basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEARNER RESPONSES
AND
EVALUATION OF THE QUESTION PAPERS (PER PAPER)
NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE 2025
WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

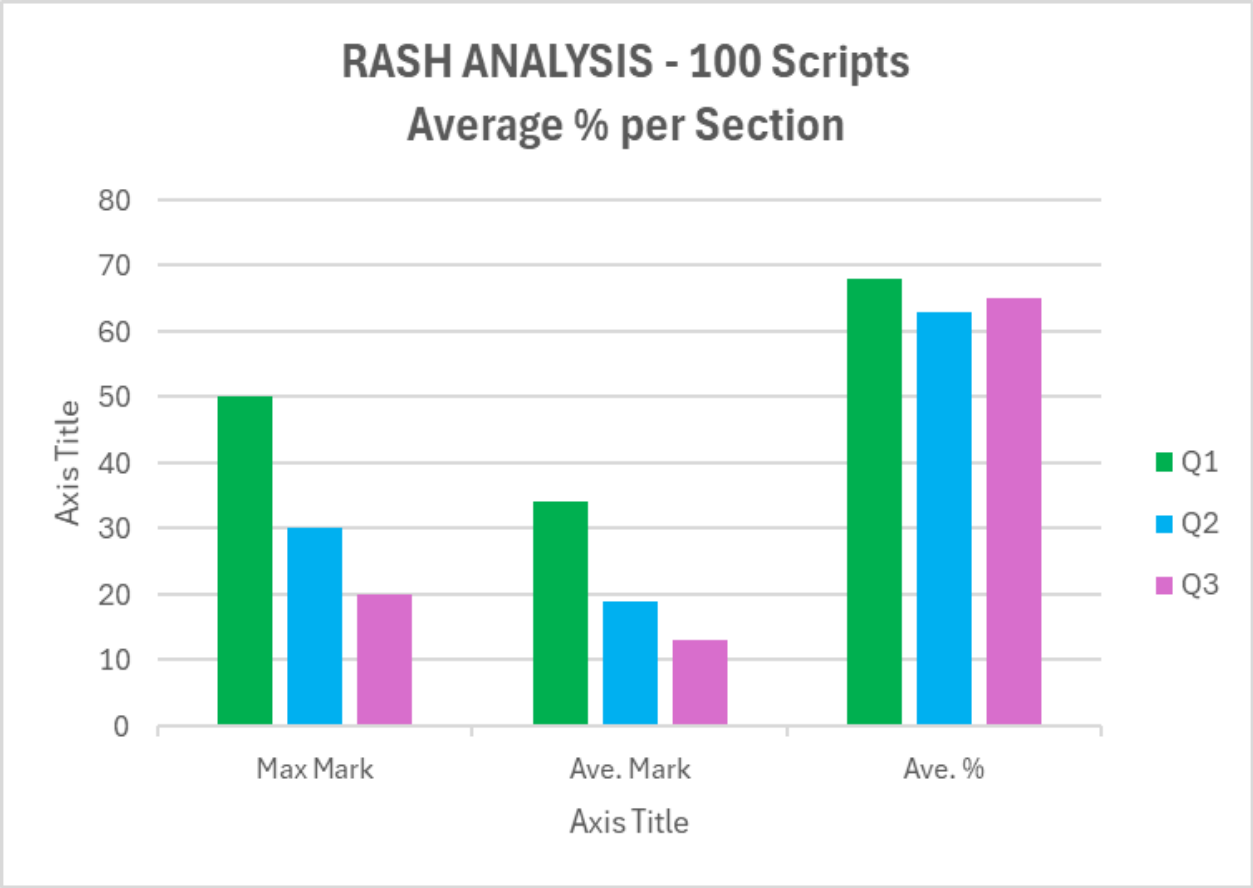
SUBJECT	**ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**		
QUESTION PAPER	**1**	**2**	**3**
DURATION OF PAPER	**2½ HOURS**		
INTERNAL MODERATOR	**JOYCELINE VERCUIL AND MATAPHELO GXASHEKA**		
CHIEF MARKER	**JUSTIN KENNEDY**		
DATES OF MARKING	**FROM: 29 NOVEMBER 2025**	**TO: 11 DECEMBER 2025**	
HEAD OF EXAMINATION	**MS LM BREDENKAMP**		

REPORT 2: QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEARNER RESPONSES

SECTION 1: ***(GENERAL OVERVIEW OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN THE QUESTION PAPER AS A WHOLE)***

The graph below, Figure 1, shows the average percentage per section.

