

# Commentary on candidate evidence

## Candidate 4

The candidate evidence has achieved the following marks for the coursework assessment task.

The candidate was awarded **19 marks**.

**Topic:** *“An exploration of the extent to which Heathcliff and Mr Rochester conform to the Gothic convention of the Byronic hero in Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte and Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte.”*

### Task

The candidate states that they will look at the nature of the ‘Byronic hero’ in both *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*. The candidate defines the multiple traits of the Byronic hero in the opening paragraph as being “male”, an “anti-hero”, prone to “rebellion”, having “great passion”, having “great talent, lacking respect for rank and privilege”, having an “unsavoury secret past”, being arrogant, overconfident and self-destructive. The candidate indicates that Rochester and Heathcliff are both Byronic heroes yet to “different extents ... and ways”. Albeit the candidate mentions the “Gothic convention”, they never engage with ideas around the Gothic past a cursory mention in the first paragraph of the dissertation. The selection of texts and task itself are appropriate for this level of study.

### Knowledge and Understanding

The candidate demonstrates **broad knowledge and understanding of the texts** as they pertain to the defined task. Rochester is understood to be “dark...mysterious... unsavoury”; “concealing his unsavoury past”; “consumed by love and passion”; “cunning and deceiving” and is a “Byronic hero” who is redeemed only once a transformation takes place. Whereas Heathcliff is seen as “cruel and incapable of passion”; arrogant, “intelligent” and “cynical” who does not “experience any transition” so is never fulfilled.

The approach to the task can be seen as **broadly relevant** which would place this dissertation in the 18-15 band range, yet Rochester is dealt with in a more thorough manner which places that element of the dissertation into the 22-19 band range as it is a **relevant approach...which demonstrates broad consideration of the implications of the task**.

The textual evidence used throughout **broadly supports the demands of the task** but there are **some limitations in breadth of selection** in the textual evidence used when dealing with Heathcliff. For example, the candidate uses short quotations “Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same” and “If he loved with all the powers of his puny being, he couldn’t love as much in eighty years, as I could in a day” but moves towards assertion and narrative as opposed to analysis.

### Analysis

There is a **relevant analysis** of a range of **features of language as appropriate to the task**. With this particular task, the candidate primarily looks at characterisation and the different aspects of the two main protagonists being dealt with which justify them being defined as “Byronic” heroes.

For most of the dissertation, the analysis is **relevant** and **appropriate to the task** and the discussion of the fact that Heathcliff’s “lack of surname...highlights how much of an outsider he is”. Indeed the analysis of Rochester could be said to **support the line of argument** (which is in the 22-19 band range) as the candidate explains that Rochester “believes himself to be above spiritual and societal law” and the candidate engages with a secondary reference to come to the understanding that Rochester’s “Byronic traits lead to his own self-destruction.”

### Evaluation

There is a **discernible evaluative stance based on evidence presented within the dissertation**. The candidate deals with each aspect of the Byronic hero indicting the complexity of the characters, and comes to a cohesive conclusion which states that the characters contrast with each other with Rochester’s “positive aspects” and “charming traits” and Heathcliff’s only “redeeming quality is his ability to love.”

### Expression

The candidate demonstrates language which is **consistently accurate** and **broadly relevant to the task**. The candidate alternates between the texts, albeit there is a more sustained treatment of *Jane Eyre*, and touches upon the comparative with “Conversely”, and “In contrast to Heathcliff”. Therefore this aspect of the dissertation can be placed firmly within the band range of 18-15.

Range: This dissertation fully meets the standard described within the 18-15 band range, so would gain the highest mark in the range. Yet there are elements of the 22-19 band range in terms of the work done on Rochester in relation to the understanding and analysis which ultimately is enough to place this dissertation at the bottom of the 22-19 band range.

Mark: 19