

GCSE

Specification

English Language

For exams January 2011 onwards and
For certification June 2012 onwards





GCSE

Specification

English Language

4705

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1 Introduction

1



1a Why choose AQA?

We, AQA, are the United Kingdom's favourite awarding body and more students get their academic qualifications from us than from any other board. But why are we so popular?

We understand the different requirements of each subject by working with teachers. Our GCSEs:

- help students achieve their full potential
- are relevant for today's challenges
- are manageable for schools and colleges
- are easy to understand by students of all levels of ability
- lead to accurate results, delivered on time; and
- are affordable and value for money.

We provide a wide range of support services for teachers, including:

- access to subject departments
- training for teachers, including practical teaching strategies and methods that work, presented by senior examiners

- individual support for Controlled Assessment
- 24-hour support through our website and online with **Ask AQA**
- past question papers and mark schemes
- a wide range of printed and electronic resources for teachers and students
- free online results analysis, with Enhanced Results Analysis.

We are an educational charity focused on the needs of the learner. All our income is spent on improving the quality of our specifications, examinations and support services. We don't aim to profit from education, we want you to.

If you are already a customer we thank you for your support. If you are thinking of joining us we look forward to welcoming you.

1b Why choose GCSE English Language?

- This specification allows candidates to demonstrate their ability in functional English; to investigate and analyse language; and, to experiment and use language creatively.
- The specification offers a skills-based approach to the study of English. This enables candidates to make 'fresh' and individual responses to each element of assessment.
- The specification is most suitable for those who wish to explore English Language in more depth, and (in combination with English Literature) experience greater breadth of English studies at this level.
- The scheme of assessment is unitised, offering flexibility. This enables centres to take varied routes in preparing candidates for assessment. Candidates can be entered when they are ready to be assessed and may re-sit each individual unit.
- The examination paper and controlled assessments will be available twice a year. Exam papers will be available at Higher and Foundation Tiers, giving access to the course for candidates of all abilities.
- The externally examined unit is common to GCSE English. This gives teachers the flexibility to make late entry decisions where they may choose to enter candidates for either GCSE English (1 GCSE) or GCSE English Language plus GCSE English Literature (2 GCSEs).
- The specification covers the functional elements of English. This is done mainly through the externally examined unit. The term 'functional' should be considered in the broad sense of providing learners with the skills and abilities they need to take an active and responsible role in their communities, in their everyday lives, workplaces and educational settings.
- Speaking and Listening is internally assessed and is common to GCSE English and GCSE English Language. This unit draws on the good practice observed during the previous specification and allows teachers to set tasks that are relevant to their students. Candidates need to exhibit their ability to speak and listen in functional contexts which require them to discuss and present. They also need to demonstrate their ability to role play in either functional or dramatic situations. This unit is an excellent preparation for life beyond the classroom.
- Extended reading in this specification is assessed through Controlled Assessment. Candidates may use a text they are studying as part of GCSE English Literature or may use an additional text, including the possibility of studying a non-fiction text. Tasks will be selected from a bank of questions that encourage the candidate to choose their own aspect of study and develop a personal response.
- Creative writing is also assessed through Controlled Assessment. Drawing on the 'creative' agenda in the National Curriculum Programme of Study, candidates will be encouraged to be imaginative and to experiment with language to create writing that goes beyond the 'real life' contexts of the writing in the external unit.
- This specification introduces the 'spoken language study' to Controlled Assessment. This is an investigative approach to the way oral communication works and offers clear progression to GCE English Language.
- This specification offers excellent preparation for GCE English Language specifications.
- The specification has been developed in consultation with practising teachers and subject associations.

1c How do I start using this specification?

To ensure you receive all the teaching and examination material, it is important that the person responsible for making the decision to teach AQA informs both AQA and their Exam Officer.

Step one:

To confirm you will be teaching this specification go to **www.aqa.org.uk/signup** and complete the online form. You will then receive your free GCSE English Language welcome pack(s) that contain teaching and support material.

Step two:

Inform your Exam Officer of your choice to ensure you receive all your examination material. Your Exam Officer will make sure that your centre is registered with AQA and will complete the Intention to Enter and Estimated Entries when required to do so.

If your centre has not used AQA for any examinations in the past, please contact our centre approval team at **centreapproval@aqa.org.uk**.

1d How can I find out more?

You can choose to find out more about this specification or the services that AQA offers in a number of ways.

Ask AQA

You have 24-hour access to useful information and answers to the most commonly asked questions at **www.aqa.org.uk/askaqa**

If the answer to your question is not available, you can submit a query through **Ask AQA** for our team. We will respond within two working days.

Speak to your subject team

You can talk directly to the GCSE English Language subject team about this specification either by e-mailing **english-gcse@aqa.org.uk** or by calling 0161 953 1180.