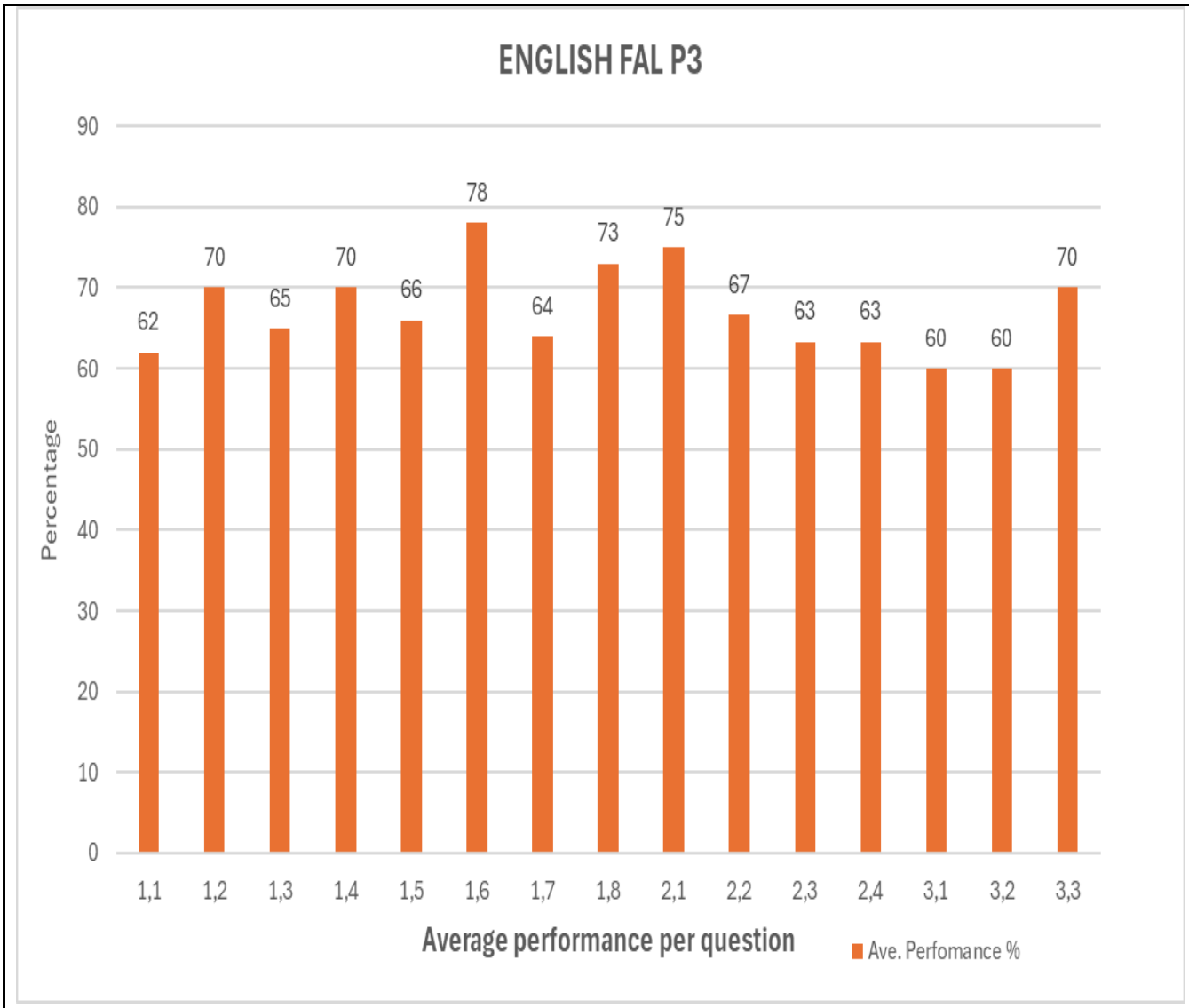
Figure 1:



RASH ANALYSIS - 100 Scripts Average % per section

1	Max Mark	Ave. Mark	Ave. %
Q1	50	34	68
Q2	30	19	63
Q3	20	13	65

Figure 2: shows the Average percentage per sub-question.



