

MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS BOARD

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA, MSIDA

MATRICULATION EXAMINATION

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

SEPTEMBER 2014

Candidate's Paper

SUBJECT:	ENGLISH
PAPER:	ORAL

PART 1 – Passage for Reading**(5 marks)**

Jordon Cox is Britain's youngest "extreme couponer" – who, despite failing to get an A in his maths GCSE, runs a fearsome financial operation from the bedroom of his mother's house in Brentwood. Next door is the box room, currently storing 50 bottles of shampoo, 80 toothbrushes, washing powder and a range of breakfast cereals – all of which he got for free by collecting and using coupons.

This year, Cox used his coupons, worth more than £500 of products, to supply Doorstep, a homeless charity, with provisions for Christmas. Supermarket insiders have raised their eyebrows at how this feat was achieved in a single shop, and Cox admits that he had some help, after he wrote to food manufacturers and explained his charitable mission. About £340 of the vouchers were donated by the likes of Aunt Bessie's frozen foods and Arla, the dairy company, which explains why Doorstep has ended up with 40 cans of Anchor whipped cream and no brandy butter.

Cox insists, however, that the rest was bought using the increasingly popular technique of "extreme couponing", a method that last year gained him a full Christmas lunch, including turkey, potatoes and lemonade, for 10p – without any charitable handouts.

Extreme couponing started as a recession-busting craze in America before finding its way over to Britain a couple of years ago. It takes the old-fashioned savviness of cutting out a voucher from a magazine to get a discount on a can of baked beans to another level. True aficionados attempt to stockpile groceries without spending a penny.

In such circles, Cox amounts to a folk hero. Cox says he invests about half an hour a day tracking down coupons. As well as hunting online, he adopts the old-fashioned approach of scouring newspapers and magazines. Of course, many of the coupons have restrictions – just one may be used per shopping trip, for instance – but that doesn't deter extreme couponers, who will return as often as is necessary.

PART 2 – Discussion on a Topic (Long Turn)**(5 marks)**

Choose ONE topic from the list below and speak about it for an extended period of time.

- How do you make studying interesting?
- An eco-tourism experience
- Equal opportunities
- Friendships
- The good and the bad of football
- Comino

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PART 2 – Discussion on a Topic (Long Turn)

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Invite the candidate to speak for an extended period on the topic of their choice, only offering prompts where necessary.

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The honeybees are dying — and we don't really know why. That's the conclusion of a massive Department of Agriculture report that came out late last week on colony-collapse disorder, the catchall term for the large-scale deaths of honeybee groups throughout the U.S. And given how important honeybees are to the food that we eat, the fact that they are dying in large numbers, is very, very worrying.

The problem was first reported in 2006, when commercial beekeepers began noticing that their adult worker honeybees would suddenly flee the hive, ending up dead somewhere else and leading to the rapid loss of the colony. In normal years, commercial beekeepers might expect to lose up to 15% of their colony, but over the past five years, mortality rates for commercial operations in the U.S. have been much higher. Since 2006, an estimated 10 million beehives have been lost, costing beekeepers some \$2 billion. There are now 2.5 million honeybee colonies in the U.S., down from 6 million 60 years ago. And if this continues, the consequences for the agricultural economy — and even for our ability to feed ourselves — could be dire. “Currently, the survivorship of honeybee colonies is too low for us to be confident in our ability to meet the pollination demands of U.S. agricultural crops,” the USDA report said.

Since dying honeybees isn't so much a single disease as it is a collection of symptoms, we cannot be certain of what is causing it. The presence of a mite, for instance, can worsen the impact of existing viruses, while the stress of shipping bees back and forth across the country — increasingly common in commercial beekeeping — may be amplifying the stress on the insects and leaving them more vulnerable to the disease. (If you think a cross-country flight is rough on you, just imagine what it's like for a honeybee hive.) The fact that colony collapse disorder is increasingly seen in other countries as well gives more weight to the notion that there may be multiple factors at work.

Still, environmentalists have focused most on the potential role of pesticides, and some lab studies have found that the chemicals can adversely affect bee health. It's not that the pesticides — which are aimed at other insects — are killing the bees outright, but rather that sublethal exposure in nectar and pollen may be interfering with the honeybees' internal radar, preventing them from gathering pollen and returning safely to the hive.

PART 2 – Discussion on a Topic (Long Turn)**(5 marks)**

Choose ONE topic from the list below and speak about it for an extended period of time.

