**Section Two: Responding (40 marks)**

Across the paper, your markers were looking for the following:

**Content**

* Engagement with the question rather than the reproduction of material prepared during the course with merely token reference to the question. This is of paramount importance in each section.

**Structure and expression**

* Organisation of ideas; the ability to develop and sustain a response; textual coherence; awareness of purpose and textual conventions; clarity of language; breadth of vocabulary; and competence in such elements as awareness of audience, fluency, grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation.

By far the most popular questions were Questions 4 and 7. There were a range of responses for both, which displayed textual understanding and knowledge.

Most candidates wrote about the major text studied, *1984*, with some students taking the ‘road less travelled’ and discussed ‘We Are Here: The Pale Blue Dot,’ *The Secret River* ‘The Pedestrian,’ and *Maus*.

A number of candidates included CLTs and intertextuality in their introductions without referring to them in their body paragraphs, rendering them unnecessary. This needs further refinement. Remember that whatever goes into your introduction needs to be discussed in your body paragraphs. Conversely, putting too much information in your introduction and then not referring to it in your body paragraphs may affect the organisation of your ideas for your essay. A number of candidates discussed ideas and information that should have been put into their body paragraphs in their introduction. Remember that essay writing is an art and that your key purpose is not only to show your depth of knowledge but to express it in a clear and cogent manner through one main, central argument.

One of the purposes of this section is for candidates to demonstrate their textual knowledge and understanding of metalanguage specific to the form through text/texts studied. It was disappointing to see a lack of specific textual evidence through quotes, retelling of texts, not enough explanation of quotes, or too many intertextual links in one body paragraph in some answers. Learning how to embed evidence in sentences, and where to place this in paragraphs is crucial. Far too often, candidates did not introduce their quotes, nor explain them in a relevant or deep fashion expected of a Year 12 ATAR candidate. Simply saying that **“this quote shows”** does not sufficiently explain anything. Quotations from texts need to explained in relation to the argument that you are presenting. You should never assume that your WACE marker has read your text, therefore, you need to explicitly explain the plot, character and setting so that your marker understands what you are trying to say about the text.

Questions in this section required close discussion of studied texts and great control over essay structure and expression. The larger weighting for this section is not a signal for a longer answer. While candidates might choose to allocate a little more time on planning for a section with a larger weighting, the response should be a tightly structured and focused answer to the question. Some candidates felt obliged to write lengthy responses that they were unable to control under examination conditions, and many candidates wrote strong responses for the beginning of their essays, they quickly deteriorated, ultimately harming their mark. The principles of clear and focused essay writing apply to this section. It was also disappointing to see minimal use of thesis statements, topic sentences and summarising sentences that fully engaged with the question. These markers are essential for the WACE and form the basis of any coherent essay.

Question 4 (40 marks)

Candidates: 12 Mean: 23.45 (/40) 58% Max: 31 Min: 13

Discuss how an understanding of context has influenced your response to an ideology in at least **one** text.

* Candidates are required to identify a belief system(ideology) in a text and relate this to their understanding of context and audience.
* The glossary defines context as the environment in which a text is created or received. Context can also refer to the setting of time and place in a text.
* Candidates might consider how a belief system relates to representations of gender, race, class in a text, the context of an intended audience, the historical, social, cultural conditions that influence an author at the time of production.
* They might consider the purpose of representations of belief systems in a text and how genre relates to meaning and to audience.
* By discussing contexts, candidates might reflect on their own values, attitudes, beliefs. They might question belief systems that are at odds with contemporary values.
* Candidates might consider how belief systems relate to historical, social, cultural conditions and can generate controversy or empathy. Some texts such as science fiction or speculative fiction or non-fiction represent extreme belief systems that resonate in our modern world.
* Through a discussion of contexts candidates might identify omissions, inclusions, emphases and marginalisation in a text which an intended audience may not be aware of.

Some responses were quite strong, but only a few candidates discussed how context influences their personal response to an ideology in a text. Your chosen text needed to be the primary focus. Many candidates fell into the trap of writing history essays and did not specifically explain the links and allusions to history/historical figures in the text. The driver for this question should have been: ideology → how this is shown through the text → context → response, or ideology → context → text → response. Many candidates argued the ideology of totalitarianism; however, this was not argued very well.

Some candidates used the blanket phrase ‘reader response.’ If a question asks for YOUR response, you need to explain how your feelings towards the text through examining your personal values and attitudes and how the text might challenge or support them.

Question 5 (40 marks)

Candidates: 8 Mean: 24.5 (/40) 61% Max: 30.5 Min: 17 A:1

Analyse how **one** text reflects a particular context by conforming to or challenging generic conventions.