Topic	Sub Question	Ave. Perfomance %
Essay	1,1	62
Essay	1,2	70
Essay	1,3	65
Essay	1,4	70
Essay	1,5	66
Essay	1,6	78
Essay	1,7	64
Essay	1,8	73
E-mail	2,1	75
Review	2,2	67
Dialogue	2,3	63
Speech	2,4	63
Flyer	3,1	60
Whatsapp message	3,2	60
Instructions	3,3	70

SECTION 2: *COMMENT ON CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE IN INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS*

(It is expected that a comment will be <u>provided for each question</u>)

<u>QUESTION 1</u>
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

Question 1.1: The story behind my smile

This popular question (27/100) was generally well-answered, with candidates producing a range of narrative and reflective responses. While some responses were mundane, others were excellent, showcasing candidates' creativity and emotional depth.

Question 1.2: It gets easier

A smaller group of candidates (13/100) chose this question, but most performed fairly well. Responses were mostly narrative and reflective, with some candidates producing thought-provoking essays.

Question 1.3: A promise that I could not keep

This popular topic (18/100) elicited mature responses from some candidates, particularly those with a religious or spiritual perspective. Others produced more ordinary responses, losing marks in language and style.

Question 1.4: When the mask falls off

Candidates (11/100) generally understood this topic, relating it to personal experiences and themes of truth and revelation. Most essays were well-structured and effectively explored the topic.

Question 1.5: Anais Nin quote

Although one of the least popular questions (8/100), candidates who chose this quotation demonstrated a good understanding and produced skilful to excellent responses.

Question 1.6: The old man

This visual prompt (7/100) inspired creative and exceptional responses, with candidates exploring themes of wisdom, aging, and experience. The quality of essays was high, despite the topic's relatively low popularity.

Question 1.7: Cub Snarling

Candidates (10/100) produced moderate to skilful responses, with some focusing on literal descriptions of lions and others exploring themes of strength and perseverance.

