
EXTENDED ESSAY REPORTS – MAY 2003

Dutch – Group 2

The range and suitability of the work submitted

I received and marked sixteen extended essays for Dutch B. The essays came from five schools; all of which were in the Netherlands. About half of the candidates appear to be native speakers of Dutch, and their overall understanding of the culture / language studied was, therefore, on the whole very good.

Most essays centred on the general subject of contemporary society, with topics like soft drugs, euthanasia or immigration into Dutch society.

I suspected two of the essays to contain plagiarised material; these were sent to IBCA. One of these candidates was indeed found to have plagiarised; the other, however, was returned to me for marking. Most candidates had chosen suitable topics, but it must be said that it is quite hard to provide an interesting angle to essays on the more widely discussed topics of euthanasia or soft drugs. One candidate wrote about him/herself which did not provide him/her with the possibility of systematic research. Some candidates had written essays on interesting, challenging topics, though.

Candidates' performance against each criterion

Like last year, the lowest scores were given on criteria A (research question) and E (conclusion). Candidates scored on the whole better on the subject assessment criteria than on the general assessment criteria.

The research question is a criterion which can easily provide the candidate with a high score, yet I found that too many candidates did either not define their research question sufficiently; or formulated split research questions; or had indeed not provided a research question at all.

Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

Candidates will perform better if the research question is narrowed down to a greater extent, and if the candidates do not try to cover too much ground. More should be done to achieve coherence between and within paragraphs or sections, and more attention should be paid to writing a successful conclusion. Candidates should also be more aware of the importance of consistent referencing: footnotes and bibliographies were often found to be quite poor and ill constructed. Special attention ought to be paid on how to reference websites.