- My favourite travel destination
- Solving Malta's traffic congestion problems creatively
- Cooking with friends or eating out?
- Are there advantages to switching off your smartphone?
- Watersports in winter
- Balancing the need to both study and relax

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PART 2 – Discussion on a Topic (Long Turn)

(5 marks)

Invite the candidate to speak for an extended period on the topic of their choice, only offering prompts where necessary.

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DNA traces modern cats back to the long-ago *Felis*, which bears a physical resemblance to the contemporary cat, in addition to a shared genetic past. What has never been known is exactly when true domestication took place, with possible dates ranging from as far back as 9,500 years ago to 4,000 years ago (when domesticated cats first began appearing in Egyptian art).

Now, a recent study splits the difference, offering a satisfyingly precise date: cats first moved into our homes 5,300 years ago — and for better or worse, have refused to leave since. The investigators in the current study, led by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, excavated a site in China, where an agricultural village was known to have stood less than 6,000 years ago. The scientists unearthed cat skeletons buried within the boundaries of the village that were physically similar to wildcats but smaller — well within the range of domesticated cats.

The key to determining what the animals ate and whether that indicated domestication was to analyze the bones in a different way to detect the particular mix of minerals and other nutrients that went into building the skeleton in the first place. One elemental profile would indicate a meat-heavy diet; another plant- or grain-based; another, different combinations of all of them.

In general, the cats — like the humans at the site — showed evidence of a diet heavy in grain that was clearly part of the local crop and is especially useful because farm animals eat it too. The cats did eat meat-based proteins, though not as much as they would have if they'd been living in the wild and doing what they do best, which is hunting smaller animals.

The source of the meat the cats did eat is not a mystery. It's possible the humans gave them scraps, but then as now, meat is difficult and expensive to raise and would likely have been saved for the villagers. There were, however, plentiful mice and rats around, and their skeletons indicated that they enjoyed millet too — something the humans would not have tolerated for long. Ceramic jugs with heavy tops, also found at the site, were likely used as rodent-resistant ways to store grains. But a better solution was simply to let the cats eat the pests, a job they performed quite happily.

PART 2 – Discussion on a Topic (Long Turn)**(5 marks)**

Choose ONE topic from the list below and speak about it for an extended period of time.

- a) The Mediterranean is beautiful but dangerous
- b) Peace
- c) Ways to keep fit
- d) Different kinds of music
- e) Why invest in alternative energy?
- f) A great event

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PART 1 – Passage for Reading**(5 marks)**

When a battered, skinny tortoiseshell cat wandered into a yard in Florida earlier this year, she could have been any other stray, but she was nothing of the kind. She carried an implanted microchip — one put there by a loving owner — and it revealed an intriguing story: the cat belonged to a local family, had been lost on a trip two months earlier, and had travelled 200 miles (322 km) in that time to arrive back in her hometown. Her journey inspired a series of articles looking for an explanation for how this one cat, and a few others who've made similar trips, managed to find their way back home. The response from many animal researchers was the same: "No idea."

Cats' long-distance travels are relatively rare in the scientific literature, at least so far. But that's not the case for the wanderings of many other creatures, especially those that migrate. Such extreme journeys — mapless, compassless, sometimes intercontinental, through places the animals have never seen before — seem nothing short of miraculous. That's the kind of mystery that gets scientists moving, and move they have, conducting all manner of experiments over the years. These experiments have yielded fascinating insights into the animal brain and into a world beyond human senses.

Plenty of other navigating animals are using something most humans regularly forget exists: the Earth's magnetic field. In illustrations, the field is usually depicted as a series of loops that emerge from the South Pole and re-enter the planet at the North Pole, and reach out to the edges of our atmosphere. Our compass needles are designed to align with the magnetic field, and in the last few decades it's become clear that numerous animals can find their way by feeling some of its field.

Sea turtles, for example, don't use the field simply to tell north from south. According to experiments led by a professor of biology at University of North Carolina, they are actually born knowing a magnetic map of the ocean. Newly hatched loggerhead turtles in the populations studied, journey 8,000 miles (12,900 km) from their hatching beaches around the Atlantic Ocean to reach feeding areas, and if they don't keep right on track, they do not survive. Scientists learned early on that the turtles could sense the Earth's magnetism: they found that hatchlings from the Florida coast, which normally swim east in darkness to start their migration, swam the other way when they were put in a magnetic field that reversed north and south.

PART 2 – Discussion on a Topic (Long Turn)**(5 marks)**

Choose ONE topic from the list below and speak about it for an extended period of time.

