descriptors in that level. Marks will be awarded towards the top or bottom of that level depending on how they have evidenced each of the descriptor bullet points.

- If the candidate's answer meets the requirements fully, markers should be prepared to award full marks within the level. The top mark in the level is used for work that is as good as can realistically be expected within that level.

Unit 1: Post-2000 Poetry and Prose

Section A: Post-2000 Poetry

Question Number	Indicative Content
1	***The Lammas Hireling*** All reasonable and relevant interpretations of 'unwanted memories' should be rewarded. A pertinent choice of second poem might be *On Her Blindness* by Adam Thorpe. Candidates may include the following in their answers: - contrast between the contented tone of the opening and the coming unwanted memories, e.g. 'After the fair, I'd still a light heart / And a heavy purse' - repeated use of the word 'dream' suggests the speaker cannot control his memories - use of vocabulary that emphasises the negativity of the speaker's memories, e.g. 'muckle sorrow'; 'muckle care' - the speaker's unavoidable unease after the murder has been committed, e.g. 'spend my nights casting ball from half-crowns / And my days here' - the poem's concluding focus on the idea of repeated confession emphasises that these are memories of which the persona wishes to rid himself - use of the supernatural to underline the idea of unwanted experience, e.g. 'There was no / Splash' - the speaker's detailed and unpleasant memories of what has happened, e.g. 'I hunted down her torn voice to his pale form' - the regular 6-line stanzas reflect the repetition and the inevitability of the speaker's memories and feelings. These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses.

Question Number	Indicative Content
2	*An Easy Passage*
	All reasonable and relevant interpretations of 'boundaries' should be rewarded. A pertinent choice of second poem might be *The Gun* by Vicki Feaver.
	Candidates may include the following in their answers:
	- the opening line establishes that the girl inhabits a liminal or boundary space, e.g. 'halfway up there'
	- use of images that evoke boundaries, e.g. 'the narrow windowsill'; 'petrified beach'
	- placing the electroplating factory, the adult world of work, 'over the road' highlights the boundary between the girl and the 'flush-faced secretary'
	- the idea that worldly experience can be a boundary that prevents development and fulfilment, e.g. 'the world admits us less and less / the more we grow'
	- the contrasting idea that boundaries are not always barriers to progress and can be points of access, e.g. 'the open window'
	- the boundary between the adult parent and the child, e.g. 'the mother / who does not trust her daughter with a key'
	- the ironic potential of the title, as the poem itself suggests that the boundaries between youth and adulthood are not easily bridged
	- the poem is in one unbroken, unrhymed stanza, perhaps suggesting the difficulty in defining the movement across the boundary from youth to adulthood.
	These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses.

Please refer to the specific marking guidance when applying this marking grid.				
Level	Mark	AO1 = bullet point 1	AO2 = bullet point 2	AO4 = bullet points 3,4
	0	No rewardable material.		
Level 1	1 − 5	**Descriptive** ● Makes little reference to texts with limited organisation of ideas. Limited use of appropriate concepts and terminology with frequent errors and lapses of expression. ● Uses a narrative or descriptive approach that shows limited knowledge of texts and how meanings are shaped in texts. Shows a lack of understanding of the writer's craft. ● Demonstrates limited awareness of connections between texts. ● Describes the texts as separate entities.		
Level 2	6 − 10	**General understanding/exploration** ● Makes general points, identifying some literary techniques with general explanation of effects. Aware of some appropriate concepts and terminology. Organises and expresses ideas with clarity, although still has errors and lapses. ● Gives surface readings of texts relating to how meanings are shaped in texts. Shows general understanding by commenting on straightforward elements of the writer's craft. ● Identifies general connections between texts. ● Makes general cross-references between texts.		
Level 3	11 − 15	**Clear relevant application/exploration** ● Offers a clear response using relevant textual examples. Relevant use of terminology and concepts. Creates a logical, clear structure with few errors and lapses in expression. ● Demonstrates knowledge of how meanings are shaped in texts with consistent analysis. Shows clear understanding of the writer's craft. ● Makes relevant connections between texts. ● Develops an integrated approach with clear examples.		
Level 4	16 − 20	**Discriminating controlled application/exploration** ● Constructs a controlled argument with fluently embedded examples. Discriminating use of concepts and terminology. Controls structures with precise cohesive transitions and carefully chosen language. ● Demonstrates discriminating understanding of how meanings are shaped in texts. Analyses, in a controlled way, the nuances and subtleties of the writer's craft. ● Analyses connections between texts. ● Takes a controlled discriminating approach to integration with detailed examples.		
Level 5	21 − 25	**Critical and evaluative** ● Presents a critical evaluative argument with sustained textual examples. Evaluates the effects of literary features with sophisticated use of concepts and terminology. Uses sophisticated structure and expression. ● Exhibits a critical evaluation of the ways meanings are shaped in texts. Displays a sophisticated understanding of the writer's craft. ● Evaluates connections between texts. ● Exhibits a sophisticated connective approach with sophisticated use of examples.		