Question 1.8: Eggs on a cloth

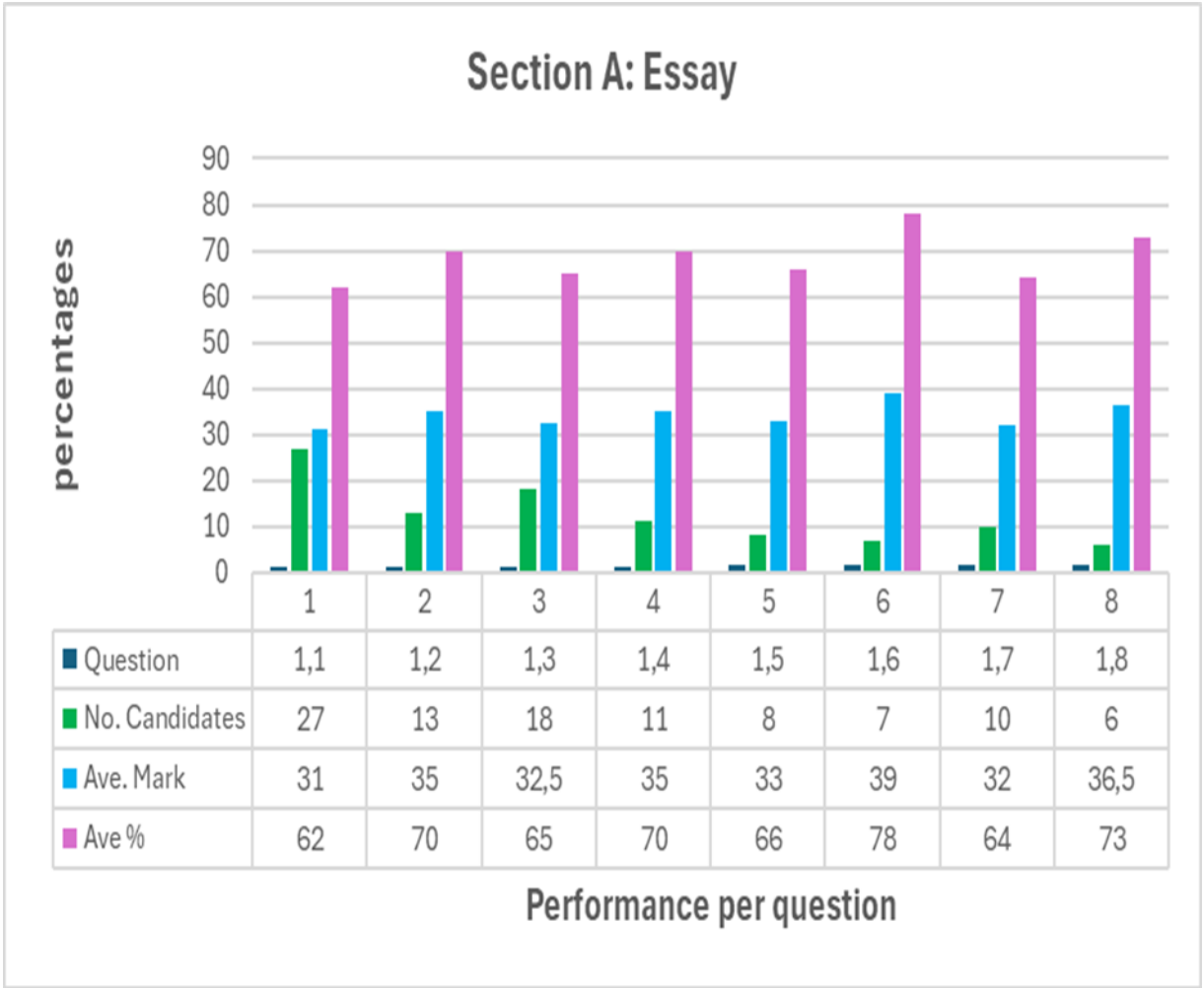
Although not a popular topic (6/100), candidates who chose it produced imaginative,

mature, and thought-provoking essays, earning high marks.

Overall Performances in Section A:

Candidates generally performed well on questions that allowed for personal reflection and creativity. Popular topics like "The story behind my smile" and "A promise that I could not keep" elicited a range of responses, from ordinary to excellent. Less popular questions, such as "We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are" and "Eggs on a cloth," often produced high-quality responses from candidates who chose them. The visual prompts, particularly "The old man," inspired creative and exceptional essays. However, some candidates struggled with language and style, and adherence to word limits and question requirements remained a challenge.

Figure 2: shows the performance per sub-question in Section A.



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Question	1,1	1,2	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,6	1,7	1,8
No. Candidates	27	13	18	11	8	7	10	6
Ave. Mark	31	35	32,5	35	33	39	32	36,5
Ave %	62	70	65	70	66	78	64	73

Section A: Essay Performance per Question			
Question	No. Candidates	Ave. Mark	Ave %
1,1	27	31	62
1,2	13	35	70
1,3	18	33	65
1,4	11	35	70
1,5	8	33	66
1,6	7	39	78
1,7	10	32	64
1,8	6	37	73

(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

Several issues affected candidate performance. Topic selection was a challenge, with weaker candidates choosing topics beyond their linguistic abilities, resulting in good content being marred by poor language and style. Word limit adherence was also a problem, often due to poor planning. Some candidates did not write rough drafts or edit their work, and many failed to clearly distinguish between rough work and final submissions. This inconsistency can lead to unfair outcomes, as some candidates who exceeded word limits had their conclusions disregarded, as these candidates adhered to the requirements by drawing a line through their excess words, while others were credited as they did not draw a line through their excess word.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Teaching Writing Skills:

- Teachers should prioritise teaching writing skills in both formal and informal contexts, fostering creativity and enjoyment while developing writing proficiency.
- Exposure to diverse topics and texts should be encouraged throughout learners' schooling to extend their vocabulary and writing skills.
- Vocabulary exercises should be incorporated into the curriculum, potentially within literature setworks, to familiarise learners with topic-specific vocabulary.
- Grammatical structures and punctuation should be taught to enhance learners' writing quality and effectiveness.

