

**Proposed GCE AS and A Level  
Subject Content for English  
Language and Literature**

# The criteria

## Introduction

AS and A level subject criteria set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and assessment objectives common to all AS and A level specifications in a given subject. They provide the framework within which the awarding organisation creates the detail of the specification.

## Aims and objectives

1. All AS and A level specifications in English language and literature must encourage learners to develop their interest in and enjoyment of English as they:
  - develop and apply their knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation;
  - develop and apply their understanding of the concepts and methods appropriate for the analysis and study of language;
  - use linguistic and literary approaches in their reading and interpretation of texts, showing how the two disciplines can relate to each other;
  - engage creatively and critically with a wide range of texts;
  - explore the ways in which texts relate to each other and the contexts in which they are produced and received; and
  - develop their skills as producers and interpreters of language.
2. In addition, A level specifications in English language and literature must encourage learners to develop their interest in and enjoyment of English as they:
  - undertake independent and sustained studies to develop their skills as producers and interpreters of language.

## Subject content

3. AS and A level specifications in English language and literature must build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established at GCSE, developing learners' ability to apply and integrate linguistic and literary approaches. A level specifications must extend these studies in breadth and depth, further developing learners' techniques of analysis, evaluation and production of texts.
4. Specifications must clearly show how the knowledge, understanding and skills associated with the disciplines of linguistic and literary studies make a coherent course.

5. Texts and materials for study must be organised in ways that develop learners' understanding of the value and purpose of applying both literary and linguistic approaches.

## **Knowledge and understanding**

6. AS and A level specifications must require learners to show knowledge and understanding of:
  - At A level: a wide range of spoken and written texts from different times, including a minimum of 6 substantial texts;
    - at least three from the genres of prose fiction, poetry and/or drama, and
    - at least three further texts, one of which must be non-literary.
  - At AS level: a wide range of spoken and written texts from different times, including a minimum of 3 substantial texts;
    - at least 2 from the genres of prose fiction, poetry and/or drama, and
    - at least 1 further text, which must be non-literary.
7. AS and A level specifications must require learners to show awareness of some of the different language levels, as appropriate drawn from:
  - Phonetics, phonology and prosodics;
  - Lexis and semantics;
  - Grammar and morphology;
  - Pragmatics; and
  - Discourse.
8. AS and A level specifications must require learners to show knowledge and understanding of:
  - how language choices shape meanings in texts;
  - ways in which individual texts are interpreted by different readers or listeners;
  - how linguistic and literary approaches can inform interpretations of texts; and
  - ways in which texts relate to each other and to the contexts in which they are produced and received.

9. In addition, A level specifications must require learners to show knowledge and understanding of:
- the significance of contextual factors in the production and reception of texts; and
  - how to apply linguistic and literary methodologies and concepts to inform their responses to and interpretations of texts.
10. Specifications must contain clear principles for the review and updating of selected texts and materials and methods used for studying them.

## **Skills**

11. AS and A level specifications must require learners to:
- apply relevant methods for text analysis, drawing on linguistic and literary fields;
  - apply varied strategies for reading and listening according to text type and purpose for study;
  - identify and describe how meanings and effects are created and conveyed in texts;
  - explore connections across a wide range of texts;
  - use English appropriately, accurately and creatively;
  - use a range of techniques to produce and evaluate the effectiveness of texts for different audiences and purposes, informed by wide reading and listening; and
  - make accurate reference to texts and sources.
12. In addition, A level specifications must require learners to develop judgement and independence as they:
- explore connections across a wide range of literary and non-literary texts; and
  - synthesise and reflect on their knowledge and understanding of linguistic and literary concepts and methods in the study of texts.