- a) Meditation and prayer
- b) Different ways of self-expression
- c) Families and friendships
- d) Favourite digital trends
- e) Helping others
- f) Running a project

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PART 2 – Discussion on a Topic (Long Turn)

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SUBJECT:	ENGLISH
DATE:	5th September 2014
TIME:	9.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon

ANSWER BOTH SECTIONS

You are advised to spend about 1 hour on each task.

SECTION A – LANGUAGE (60 marks)

1. ESSAY

(30 marks)

Write approximately 500 words on **one** of the following:

- a. Write a short story about three brothers.
- b. You are W. Vella living at 25, Broad Street, Nadur. Write a letter to the local council explaining some of your ideas for improving beach facilities and why this might be a good thing to do.
- c. November.
- d. Internet addiction is a new form of addictive behaviour which can be as dangerous as other forms of addiction. Discuss.
- e. You belong to an association or group (such as a religious, cultural, sports or any other organisation). Write a report for your team leader explaining how you and your team participated in and coped with a number of exercises and tasks in a recent team event.
- f. Describe a family event which has remained memorable for many different reasons.

2. COMPREHENSION AND SUMMARY

(30 marks)

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

A Path to Road Safety With No Signposts (Adapted) By Sarah Lyall

5 "I want to take you on a walk," said Hans Monderman, abruptly stopping his car and striding – hatless, and nearly hairless – into the freezing rain. Like a naturalist conducting a tour of the jungle, he led the way to a busy intersection in the centre of town, where several odd things immediately became clear. Not only was it virtually naked, stripped of all lights, signs and road markings, but there was no division between road and sidewalk. It was, basically, a bare brick square.

10 But in spite of the apparently **anarchical** layout, the traffic, a steady stream of trucks, cars, buses, motorcycles, bicycles and pedestrians, moved along fluidly and easily, as if directed by an invisible conductor. When Mr. Monderman, a traffic engineer and the intersection's proud designer, deliberately failed to check for oncoming traffic before crossing the street, the drivers slowed for him. No one honked or shouted rude words out of the window.

15 "Who has the right of way?" he asked rhetorically. "I don't care. People here have to find their own way, negotiate for themselves, use their own brains." Used by some 20,000 drivers a day, the intersection is part of a road-design revolution pioneered by the 59-year-old Mr. Monderman. His work in Friesland, the district in northern Holland that takes in Drachten, is increasingly seen as the way of the future in Europe.

20 His philosophy is simple, if counterintuitive.

25 To make communities safer and more appealing, Mr. Monderman argues, you should first remove the traditional **paraphernalia** of their roads – the traffic lights and speed signs; the signs exhorting drivers to stop, slow down and merge; the centre lines separating lanes from one another; even the speed bumps, speed-limit signs, bicycle lanes and pedestrian crossings. In his view, it is only when the road is made more dangerous, when drivers stop looking at signs and start looking at other people, that driving becomes safer.

30 "All those signs are saying to cars, 'This is your space, and we have organized your behaviour so that as long as you behave this way, nothing can happen to you,' " Mr. Monderman said. "That is the wrong story." The Drachten intersection is an example of the concept of "shared space", a street where cars and pedestrians are equal, and the design tells the driver what to do.

35 "It's a moving away from regulated, **legislated** traffic toward space which, by the way it's designed and configured, makes it clear what sort of behaviour is anticipated," said Ben Hamilton-Baillie, a British specialist in urban design and movement and a proponent of many of the same concepts. Variations on the shared-space theme are being tried in Spain, Denmark, Austria, Sweden and Britain, among other places. The European Union has
40 appointed a committee of experts, including Mr. Monderman, for a Europe-wide study.

45 Mr. Monderman is a man on a mission. On a daylong automotive tour of Friesland, he pointed out places he had improved, including a town where he ripped out the pavements, signs and crossings and put in brick paving on the central shopping street. An elderly woman crossed slowly in front of him. "This is social space, so when Grandma is coming, you stop, because that's what normal, courteous human beings do," he said.

50 Planners and curious journalists are increasingly making pilgrimages to meet Mr. Monderman, considered one of the field's great innovators, although until a few years ago he was virtually unknown outside Holland. Mr. Hamilton-Baillie, whose writings have helped bring Mr. Monderman's work to wider attention, remembers with fondness his own first visit.

55 Mr. Monderman drove him to a small country road with cows in every direction. Their presence was unnecessarily reinforced by a large, standard-issue European traffic sign with a picture of a cow on it. "He said: 'What do you expect to find here? Wallabies?' " Mr. Hamilton-Baillie recalled. " 'They're treating you like you're a complete idiot, and if people treat you like a complete idiot, you'll act like one.' "

60 Here was someone who had rethought a lot of issues from complete scratch. Essentially, what it means is a transfer of power and responsibility from the state to the individual and the community. In residential communities, Mr. Monderman began narrowing the roads and putting in design features like trees and flowers, red brick paving stones and even fountains to discourage people from speeding, following the principle now known as psychological
65 traffic calming, where behaviour follows design.