Guidance for Candidates:

- Candidates should be guided to:
  - Analyse topics carefully to understand the requirements of the response.
  - Respond with relevant and appropriate content, avoiding explicit or sensitive topics.
  - Structure their writing effectively, using paragraphs and focusing on main ideas.
  - Plan and edit their work, including writing a complete rough draft.

- Adhere to word limits and use suitable vocabulary.
- Refrain from using inappropriate language and explicitly depicting sexual content.

Best Practices for Teachers:

- Use exemplary writing pieces to demonstrate effective writing techniques.
- Teach various formats of shorter texts and provide continuous feedback on learners' writing.
- Encourage process writing, starting with a stimulus and emphasising the importance of drafting and editing.
- Utilise pictorial stimuli to inspire creative writing and emphasise the significance of this paper in the examination.
- Teach learners to break up words into syllables at the end of lines to improve writing quality.

Assessment and Feedback:

- Teachers should provide constructive feedback on learners' writing, highlighting areas for improvement and encouraging refinement.
- Continuous assessment and feedback will help learners develop their writing skills and prepare them for the examination.

By implementing these recommendations, teachers can help learners develop the writing skills and confidence needed to excel in the FET phase and beyond.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

- Learners should receive instruction on analysing and selecting suitable topics.
- Learners should clearly distinguish their rough work/planning from their final submission, either by drawing a line through it or labelling it as such.
- Learners must adhere to the word limit, understanding that markers will verify the word count.
- Learners should be taught effective planning strategies, including creating a rough draft that is edited and proofread, rather than simply rewritten.

QUESTION 2

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

The topics were well-received, and candidates generally performed well due to thorough preparation. The section tested a variety of formats, allowing candidates to showcase their skills.

Question 2.1: Email

Candidates (14/100) responded to this topic. Weaker candidates struggled with the

format and formal language, while stronger candidates excelled due to their familiarity with the format and ability to interpret the question correctly.

Question 2.2: Review

This less popular topic posed challenges for some candidates who were unfamiliar with the format and requirements. Stronger candidates, however, demonstrated a clear understanding of the format and delivered well-structured reviews. Only 12/100 candidates responded to this topic.