Section B: Post-2000 Prose

Question Number	Indicative Content
3	***The Kite Runner*** Candidates may include the following in their answers: • impact of the novel's opening with the idea that the following tale is predicated on new beginnings, however painful they may be • the historical and religious contexts of the novel suggest that new beginnings do not always lead to good things, e.g. the transition from Soviet rule to Taliban rule • use of the novel's structure to shape the reader's sense that Amir, Baba and others have to reshape their lives to make a new beginning after emigrating to the USA • Hosseini's use of kites to signal moments when things begin anew, e.g. the kite-flying competition; Sohrab and his new family flying a kite at the end of the novel • ethnic conflict between Pashtuns and Hazaras means that although things might change, new beginnings are not always possible • use of Assef's cyclical mistreatment of Hassan and then Sohrab shows that not all characters in the novel are capable of beginning anew. These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses.

Question Number	Indicative Content
4	**The Kite Runner** Candidates may include the following in their answers: ● Amir's love of reading and writing challenges Afghan conventions of manhood ● Baba's acceptance of Hassan and his family challenges the social norm of Pashtuns rejecting Hazaras ● use of the challenges of sexual behaviour in the novel to shape the reader's response to religious and social conventions, e.g. Assef's rape of Hassan and his abuse of Sohrab; the horror and suspense of the stoning scene; use of images of sacrificial animals ● presentation of the Taheris' daughter's elopement that challenges Afghan marital conventions ● use of the structural divide in the novel to demonstrate the ways in which characters are faced with the need to challenge conventions in new national contexts, e.g. Baba's job ● the bravery of some characters in challenging accepted conventions, e.g. Amir's challenge of Assef late in the novel; Baba challenging the Russian guard. These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses.

Question Number	Indicative Content
5	**Life of Pi**

Candidates may include the following in their answers:

- the setting of Pi's contented family home in Canada provides a contrast to the isolation he experiences elsewhere in the novel
- use of Pi's increasing isolation on the boat to shape the reader's views of his creativity, determination and resilience, e.g. the eating of the fish
- Pi's unique approach to religious belief isolates him from his society and the rest of his family
- the symbolic use of Pi's name, the unending number, to represent his uniqueness and isolation
- the increasing political and social isolation of Pi's family in Pondicherry leads to their emigration
- Pi uses his isolation as a means of ensuring that Okamoto and Chiba can neither verify nor deny his account of events, creating a typical postmodern take on the idea of truth.

These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses. |

Question Number	Indicative Content
6	**Life of Pi** Candidates may include the following in their answers: ● Martel's presentation of Pi's Canadian home and apparent domestic bliss demonstrate at the outset that security will be reached in spite of the many uncertainties readers later see Pi encounter ● use of the scenes in Pondicherry to demonstrate the uncertainty and insecurity that lead to Pi's family's emigration, e.g. the scenes at the zoo ● detailed descriptions of the perils he encounters on his journey and the unpleasant setting of the lifeboat emphasise the insecurity of Pi's position and the context of migrancy ● the symbolic use of the journey and the fact that Pi is literally 'at sea' to create a sense of 'unrootedness' and insecurity ● the possible alternative endings of the novel demonstrate that, typically of postmodern fiction, its meaning remains unstable and insecure ● the novel's use of elements of multiple genres creates uncertainty in the telling and reading of his tale. These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses.

Question Number	Indicative Content
7	***The White Tiger*** Candidates may include the following in their answers: ● Balram's narrative is fired by a desire to drive change in India ● the move from rural to urban setting reflects development in Balram as he seeks to change into an entrepreneur and the symbolic white tiger ● use of the election and The Great Socialist to shape our sense of how political change is deceptive ● the novel explores the context of contemporary India as it seeks to change into a modern-day economy and power ● use of symbolism to demonstrate that the transformation of India is limited by the continued influence of its societal structures, e.g. the Rooster Coop representing the caste system ● Pinky Madam and Ashok have been changed by their experiences of life in the USA, and this creates difficulties as they return to India. These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses.

Question Number	Indicative Content
8	**_The White Tiger_** Candidates may include the following in their answers: ● the tone of Balram's narrative demonstrates unshakeable belief in his own amoral motives ● the novel's presentation of what Balram symbolically calls The Rooster Coop, a social system that inevitably shapes people's actions, e.g. caste and marriage ● use of symbolism to present a political process of corrupt motivations and inefficiency, e.g. corrupt use of money intended for schools and hospitals ● presentation of an emerging capitalist culture as a motivating force shaping Indian society and its actions, e.g. the conflict between poverty and new wealth ● postcolonial developments that demonstrate the motivations of new global powers such as India and China ● use of Kusum as a foil to Balram with her motivation based entirely on the family. These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses.