70 He made his first nervous foray into shared space in a small village whose residents were upset at its being used as a daily thoroughfare for 6,000 speeding cars. When he took away the signs, lights and sidewalks, people drove more carefully. Within two weeks, speeds on the road had dropped by more than half. In fact, he said, there has never been a **fatal** accident on any of his roads.

75 Several early studies bear out his contention that shared spaces are safer. In England, the district of Wiltshire found that removing the centre line from a stretch of road reduced drivers' speed without any increase in accidents.

80 While something of a libertarian, Mr. Monderman concedes that road design can do only so much. It does not change the behaviour, for instance, of the 15 percent of drivers who will behave badly no matter what the rules are. Nor are shared-space designs appropriate everywhere, like major **urban** centres, but only in neighbourhoods that meet particular criteria.

85 Recently a group of well-to-do parents asked him to widen the two-lane road leading to their children's school, saying it was too small to accommodate what he **derisively** calls "their huge cars." He refused, saying the fault was not with the road, but with the cars. "They can't wait for each other to pass?" he asked. "I wouldn't interfere with the right of people to buy the car they want, but nor should the government have to solve the problems they make with their choices."

90

- a. Define the following words or phrases as they are used in the text (**in bold**): anarchical (1.8), paraphernalia (1.23), legislated (1.35), fatal (1.70), urban (1.80), derisively (1.84). (6 marks)
- b. Explain why Mr Monderman is important in this article. (3 marks)
- c. Why is Mr Monderman's idea "counterintuitive" (1.20)? (3 marks)
- d. Briefly describe what is meant by "the principle now known as psychological traffic calming" (1.64-65) as described in this article. (3 marks)
- e. What are some of the cases in which Mr Monderman's idea of "shared space" (1.38) will probably not work? (3 marks)
- f. Using between 80-100 of your own words, summarise the main characteristics and examples of "shared space" (1.38) as they are presented in this article. (12 marks)

SECTION B – LITERATURE (30 marks)

Choose one of the texts below and answer ONE of the three questions set on the text using no less than 450 words. All answers must be supported by close reference to the text.

Text 1: Graham Greene *The Heart of the Matter*

- a. "Failure in human relationships is a dominant concern in *The Heart of the Matter*." Discuss how far you agree with this statement.

Or

- b. Scobie's major flaw is his sense of pride. Discuss.

Or

- c. Write an essay on the importance of the following passage to the novel *The Heart of the Matter*. These topics are being offered to you as guidelines:
 - The relation of the passage to the plot or action of the novel.
 - What the passage reveals about any of the characters in the novel.
 - The relation to the central themes of the novel.

"Scobie thought: if only I could weep, if only I could feel pain; have I really become so evil? Unwillingly he looked down at the body. The fumes of petrol lay all around in the heavy night and for a moment he saw the body as something very small and dark and a long way away – like a broken piece of the rosary he looked for: a couple of black beads and the image of God coiled at the end of it. Oh God, he thought, I've killed you: you've served me all these years and I've killed you at the end of them. God lay there under the petrol drums and Scobie felt the tears in his mouth, salt in the cracks of his lips. You served me and I did this to you. You were faithful to me, and I wouldn't trust you."

Text 2: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie *Purple Hibiscus*

a. Discuss the importance of remorse in *Purple Hibiscus*.

Or

b. How far would you agree that the character of Father Amadi represents hope to Jaja and Kambili?

Or

c. Write an essay on the importance of the following passage to the novel *Purple Hibiscus*. These topics are being offered to you as guidelines:

- The relation of the passage to the plot or action of the novel.
- What the passage reveals about any of the characters in the novel.
- The relation to the central themes of the novel.

I took my exams on my hospital bed while Mother Lucy, who brought the papers herself, waited on a chair next to Mama. She gave me extra time for each exam, but I was finished long before the time was up. She brought my report card a few days later. I came first. Mama did not sing her Igbo praise songs; she only said, ‘Thanks be to God.’

My class girls visited me that afternoon, their eyes wide with awed admiration. They had heard I had survived an accident. They hoped I would come back with a cast that they could all scribble their signatures on. Chinwe Jideze brought me a big card that read ‘Get well soon to someone special,’ and she sat by my bed and talked to me, in confidential whispers, as if we had always been friends. She even showed me her report card – she had come second. Before they left, Ezinne asked, ‘You will stop running away after school, now, won’t you?’

