

English Syllabus

There are two papers as follows:

1. Paper 1: English Language (3 hours) - 100 marks
2. Paper 2: Literature in English (3 hours) - 100 marks

Paper 1: English Language

Question One:

A composition on one of a number of subjects. (30 Marks)

You are required to select one composition topic from a choice of six. The choice will normally include narrative, descriptive, reflective, argumentative, discussion topics and short story. The required length of the composition is 450 - 500 words.

Question Two:

Directed writing (article writing, book review, film review, review of theatre/ concert / cultural programme/ television show, speech writing, report writing, personal profile, statement of purpose and testimonial) based on suggested points. (20 Marks)

The piece of directed writing will be based on the information and ideas provided. The required length will be about 300 words. The range of subjects may include article writing, book review, film review, review of theatre/ concert / cultural programme/ television show, speech writing, report writing, personal profile, statement of purpose and testimonial.

Skills such as selecting, amplifying, describing, presenting reasoned arguments, re-arranging and re-stating may be involved. The candidates' ability in the above skills, including format will be taken into account as well as their ability to handle language appropriately in the context of the given situation.

It is emphasized that only one question will be set in the examination paper and that this will be compulsory.

Question Three:

Short-answer questions to test grammar, structure and usage. (20 Marks)

All the items in this question are compulsory, and their number and type / pattern may vary from year to year. They will consist of short-answer, open completion items or any other type, which will test the candidates' knowledge of the essentials of functional English grammar and structure. Only two or three types will be included in any one examination.

Question Four:

Comprehension. (30 Marks)

A passage of about 500 words will be provided.

It is recommended that in Paper 1 about 50 minutes should be spent on Question one, 40 minutes on Question two, 30 minutes on Question three and one hour on Question four.

Paper 2: Literature in English

You are required to answer five questions as follows:

One textual question (compulsory) on the Shakespeare play/ alternative prescribed play together with four other questions on at least three texts, which may include the Shakespeare play/ alternative play.

Question 1 is compulsory (20 Marks), four other questions, each carrying 20 Marks.

The textual question, which will be set on the Shakespeare play/alternative play, will contain three short passages and candidates will be required to answer questions set on two of the passages. These Questions may require candidates to explain words and phrases, to rewrite passages in modern English, or to relate an extract to the work as a whole.

The rest of the questions on the Shakespeare play/alternative play and on the other prescribed texts will require essay-type answers and will be set on the episodes, the plot or plots, themes or ideas, characters, relationship and other prominent literary qualities of the texts prescribed.