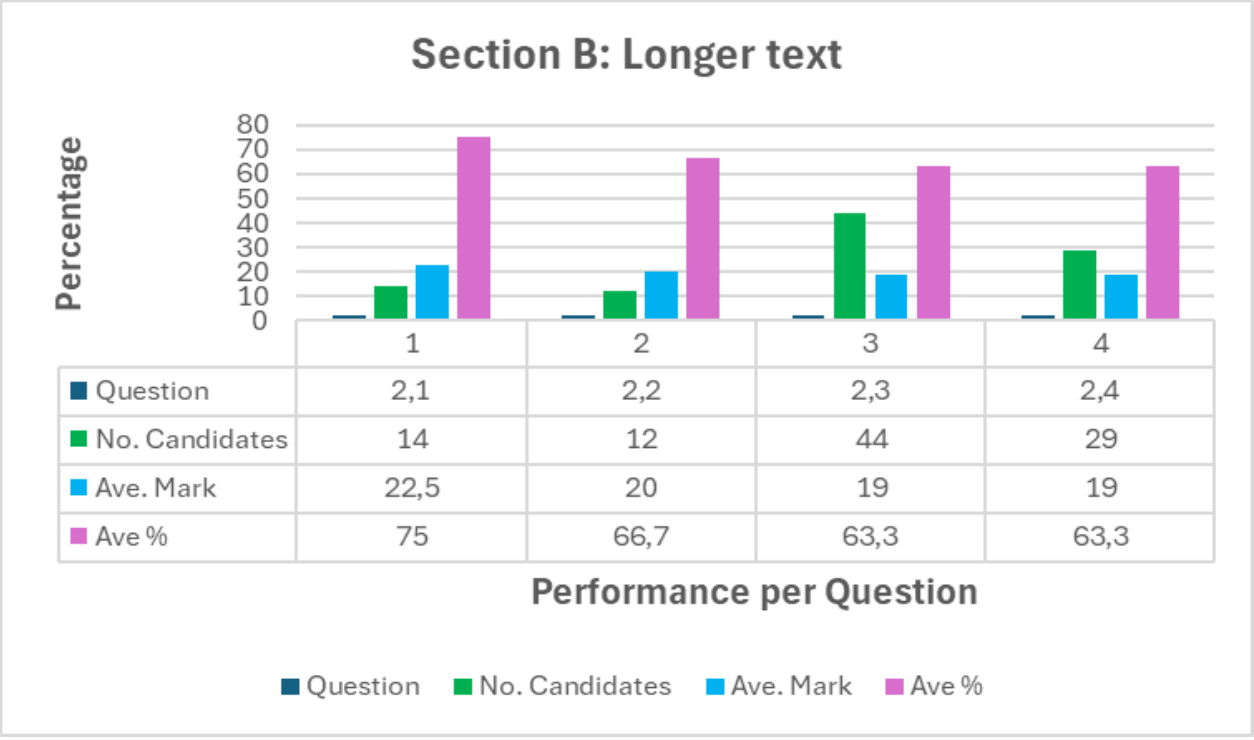
Question 2.3: Dialogue The most popular topic, (44/100) candidates selected this topic. Candidates generally produced skilful to exceptional responses. However, some candidates omitted context or scene-setting, and others failed to provide a clear explanation for the damaged book as required by the topic. Quote a large number of candidates misspelt "ma'am" as "mam".

Question 2.4: Speech

A popular topic (29/100), with most candidates understanding the requirements. However, responses were often bland and lacked depth, with some candidates omitting key elements such as motivation and acknowledging attendees.

Overall, candidates demonstrated strengths in format familiarity and writing skills, but areas for improvement include providing context, adhering to format requirements, and delivering more nuanced and engaging responses.

Section B: Breakdown of Rasch Analysis



	1	2	3	4
Question	2,1	2,2	2,3	2,4
No. Candidates	14	12	44	29
Ave. Mark	22,5	20	19	19
Ave %	75	66,7	63,3	63,3

Section B: Longer Text

Question	No. Candidates	Ave. Mark	Ave %
2,1	14	22,5	75
2,2	12	20	66,7
2,3	44	19	63,3
2,4	29	19	63,3

(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

No question was overwhelmingly poorly answered. However, the Review (2.2) was the least popular, with very few candidates attempting it. Unfortunately, the responses received for this topic were largely subdued, likely due to candidates' unfamiliarity with the specific requirements.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

To enhance learner performance, the following aspects should be emphasised:

- Learners should not only be taught the format of various texts but also be encouraged to study and internalise them. The misconception that studying is unnecessary for this paper should be addressed.
- Candidates should be trained to analyse topics carefully to understand the specific requirements of each text.
- Instruction should focus on using tone and language appropriately to match the assessed text.
- Candidates should be reminded to avoid contractions in formal writing, such as in the e-mail.
- Learners should be made aware of the various study guides and online resources available to support their learning.
- The distinction between informal language, colloquial language, and slang should be taught, with an emphasis on using polite, colloquial language in dialogues and speeches.
- Candidates should be taught how to infuse the correct tone and register in their responses to match the context and purpose of the text.

By focusing on these areas, teachers can better support learners in developing their writing skills and achieving success in the examination.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

To improve learner performance, the following areas require attention:

- Teachers should familiarise themselves with the formats of various transactional pieces using the CAPS document and examples provided by DBE.

- Teachers need training on using the marking rubric effectively, which can be addressed through workshops.
- Learners should be taught the formats of all transactional writing pieces, and teachers should guide them in selecting questions that match their abilities.
- Candidates should be taught the difference between formal and informal language, with an emphasis on using acceptable formal language in written pieces.
- Instruction should focus on crafting clear, concise sentences suitable for formal writing.
- Candidates should be encouraged to plan their responses and manage their time effectively to produce satisfactory answers.
- Punctuation skills, including the correct use of full stops and commas, should be taught and reinforced across all phases.

