



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **English Literature 5741**

## *Specification A*

**LA2C      Shakespeare (Coursework)**

# **Report on the Examination**

## *2008 examination - June series*

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*Dr Michael Cresswell Director General.*

This summer saw the last large entry for LA2C. It is a pleasure to report that the overall standard of work and assessment was very high. Moderators reported on having read many very engaged and interesting essays.

In the light of the demise of this unit, the report will focus on areas that teachers and candidates may find useful when producing future coursework.

### **Administration**

Some folders were dated by candidates in February and yet staff dates were May. It is helpful to contact your moderator as soon as coursework is complete in order to begin the process to enable timely completion.

Marks must be entered on the CRF as well as on the essay itself. Very few folders were unsigned by candidates but rather more lacked staff signatures. Results can be withheld if candidates do not sign.

### **Presentation**

Overall, presentation was very good indeed. A few still fail to observe the need to produce work of published quality. Essays should not be offered in bold nor in italics and neither should quotations be in bold or italics. Centre-justified quotations are hard to read and disrespect form (AO3). Verse should be set out as verse and not as prose (AO3, Form).

### **Tasks**

There are still examples of centres setting tasks or candidates choosing from 'pick-lists'. This can lead to similarity of responses and prevents candidates from freely exploring their own interests. Where there were wide ranges of tasks, results tended to be better as the candidate engagement was higher.

#### **AO1**

There was plenty of evidence of well-crafted essays which were the products of redrafting. The better candidates chose their words very carefully and were tentative when exploring texts. Less successful candidates use "positive" and "negative" instead of choosing appropriate adjectives. Quotation followed by "this means" or "this shows" is rather 'plodding'. Some candidates open sentence after sentence with "this" causing a reader to agonise over the noun phrase being referred to. There were some 'plodding' introductions in which candidates listed what they were going to do. These were balanced at the upper end by introductions which launched straight into stimulating overviews of the plays.

#### **AO2**

Where tasks were set, there could be similarity of approaches in which the less successful candidates were struggling to assimilate received ideas. There could also be narrative approaches. The best candidates came up with interesting lines of enquiry and fully explored them.

#### **AO3**

There was much excellent unpacking of images and careful examinations of Shakespeare's choices of words. There was some skilled study of versification and its effects. Sadly, such excellence was countered by candidates who could not assimilate received ideas and made banal statements about prose for low-life and verse for the nobility. It was hard to agree with the candidate who applied this to "Much Ado About Nothing".

#### **AO4**

Where candidates chose topics and explored them, the personal response was high. If they had encountered critical or theoretical opinion they could handle it well in building their own

arguments. Responses which went through Marxist, Freudian, Feminist or Post-Colonial approaches were sometimes laboured. Candidates were struggling to understand the ideas and were unable to come up with their own.

“And finally”

It has been a privilege to have seen the year-on-year progress in this Unit and to have been able to read so much excellent work. Best wishes for continued success in the future.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.