

# GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

(8700)

## Specification

For teaching from September 2015 onwards  
For exams in May/June 2017 onwards

Version 1.4 21 May 2018



## 2 Specification at a glance

### Subject content

1 [Explorations in creative reading and writing](#) (page 14)

2 [Writers' viewpoints and perspectives](#) (page 14)

3 [Non-exam assessment](#) (page 15)

For the award of the GCSE in English Language students must offer all three assessments.

### Assessments

All texts in the examination will be unseen.

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing
<b>What's assessed</b> <b>Section A: Reading</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• one literature fiction text</li></ul> <b>Section B: Writing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• descriptive or narrative writing</li></ul>
<b>Assessed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes</li><li>• 80 marks</li><li>• 50% of GCSE</li></ul>
<b>Questions</b> <b>Reading (40 marks) (25%)</b> – one single text <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks)</li><li>• 2 longer form questions (2 x 8 marks)</li><li>• 1 extended question (1 x 20 marks)</li></ul> <b>Writing (40 marks) (25%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)</li></ul>



**Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives****What's assessed****Section A: Reading**

- one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text

**Section B: Writing**

- writing to present a viewpoint

**Assessed**

- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

**Questions****Reading (40 marks) (25%)** – two linked texts

- 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks)
- 2 longer form questions (1 x 8, 1 x 12 marks)
- 1 extended question (1 x 16 marks)

**Writing (40 marks) (25%)**

- 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

**Non-examination Assessment: Spoken Language****What's assessed**

(AO7–AO9)

- presenting
- responding to questions and feedback
- use of Standard English

**Assessed**

- teacher set throughout course
- marked by teacher
- separate endorsement (0% weighting of GCSE)

## 3 Subject content

Students will draw upon a range of texts as reading stimulus and engage with creative as well as real and relevant contexts. Students will have opportunities to develop higher-order reading and critical thinking skills that encourage genuine enquiry into different topics and themes.

This specification will ensure that students can read fluently and write effectively. Students will be able to demonstrate a confident control of Standard English and write grammatically correct sentences, deploying figurative language and analysing texts.

For GCSE English Language students should:

- read fluently, and with good understanding, a wide range of texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, including literature and literary non-fiction as well as other writing such as reviews and journalism
- read and evaluate texts critically and make comparisons between texts
- summarise and synthesise information or ideas from texts
- use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing
- write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately
- use grammar correctly and punctuate and spell accurately
- acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- listen to and understand spoken language and use spoken Standard English effectively.

GCSE English Language is designed on the basis that students should read and be assessed on high-quality, challenging texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Each text studied must represent a substantial piece of writing, making significant demands on students in terms of content, structure and the quality of language. The texts, across a range of genres and types, should support students in developing their own writing by providing effective models. The texts must include literature and extended literary non-fiction, and other writing such as essays, reviews and journalism (both printed and online). Texts that are essentially transient, such as instant news feeds, must not be included. The number and types of texts, and their length, are not prescribed.

### 3.1 Scope of study

This GCSE specification in English Language will require students to study the following content:

#### 3.1.1 Critical reading and comprehension

- *critical reading and comprehension*: identifying and interpreting themes, ideas and information in a range of literature and other high-quality writing; reading in different ways for different purposes, and comparing and evaluating the usefulness, relevance and presentation of content for these purposes; drawing inferences and justifying these with evidence; supporting a point of view by referring to evidence within the text; identifying bias and misuse of evidence, including distinguishing between statements that are supported by evidence and those that are not; reflecting critically and evaluatively on text, using the context of the text and drawing on knowledge and skills gained from wider reading; recognising the possibility of different responses to a text
- *summary and synthesis*: identifying the main theme or themes; summarising ideas and information from a single text; synthesising from more than one text

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- *evaluation of a writer's choice of vocabulary, form, grammatical and structural features*: explaining and illustrating how vocabulary and grammar contribute to effectiveness and impact, using linguistic and literary terminology accurately to do so and paying attention to detail; analysing and evaluating how form and structure contribute to the effectiveness and impact of a text
  - *comparing texts*: comparing two or more texts critically with respect to the above.

### 3.1.2 Writing

- *producing clear and coherent text*: writing effectively for different purposes and audiences: to describe, narrate, explain, instruct, give and respond to information, and argue; selecting vocabulary, grammar, form, and structural and organisational features judiciously to reflect audience, purpose and context; using language imaginatively and creatively; using information provided by others to write in different forms; maintaining a consistent point of view; maintaining coherence and consistency across a text
- *writing for impact*: selecting, organising and emphasising facts, ideas and key points; citing evidence and quotation effectively and pertinently to support views; creating emotional impact; using language creatively, imaginatively and persuasively, including rhetorical devices (such as rhetorical questions, antithesis, parenthesis).

### 3.1.3 Spoken language

- *presenting information and ideas*: selecting and organising information and ideas effectively and persuasively for prepared spoken presentations; planning effectively for different purposes and audiences; making presentations and speeches
- *responding to spoken language*: listening to and responding appropriately to any questions and feedback
- *spoken Standard English*: expressing ideas using Standard English whenever and wherever appropriate.

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## 4.5 Assessment objectives

Assessment objectives (AOs) are set by Ofqual and are the same across all GCSE English Language specifications and all exam boards.

The exams and Spoken Language endorsement will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

- AO1:
  - identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas
  - select and synthesise evidence from different texts
- AO2: Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views
- AO3: Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts
- AO4: Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references
- AO5: Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts
- AO6: Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation. (This requirement must constitute 20% of the marks for each specification as a whole.)



- AO7: Demonstrate presentation skills in a formal setting
- AO8: Listen and respond appropriately to spoken language, including to questions and feedback on presentations
- AO9: Use spoken Standard English effectively in speeches and presentations.

## Weighting of assessment objectives for GCSE English Language

Assessment objectives (AOs)	Component weightings (approx %)			Overall weighting (approx %)
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Spoken Language NEA	
AO1	2.5	7.5	N/A	10
AO2	10	7.5	N/A	17.5
AO3	N/A	10	N/A	10
AO4	12.5	N/A	N/A	12.5
AO5	15	15	N/A	30
AO6	10	10	N/A	20
AO7	N/A	N/A	endorsement	0
AO8	N/A	N/A	endorsement	0
AO9	N/A	N/A	endorsement	0
Overall weighting of components	50	50	0	100