Additional Considerations

- Candidates should be warned about the consequences of exceeding the word limit and the importance of honesty regarding word count.
- Teachers should consult the Writing and Presenting section of the CAPS document and communicate the requirements of each text type to learners.
- Instruction should cover vocabulary, tone, and punctuation relevant to all formal texts.
- Learners should be taught to edit their work carefully and thoroughly, without rectifying mistakes in pencil.

By addressing these areas, subject advisers can effectively support teachers, who in turn can better support learners in developing their writing skills and achieving success in the examination.

QUESTION 3

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

Topics were appropriate and reasonable. A variety of formats were tested.

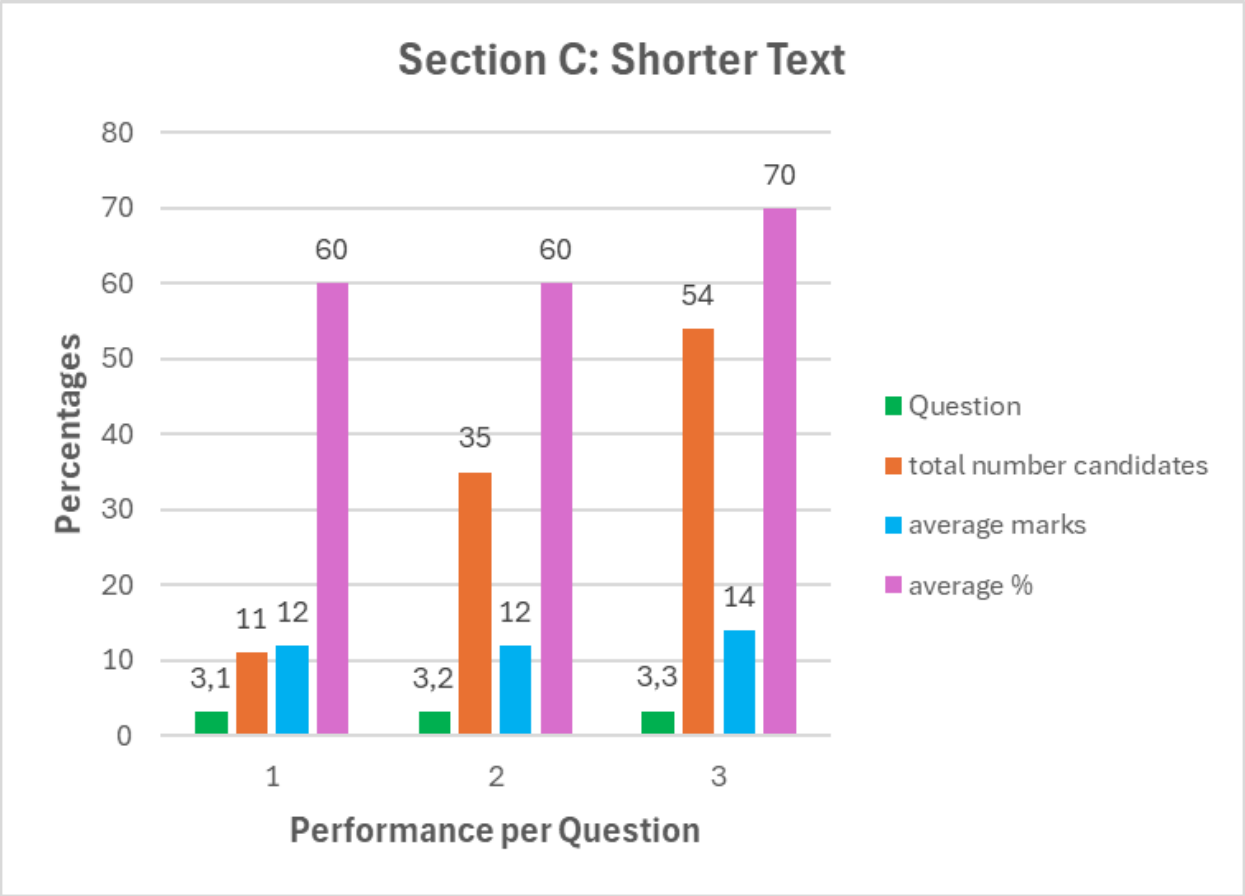
Question 3.1: Flyer – the least popular option. Only 11 out of 100 candidates selected this topic. It is apparent that candidates were not familiar with the appropriate format and requirements of the text. The weaker candidates only provided the basic aspects such as date, time and venue, omitting the contact details and also not providing sufficient elaborative details as to the career exhibition.