* Candidates are required to identify conventions of genre/mode that meet expectations. Alternatively, candidates will consider the implications of an innovative style which challenges expectations of conformity.
* This question requires candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the key syllabus concepts of ‘genre’, ‘purpose’ and ‘context’.
* The glossary defines ‘genre’ as ‘categories into which texts are grouped.’
* Genre can be interpreted either in terms of form and structure (such as novel, feature film, biography) or in terms of subject matter (such as science-fiction, romance, fantasy). Candidates must clearly identify the genres they believe have been used.
* ‘Conventions’ of genres may be interpreted as structural, language or stylistic features conventional to particular genres. Candidates may discuss broad features such as character, setting and conflict within narratives, or specific features such as hand-held camera work, voice-over and the use of a focaliser within documentary film.
* Candidates are required to do more than just identify generic features. The manipulation of the conventions of such genres to fulfil particular purposes and suit particular contexts must be addressed.
* The term ‘particular’ indicates that candidates need to identify specific purposes and contexts.
* Context may be considered in a number of ways. Context is defined in the glossary as ‘The environment in which a text is responded to or created. Context can include the general social, historical and cultural conditions in which a text is responded to and created (the context of culture) or the specific features of its immediate environment (context of situation).’
* Candidates should be rewarded on the extent to which they clearly and logically link the use of conventions of genre to identified purposes and contexts.
* Candidates might acknowledge the role of audience expectations on interpretation and the effect when those expectations are met or not met.

A strong section which demonstrates that the average for this question is higher than the state standard of 58%. Barring one anomalous student, candidates demonstrated a strong link between *Maus* and context, and *1984* and context. For *Maus* in particular, candidates needed to link their argument to specific pages/panels in the graphic novel and offering an analysis. A few candidates lost focus and introduced texts without fully explaining them. Conversely, other candidates spend whole paragraphs describing colour symbolism: this is unnecessary. For an in depth text such as *Maus*, you need to control the sophistication of your analysis by examining context and key scenes from the text as well. The concept of broken English in relation to diaspora also needs to be treated in a more mature manner, with some candidates stating that Vladek is mentally challenged because of the way that he speaks. Another concern is that candidates needed to use visual and written techniques in their HOW, but many did not.

Many students were able to link *1984’s* context to pre-Cold War era politics; however, many also struggled to go beyond simplified retellings of contextual information with limited textual analysis or reference to narrative elements. As genre can mean both the structure of a text (novel, short story, film) as well as the subject matter (detective fiction, romance), solid links to either structure or subject matter was warranted in responding to this question. A few successful candidates were able to discuss **HOW** the text conformed to the genre through the use of dystopian generic conventions to reflect Orwell’s context and purpose in writing the novel. Some candidates discussed ‘dystopian conventions’ without explaining how the convention is related to the genre. For your WACE, please name and explain generic conventions before moving on.

Question 6 (40 marks)

Compare how **two** texts use language features to reveal cultural prejudice to an audience.

Candidates: 1 Mean: 14.5 (/40) 36%

* Candidates are required to compare two texts and investigate how similar or different language features are used to position response to cultural prejudice. Furthermore, a comparison of the use of voice and the way this positions an audience is required.
* The word ‘prejudice’ infers a preconceived set of ideas that create bias and a disregard for the rights of others. A ‘culture of prejudice’ infers a collective system of beliefs, attitudes, assumptions, behaviours which reflect prejudice towards perceived differences.
* Candidates should be rewarded for identifying specific language features such as dialogue, direct speech, colloquial and connotative language, punctation for effect, figures of speech, description and imagery, tone etc. that position response.
* Candidates might refer to representations of identity and marginalisation, ideas, issues, values and attitudes, ways of thinking, speaking and acting, generic conventions that frame language features, intertextual and ideological resonances. They might also consider the way individual views can be represented of a wider nation, society or communities’ cultural prejudice.
* Candidates that demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between text, context and audience should also be rewarded. The role of audience is relevant to response as attitudes change over time.

Question 7 (40 marks)

Candidates: 11 Mean: 20.90 (/40) 52% Max: 28 Min: 15

Examine the way at least **one** text constructs a disquieting perspective of the world.

* Candidates are required to inquire into the structure and conventions in a text that provide a framework for an unsettling view of the world and possibly people.
* The glossary defines ‘structure’ as the ways in which information is organised and that structures and language features together define a text type and shape its meaning. Some genres lend themselves to a ‘disquieting perspective’ of the world and people e.g. dystopian, science fiction, ecocritical, speculative fiction, documentaries etc.
* The word ‘construct’ infers the use of structure and generic conventions. In a narrative this includes setting, plot, point of view and characterisation. Other text types have different conventions that relate to mode or medium.
* ‘Perspective’ is defined in the glossary as ‘a position from which things may be viewed or considered’ A ‘disquieting perspective of the world’ might be the representation of belief systems that are oppressive, or an imaginary world in which human beings are struggling to survive, the rise of technology and dehumanisation, scientific experimentation that threatens our species or seeks to control it, or a generally pessimist view of a future or transformed world.
* Candidates should be rewarded for focussing on elements which construct and frame perspectives rather than simply describing plot elements. They might also consider the effect of genre, its purpose and the context of an intended audience.