Teacher Support Meetings

Details of the full range of our Teacher Support meetings are available on our website at **www.aqa.org.uk/support/teachers.php**.

There is also a link to our fast and convenient online booking system for Teacher Support meetings at **events.aqa.org.uk/ebooking**

If you need to contact the Teacher Support team, you can call us on 01483 477860 or e-mail us at **teachersupport@aqa.org.uk**

Latest information online

You can find out more including the latest news, how to register to use Enhanced Results Analysis, support and downloadable resources on our website at **www.aqa.org.uk**



2 Specification at a Glance

GCSE English Language

Unit 1: Understanding and producing non-fiction texts

External examination 40% of the total GCSE marks	2 hours 15 minutes	80 marks
Section A: Reading 20% of the total GCSE marks		40 marks
Section B: Writing 20% of the total GCSE marks		40 marks

PLUS

Unit 2: Speaking and Listening

Controlled Assessment 20% of the total GCSE marks	45 marks
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PLUS

Unit 3: Understanding spoken and written texts and writing creatively

Controlled Assessment 40% of the total GCSE marks		80 marks
Part a: Extended reading 15% of the total GCSE marks	3–4 hours	30 marks
Part b: Creative writing 15% of the total GCSE marks	3–4 hours	30 marks
Part c: Spoken Language Study 10% of the total GCSE mark	2–3 hours	20 marks

Note that times indicates the production of final written outcomes.

Summary of assessment

Structure of units and examination papers

2

Unit 1: Understanding and producing non-fiction texts

Section A: Reading

At Tier H candidates answer four compulsory questions based on three reading sources.

At Tier F candidates answer five compulsory questions, including those requiring short responses, based on three shorter reading sources.

Section B: Writing

At both Tiers candidates do two compulsory writing tasks – one shorter task worth 16 marks and one longer task worth 24 marks.

Unit 2: Speaking and Listening

Candidates must be assessed on three equally weighted activities:

- presenting;
- discussing and listening;
- role playing.

Each activity will be marked separately out of 15 and the marks added together to give a final mark out of 45.

Unit 3: Understanding spoken and written texts and writing creatively

Part a: Extended reading – candidates choose one task from the bank of published titles for the year in which they are entering this unit. They must consider one extended text which may be a text that they are also using for GCSE English Literature. The definition of 'extended text' is given under the detailed guidance for this unit in Section 3c. You will give one mark out of 30.

Part b: Creative writing – candidates choose two tasks from the bank of published titles for the year in which they are entering this unit. The two tasks do not have to be equal in length as this will be determined by the type of creative writing they choose to do. 20 marks are available for content and organisation and 10 marks are available for accuracy. You will mark each writing task out of 10 marks and give an overall mark out of 10 for accuracy. The marks will be added together to give a final mark out of 30.

Part c: Spoken language study – candidates choose one task from the bank of published titles for the year in which they are entering the unit. You will give one mark out of 20.

Please refer to the Specimen Assessment Materials on aqa.org.uk for examples of examination papers and controlled assessment tasks for this specification.

Controlled Assessment

There are three elements to Controlled Assessment:

- Task Setting: Who sets the task
- Task Taking: How the students perform the tasks
- Task Marking: Who does the marking.

Each stage has a level of control (high, medium or low) to ensure reliability and authenticity and to make assessments more manageable for teachers and students.

AQA's Controlled Assessment tasks have been designed to offer you maximum flexibility allowing you to:

- choose texts for reading units
- contextualise tasks to meet the needs of your students
- timetable the assessment to meet your needs
- offer assessment in January and June.



3 Subject Content

This section covers the subject content of the three units:

- Unit 1: Understanding and producing non-fiction texts
- Unit 2: Speaking and Listening
- Unit 3: Understanding spoken and written texts and writing creatively

Each section provides a summary of what candidates have to do, the assessment process and answers to questions.

3a Unit 1: Understanding and producing non-fiction texts

Unit 1: Summary of what candidates have to do

Requirements: Candidates are required to read and understand a range of non-fiction texts, identifying the writers' crafts and transferring these skills into their own writing for a range of genres, audiences and purposes.

The **functional elements** of English reading and writing are embedded within this unit allowing candidates to demonstrate that they are competent readers and writers in their daily lives.

Reading texts will be drawn from a range of non-fiction genres. Some texts will be clearly functional in context (such as information leaflets) and others will be those which candidates can clearly expect to read in their daily lives including media sources (including texts with images, and/or other presentational

devices) and literary non-fiction (such as travelogues and biographies). In preparing for this unit, candidates should draw on a variety of text types and transfer their reading skills.