Question Number	Indicative Content
9	**_Brooklyn_** Candidates may include the following in their answers: ● use of Enniscorthy and its values as a foil to the very different values of New York ● presentation of Eilis' and Tony's experiences and the ways in which Irish and Italian communities view life differently ● use of characters of different ages to explore generational differences in values, e.g. Eilis and her mother; the girls in the lodging house and Mrs Kehoe ● the ways in which differing cultural and social contexts and contexts of migration highlight conflicting cultural values ● use of the Christmas party and its strongly Irish flavour to contrast with the characters' experiences of life in the USA ● structural significance of repeated journeys between Ireland and the USA in establishing and bringing to the fore conflicting values. These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses.

Question Number	Indicative Content
10	**_Brooklyn_** Candidates may include the following in their answers: • use of Father Flood as a character who encourages Eilis to embrace the dream of a new life in the USA • the presentation of Eilis' dreams, which are focused on her desires to be like Rose, of having a husband who loves her and of becoming an accountant • use of the boat crossing to represent the nightmarish possibilities of Eilis' 'journey' to New York • the challenges Eilis faces as she lives out the 'dream' of her new life in Brooklyn, as typical of a bildungsroman • exploration of the ways in which migration is a key context in understanding how the USA represents a 'dream' for the characters in the novel, e.g. new possibilities; escape from 'nightmares' in the home country • use of the omniscient third-person narrator to demonstrate the many gaps between characters' hopes and dreams and the reality they encounter. These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses.

Question Number	Indicative Content
11	**_Purple Hibiscus_** Candidates may include the following in their answers: ● presentation of the contrast between characters who are able to escape their situations and those who are not, e.g. Aunty Ifeoma and Beatrice ● use of the purple hibiscus flower as a symbol of freedom and individuality ● exploration of the social contextual issues that force Aunty Ifeoma and her children to escape Nigeria and emigrate to the USA ● presentation of protest in the novel to demonstrate characters' desire to escape from social and political demands and restrictions, e.g. Ade Coker and Eugene's newspaper; student protests at the university ● the extreme lengths to which Beatrice is driven in order to escape from her violent marriage ● Jaja's sacrificial act in taking the blame for Eugene's death so that Beatrice can escape punishment. These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses.

Question Number	Indicative Content
12	**_Purple Hibiscus_** Candidates may include the following in their answers: ● presentation of the Achike home as a punitive environment, e.g. repeated physical punishment; verbal punishment; aggressive silence ● use of political views and social practices as reasons why characters might be punished, e.g. Ade Coker's political views; Papa's abusive behaviour ● the religious contexts of Catholicism and tribal religion are used as ways of understanding notions of reward and punishment ● presentation of female characters as victims of punishment for being women, e.g. use of restrictions on dress and behaviour; being restricted in their studies ● use of contrasting households to explore ideas of punishment, e.g. Aunty Ifeoma's home and Papa Nnukwu's home as contrasts to the punitive Achike household ● deliberate use of characters who punish and are punished, e.g. Eugene's punishment of his children; Jaja's self-sacrifice in taking Beatrice's punishment on himself. These are suggestions only. Accept any valid alternative responses.

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	0	No rewardable material.		
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Level 2	6 − 10	**General understanding/exploration** ● Makes general points, identifying some literary techniques with general explanation of effects. Aware of some appropriate concepts and terminology. Organises and expresses ideas with clarity, although still has errors and lapses. ● Gives surface readings of texts relating to how meanings are shaped in texts. Shows general understanding by commenting on straightforward elements of the writer's craft. ● Has general awareness of the significance and influence of contextual factors. ● Makes general links between texts and contexts.		
Level 3	11 − 15	**Clear relevant application/exploration** ● Offers a clear response using relevant textual examples. Relevant use of terminology and concepts. Creates a logical, clear structure with few errors and lapses in expression. ● Demonstrates knowledge of how meanings are shaped in texts with consistent analysis. Shows clear understanding of the writer's craft. ● Demonstrates a clear exploration of the significance and influence of contextual factors. ● Develops relevant links between texts and contexts.		
Level 4	16 − 20	**Discriminating controlled application/exploration** ● Constructs a controlled argument with fluently embedded examples. Discriminating use of concepts and terminology. Controls structures with precise cohesive transitions and carefully chosen language. ● Demonstrates discriminating understanding of how meanings are shaped in texts. Analyses, in a controlled way, the nuances and subtleties of the writer's craft. ● Provides a discriminating analysis of the significance and influence of contextual factors. ● Makes detailed links between texts and contexts.		
Level 5	21 − 25	**Critical and evaluative** ● Presents a critical evaluative argument with sustained textual examples. Evaluates the effects of literary features with sophisticated use of concepts and terminology. Uses sophisticated structure and expression. ● Exhibits a critical evaluation of the ways meanings are shaped in texts. Displays a sophisticated understanding of the writer's craft. ● Presents a sophisticated evaluation and appreciation of the significance and influence of contextual factors. ● Makes sophisticated links between texts and contexts.		