Mama told me that evening that I would be discharged in two days. But I would not be going home, I would be going to Nsukka for a week, and Jaja would go with me. She did not know how Aunty Ifeoma had convinced Papa, but he had agreed that Nsukka air would be good for me, for my recuperation.

Text 3: Robert Bolt *A Man for All Seasons*

- a. Vanity and desire to attain a higher social status are important elements in *A Man for All Seasons*. Discuss.

Or

- b. Discuss and illustrate the aspects of Thomas Moore's character that are revealed through his relationship with Margaret, Alice and William Roper.

Or

- c. Write an essay on the importance of the following passage to the play *A Man for All Seasons*. These topics are being offered to you as guidelines:

- The relation of the passage to the plot or action of the play.
- What the passage reveals about any of the characters in the play.
- The relation to the central themes of the play.

Enter COMMON MAN, dragging basket. The rear of the stage remains water-lit in moonlight. Iron grills now descend to cover all the apertures. Also, a rack, which remains suspended, and a cage which is lowered to the floor. While this takes place the COMMON MAN arranges three chairs behind a table. Then he turns and watches the completion of the transformation.

COMMON MAN (*aggrieved*) Now look! ... I don't suppose anyone enjoyed it any more than he did. Well, not much more. (*Takes from basket and dons coat and hat.*) Jailer! (*Shrugs.*) It's a job. The pay scale being what it is they have to take a rather common type of man into the prison service. But it's a job like any other job. Bit nearer the knuckle than most perhaps.

Enter right, CROMWELL, NORFOLK, CRANMER, who sit, and RICH, who stands behind them. Enter left, MORE, who enters the cage and lies down.

They'd let him out if they could but for various reasons they can't. (*Twirling keys*). I'd let him out if I could but I can't. Not without taking up residence in there myself. And he's in there already, so what'd be the point? You know the old adage? 'Better a live rat than a dead lion', and that's about it.

*An envelope descends swiftly before him. He opens it and reads: 'With reference to the old adage: Thomas Cromwell was found guilty of High Treason and executed on 28 July 1540. Norfolk was found guilty of High Treason and should have been executed on 27 January 1547 but on the night of 26 January, the King died of syphilis and wasn't able to sign the warrant. Thomas Cranmer' (*jerking thumb*) that's the other one – 'was burned alive on 21 March 1556.' (*he is about to conclude but sees a postscript.*) Oh. 'Richard Rich became a Knight and Solicitor-General, a Baron and Lord Chancellor, and died in his bed.' So did I. And so, I hope (*pushing off basket*) will all of you.*

Text 4: Ian McEwan *Atonement*

- a. Briony is often depicted as a child demanding to be noticed. Discuss how this affects the development of plot throughout *Atonement*.

Or

- b. How far do you agree that the Tallis family is a completely dysfunctional one?

Or

- c. Write an essay on the importance of the following passage to the novel *Atonement*. These topics are being offered to you as guidelines:

- The relation of the passage to the plot or action of the play.
- What the passage reveals about any of the characters in the play.
- The relation to the central themes of the play.

As for Lola – my high-living, chain-smoking cousin – here she was, still as lean and fit as a racing dog, and still faithful. Who would have dreamed it? This, as they used to say, was the side on which her bread was buttered. That may sound sour, but it went through my mind as I glanced across at her. She wore a sable coat and a scarlet wide-brimmed fedora. Bold rather than vulgar. Near-on eighty years old, and still wearing high heels. They clicked on the pavement with the sound of a younger woman's stride. There was no sign of a cigarette. In fact, there was an air of the health farm about her, and an indoor tan. She was taller than her husband now, and there was no doubting her vigour. But there was also something comic about her – or was I clutching at straws? She was heavy on the make-up, quite garish around the mouth and liberal with the smoothing cream and powder. I've always been a puritan in this, so I count myself an unreliable witness. I thought there was a touch of the stage villain here – the gaunt figure, the black coat, the lurid lips. A cigarette holder, a lapdog tucked under one arm and she could have been Cruella de Vil.

We passed by each other in a matter of seconds. I went on up the steps, then stopped under the pediment, out of the rain, to watch the group make its way to the car. He was helped in first, and I saw then how frail he was. He couldn't bend at the waist, nor could he take his own weight on one foot. They had to lift him into his seat. The far door was held open for Lady Lola who folded herself in with a terrible agility. I watched the Rolls pull away into the traffic, then I went in. Seeing them laid something heavy on my heart, and I was trying not to think about it, or feel it now.