Question 3.2: WhatsApp Message – the second most popular topic in Section C. 35 out of 100 candidates chose this text. Generally, the question was well-answered. The majority of candidates could relate to the movie night even though this is not a common

phenomenon nowadays. Surprisingly, candidates hardly used cell phone text language. The majority express themselves in appropriate and acceptable tone and language. A few candidates scored excellent results as they were able to provide out-of-the-box ideas as opposed to other mundane responses.

Question 3.3: Instructions – the most popular option in this section (54 out of 100). Many candidates could not phrase their instructions in the imperative form. Many candidates wrote their instructions in a paragraph rather than point form. While this is not incorrect, point form lends itself better to a list of instructions. Instructions were not short and to the point. Many included unnecessary extra details. Some candidates misspelt 'soap' as 'soup' and also interpreted 'sneakers' as a sandwich. Candidates also did not realise that sneakers are plural as they refer to sneakers at it instead of they or them.

Section C: Breakdown of Rasch Analysis



Section C: Shorter Text			
Question	No. Candidates	Ave. Mark	Ave %
3,1	11	12	60
3,2	35	12	60
3,3	54	14	70

(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
Except for the flyer (3.1), this section was generally well-answered.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
In accordance with CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, the following aspects should be emphasised in the FET phase: - All texts should be taught, with clear categorisation for assessment purposes. - Writing should be encouraged in both formal and informal contexts to foster creativity, enjoyment, and assessment readiness. Learners should be exposed to diverse topics and texts to enhance their vocabulary and writing skills. - Extensive vocabulary exercises should be encouraged to familiarise learners with topic-specific vocabulary. - Instruction should focus on grammatical structures to improve writing quality and vocabulary enrichment. - The correct use of punctuation is crucial and should be taught to complement writing skills. Proper punctuation is essential for effective writing. - Shorter text formats, tone, and register should be taught throughout the FET phase to equip learners with the skills to adapt to different writing contexts. By emphasising these aspects, teachers can provide learners with a solid foundation in writing and prepare them for assessment and future academic endeavours.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
- All candidates, including weaker ones, demonstrated some proficiency in writing skills, indicating effective teaching. - Punctuation, sentence construction, and spelling remain significant challenges for many candidates. - Candidates generally stuck to the chosen topics, producing relevant content despite varying levels of proficiency. Areas for Improvement: - Candidates would benefit from practicing sentence construction, persuasive language, and emotive language, depending on the text type. - Sufficient time should be dedicated to teaching this paper, given its significant weight in The NSC examination. - Learners should be exposed to examples of good writing to enhance their skills. Specific Teaching Points: - Punctuation: Weaker candidates struggle with punctuation, often resulting in run-on sentences. Teaching the correct use of punctuation should be a specific teaching point

to all teachers.

- Candidates should be taught how to split words correctly at the end of a line.
- Techniques for effective paragraphing, including main sentences with supporting sentences, should be taught.
- Examples of good practice and creative responses should be shared with learners to demonstrate innovative writing techniques and requirements for different texts.
- Fair assessment practices should be modelled for learners.
- Learners should be encouraged to adhere to required lengths in shorter transactional pieces and to plan and edit their responses carefully.
- Candidates should be taught to avoid inappropriate language and explicit descriptions.
- Teachers should receive training on interpreting and using rubrics correctly to ensure consistent assessment.

By addressing these areas, teachers can better support learners in developing their writing skills and achieving success in the examination.