An essay analysing the theme, language, and form of a post-1945 poem in English, discussed with some reference to the general context of post-1945 poetry. A copy of the poem, xeroxed or typed up, must be attached. Advice on Presentation of Essays

Advice on Presentation of your Assessed Portfolio Essays

1. Appendices

For the single-poem analysis essay, you should attach a photocopy or typed transcript of the poem analysed. Any transcript should be double-checked for transcription errors, so a photocopy will be safer in that respect. This appendix is excluded from the word-count. It is not necessary to provide copies of poems for the other essays, although if you discuss little-known poems that are not in the course anthologies or handouts, this may still be helpful.

2. Format

The main text of your essay should be double-spaced, with adequate margins. Indented quotations in prose or verse, however, should be single-spaced. Such indented quotations should not be centred but tabbed-in to a consistent inner left margin. Indented quotations should not be enclosed within inverted commas: the indentation already indicates that this is quoted material, so inverted commas are redundant in such cases - in fact worse than redundant, because they suggest that the inverted commas belong to the source-material quoted.

In verse quotations, the poet’s original lineation should be respected, including any peculiarities of indentation or spacing. With the exception of short quoted phrases of less than a line, verse should always be quoted in its original lineation, not run on in prose form. If you quote a short phrase from a poem, this goes within inverted commas as with a prose quotation; and if the phrase runs over a line-break, this line-break should be indicated by a virgule ( | ) or slash ( / ).

3. Titles of poems, verse collections, critical essays, periodicals etc.

When you mention the title of an individual poem, this should not be italicised but placed within inverted commas. The only exceptions to this are book-length poems such as the Odyssey, Paradise Lost etc. On the other hand, titles of verse collections should be italicised, as with all other books and periodicals/journals. For instance, The Whitsun Weddings is a book containing several poems by Larkin; but ‘The Whitsun Weddings’ is a single poem, being the title poem of that collection.

Similarly in your footnotes/endnotes, the titles of critical articles in journals, or of chapters in multi-authored scholarly works, are not to be italicised but placed within inverted commas; but the titles of the journals and books should be in italics.

4. Names of Poets

When mentioning a poet’s name, use only the form under which s/he published the poems, and not in the full form found in encyclopedia entries or birth certificates: thus W. H. Auden, not ‘Wystan Hugh Auden’, and Ted Hughes, not ‘Edward James Hughes’.

5. Bibliography and references

Provision of a Bibliography for each essay is an essential requirement, and penalties are incurred by candidates who fail to observe that. This Bibliography should include primary sources (e.g anthologies, or editions of the quoted poets’ works) as well as secondary. If your only source for the poems is a course handout, you should still list that, e.g. as ‘course handout’ preceded by author and title of the poem. The Bibliography should be in alphabetical order of the authors’/editors’ surnames, with each item showing surname first, followed by forename, title, place of publication, publisher, date, e.g.:

Lowell, Robert, Collected Poems eds. Frank Bidart and David Gewanter. London: Faber and Faber, 2003.

However, in footnotes or endnotes, this information appears with the forename first, and with publisher details bracketed before the page number for the citation, thus:

Robert Lowell, Collected Poems eds. Frank Bidart and David Gewanter (London: Faber and Faber, 2003), pp. 383-4.

The abbreviation ‘pg’ should not be used, except by university bureaucrats referring to postgraduate courses.

Online sources should be listed at the end of the Bibliography. Where possible, entries for these should give similar information: author, title, journal, date - as the URL alone is not sufficient.

Page references for quotations from poems should usually be given only for the first such quotation. It will be assumed that subsequent quotations are from the same source, so there is no point in repeating the same information for each quotation, unless quotations from other sources have come in between them and your text does not already indicate which poem is now being quoted.