Six out of eleven candidates did not pass this question. A number of factors contributed towards this. Candidates either did not form an argument that examined a disquieting perspective, candidates did not explain their HOW through techniques, candidates did not engage with the text that they were analysing, candidates did not explain their evidence in the required depth, or candidates did not use textual evidence appropriately. A number of candidates discussed WHO the disquieting perspective is for by linking this to our current society, and some further explained WHY this would be disquieting. The lower average for this question reflects poor engagement with the text studied as well as poor planning and question analysis.

An important discriminator in answering this question was your ability to explain clearly how a disquieting perspective is represented – not just present – in a text, and whether this view is endorsed or challenged by your own perspective. A number of candidates fell short on discussing why their perspective was particularly disquieting in each body paragraph. In answering this question, a sound and insightful knowledge of your own perspective is required for analysis. Simply stating that “totalitarianism challenges my perspective” does not give your reader any substance; expanding on this and reflecting on your own cultural context and values in your society (Australia, 2019) will enhance the depth of your response.

Question 8 (40 marks)

Candidates: 2 Mean: 16.75 (/40) 41%

Discuss how a marginalised voice has been crafted to represent an alternative point of view in at least **one** text.

* Voice relates to a particular context, point of view and is also a marker of identity. ‘Voice’ in the glossary is described as ‘views, positions, ideas and perspectives of individuals or groups’. Candidates might refer to a persona, a character, narrator or multiple voices in a text. The use of voice can draw attention to experiences, feelings, attitudes, beliefs and position moral judgement or even naturalise prejudice. Candidates should be rewarded for recognising various voices in the text, how they relate to one another and how they are used to shape audience response.
* Candidates are required to enquire into the way a text builds empathy through its representations of marginalised people and their struggles.
* Candidates might refer to generic conventions, ideas, representations, values, attitudes and beliefs. They might consider the effect of structural, stylistic choices and language features.
* The word ‘evoke’ infers how an text positions its audience to respond emotively. Candidates might consider how a text increases our capacity to understand the lives and experiences of others.
* The ‘struggles’ of people might relate to internal and psychological conflicts, economic disadvantage, power imbalances, social hierarchy, marginalisation, bureaucracy, relationships, setbacks and circumstances.
* Candidates might consider the way points of view and values are represented in a text.

Question 9 (40 marks)

Candidates: 4 Mean: 18.87 (/40) 47% Max: 30 Min: 13

Analyse how multimodal elements reveal the issue of social responsibility in **one** text.

* Candidates are required to identify components in a multimodal text and how they reveal perspectives to the issue of social responsibility.
* Multimodal texts are described in the glossary as a ‘combination of two or more communication modes’.
* Candidates might refer to arrangement and combination of features such as audio, written, visual; language features, stylistic and structural choices etc.
* The glossary defines perspectives as ‘a position from which things may be viewed or considered’. Contrasting perspectives offer different ways of seeing an issue and allow an audience to take up a position in favour of certain perspectives. This generates discussion, debate, reflection. Using contrasting perspectives is a stylistic choice that is useful in achieving the purpose of representing an issue.
* The ‘issue of social responsibility’ relates to views in the text as well as audience perceptions of who is to take responsibility for the represented issue. This might be the environment and climate, laws such as gun laws, marginalised groups, terrorism and war, migration, displacement and dispossession, the rise of technology and bioengineering, consumerism and sustainability, generational blame, politically related problems that impact on a community. A social issue might relate to popular culture at the time.
* A multimodal text might attempt to reshape values and attitudes, create awareness of an issue through controversy, manipulate an audience to judge responsibility for an issue.
* Candidates should be rewarded for identifying perspectives on social responsibility, the issue that is being represented, how controversy is generated, the purpose of the text and its intended audience. They might also consider why ideas that relate to social responsibility are represented in particular ways.

Only one candidate managed to pass this question. There was some confusion with candidates who discussed *Gran Torino*, who did not adequately discuss *why* Walt would need to be socially responsible for Thao, nor did they discuss HOW social responsibility is revealed through filmic techniques. The candidate who passed discussed *PBD* well and was able to link techniques to the issue of social responsibility, but need to identify the intended audience of the text and their reception to it.