There will be two **writing tasks**, one shorter and one longer. The shorter task will ask candidates to write to inform, explain or describe; the longer task will require more developed and sustained ideas which argue or persuade. Candidates will be required to adapt their style to fit audience and purpose

Unit 1: Summary of assessment

This externally examined unit is common to GCSE English.

3b Unit 2: Speaking and Listening

Unit 2: Summary of what candidates have to do:

Candidates will be assessed on **three** speaking and listening tasks although they may well do more than one performance of each activity during the unit. They will be assessed on **one** activity in each of the following categories:

- Presenting
- Discussing and Listening
- Role playing.

In Speaking and Listening activities, candidates should:

- present and listen to information and ideas
- respond to the questions and views of others, adapting talk appropriately to context and audience
- make a range of effective contributions, using creative approaches to exploring questions, solving problems and developing ideas
- participate in a range of contexts, including real life uses of talk and audiences beyond the classroom.

3

Unit 2: Summary of assessment

This unit will be assessed by means of Controlled Assessment.

Task Setting (limited control)

AQA will provide guidance on the nature of tasks to be undertaken and you will then set tasks. The tasks should be contextualised to meet the needs of the candidates and enable a variety of approaches.

Some examples of possible tasks are listed below.

Within the **Presenting** strand typically candidates might:

- individually talk to the class about a topic of interest and then answer questions
- talk to the class about an argument/cause, etc as part of a paired presentation (which may include ICT support such as PowerPoint, visual media clips, etc) and then answer questions
- interview (or be interviewed by) an adult, perhaps focusing on an aspect of occupation, local current affairs, etc
- listen to a speech extract on television and re-present its main points and biases or listen to a school assembly and re-present its main points and explain its methods of presentation
- deliver a speech to a wider audience (such as school assembly, another teaching group) either as an individual or as part of a team.

Within the **Discussing and Listening** strand typically candidates might:

- in a pair work together to plan a presentation to the class
- in a group of three or four undertake a problem-solving exercise which is relevant to the local community such as congestion charging, public spending priorities, etc
- in a group of three or four discuss an issue of interpretation which arises from reading being undertaken elsewhere on the course
- in a group of three or four discuss the possible schedules for a television station from a range of given possibilities
- listen to a speech extract on television and discuss its main points and biases or listen to a school assembly and discuss its main points and its methods of presentation.

Within the **Role playing** strand typically candidates might:

- perform as a pair a media interview on a relevant issue, such as child welfare
- perform as a pair an interview between detective and suspect based upon a narrative from literature that has been studied elsewhere
- as an individual perform a 5-minute input for breakfast television called 'what the papers say today'

- perform an improvisation based on literary texts being studied
- in a group of three or four undertake a problem-solving exercise which is relevant to the local community such as congestion charging, public spending priorities and improvise a public debate on the topic.

Note here that within the role playing category, the performance of a written script, even if that script has been learned, is **not** allowed.

Task Taking (medium control)

Assessment can take place at any point during the course of study. Candidates will need to be informed that assessment is taking place, but clearly all members of a class will not be assessed at the same time.

Task Marking (medium control)

You must mark all Controlled Assessments using the criteria published on pages 34–35 of this specification.

The criteria descriptors are banded under three headings:

- Communicating and adapting language
- Interacting and responding
- Creating and sustaining roles.

These headings represent different skills that are part of Speaking and Listening, and how these skills can be assessed. It is important to stress that all these descriptors can be used in any single assessment – it is perfectly possible, for example, to identify aspects of creating a role, when the assessment is being submitted under the Presenting category.

Controlled Assessment will be moderated by AQA according to the procedures outlined in Section 7.

Unit 2: Your Controlled Assessment questions answered

How do I approach preparation and planning?

Having introduced relevant material and studied relevant speech genres:

- you should give candidates the relevant task(s)
- you may wish to provide stimulus materials for group discussions and role play or access to users of language beyond the classroom.
- you are advised to give the candidates chance to practise speaking or listening in similar contexts to that in which they will be assessed and to prepare ideas after you have given them the task(s).

How do I prepare candidates for this unit?

Speaking and Listening underpins much of the work done for this subject at GCSE. With 20% of the overall mark going to Speaking and Listening it is important that you prepare candidates for the Controlled Assessment task by teaching approaches to the chosen context/task and by considering various speech genres before giving the task to candidates. You should ensure that candidates are familiar with the assessment criteria for the Controlled Assessment tasks that make up Speaking and Listening.

Can I give candidates feedback?

You may give feedback to individual candidates during the planning phase.

How are candidates assessed?

Candidates must be assessed by a teacher either directly at the time of the response or by viewing an electronic visual recording of a candidate's response.

Can candidates use prompts?

Prompts or visual slides may be used in addition to any resources you provide. The Unit 2 record form allows teachers to record brief notes and details of activities undertaken.

Do you have Controlled Assessment Advisers?

Yes. Speaking and Listening Controlled Assessment Advisers will be available to give advice on all aspects of the Controlled Assessment. A rota of advisory visits will include advice on marking candidates' performance, task setting and record keeping.

3c Unit 3 Understanding spoken and written texts and writing creatively

There are three parts to this Unit:

- Part a: Understanding written texts (extended reading)
- Part b: Producing creative texts (creative writing)
- Part c: Spoken Language Study.

Unit 3 Part a – Understanding written texts (extended reading)

Unit 3 Part a: Summary of what candidates have to do

Candidates will submit **one** task.

Tasks will draw on candidates' study of **one** extended text from any genre, including non-fiction. An extended text may include a collection of poems, short stories or non-fiction. Candidates must make reference to the whole text. If using a collection of short texts, they must refer to more than one text, although comparison is not required. Candidates could also use any of the collections from the AQA Anthologies *Moon on the Tides* or *Sunlight on the*

Grass. Candidates can use *any* of the texts being studied for GCSE English Literature. For example, candidates studying GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature may study *Of Mice and Men* for the GCSE English Literature examination **and** may complete their GCSE English Language Controlled Assessment task on this text.

You may contextualise tasks by choosing texts that meet the needs of your candidates.

3

Unit 3 Part a: Summary of assessment

This part of Unit 3 will be assessed by means of Controlled Assessment.

Task Setting (high control)

Tasks will be set by AQA. Each year we will provide a bank of tasks under the topics covered in this unit:

- Themes and ideas
- Characterisation and voice.

Task Taking (high control)

Candidates must produce work totalling about 1200 words in a period of up to four hours.

Task Marking (medium control)

You must mark all Controlled Assessments using the criteria published on page 36 of this specification. Controlled Assessment will be moderated by AQA according to the procedures outlined in Section 7.



Unit 3 Part a: Your Controlled Assessment questions answered

How much time should I spend teaching this part of the unit?

As the Controlled Assessment is worth 15% of the overall mark, you are advised to spend 15% of the teaching time available to you on the text and topic you have chosen for this unit. You should prepare candidates for the Controlled Assessment task by teaching approaches to the chosen text and topic and by studying style models before giving the task to candidates.

You should also ensure that candidates are familiar with the assessment criteria for the Controlled Assessment task and are aware of the weighting given to each assessment objective.

Which Assessment Objectives will the tasks address?

The tasks will address all three bullet points of assessment objective AO3 except the requirement to collate, compare or cross-reference from different sources.

What approaches will the tasks offer?

The tasks will offer a variety of approaches. Tasks will consist of a single generic title that you can contextualise. There will always be a number of exemplar tasks showing how you can adapt the task to meet the needs of your students. You may, for example, make the title more specific or add bullet points.

Can the assessment be based on parts of texts?

Candidates' responses must be informed by knowledge of whole texts but the main focus of the assessment can be based on part of a text (eg a scene from a play, a chapter from a novel, a small number of poems or short story from a collection). Where candidates use a collection of short texts, there is **no** requirement to make comparisons.

Do candidates need to address social, cultural and historical context?

No. The reading assessment for GCSE English Language does **not** require candidates to address social, cultural and historical context.

Will exemplars be available?

Exemplar texts will be provided to indicate how candidates can approach the tasks.

Can candidates use texts during the controlled assessment?

Candidates must use clean, unannotated copies of texts during the assessment period.

Unit 3 Part b – Producing creative texts (creative writing)

Unit 3 Part b: Summary of what candidates have to do

Candidates will submit **two** pieces of writing prepared under controlled conditions chosen from two of the topics in this unit.

Unit 3 Part b: Summary of assessment

This part of Unit 3 will be assessed by means of Controlled Assessment:

Task Setting (high control)

Tasks will be set by AQA. Each year we will provide a bank of six tasks: two for each of the topics covered in this unit:

- Moving Images (writing for or about moving images)
- Commissions (responding to a given brief)
- Re-creations (taking a text and turning it into another).

Candidates will complete **two** of these tasks. Each task should be taken from a different topic.

Tasks will predominantly expect candidates to write in a variety of non-fiction genres. The tasks are designed to develop candidate skills in writing for particular audiences and purposes. Some tasks will encourage candidates to produce multi-modal texts in which they combine written language with audio/visual devices.

Task Taking (high control)

Preparation and Planning

You may choose to allow your candidates to do two tasks in the same period or to divide the total time available for this unit so your candidates do their two pieces at different stages of the course that are most appropriate.

Production

Candidates must produce **two** pieces of work totalling about 1200 words in a period of up to four hours.

The two pieces may be done in different time periods, for example at different times of the year, as long as the total time taken does not exceed four hours.

This word limit is for guidance only as it will vary with the nature of the task. The pieces do not have to be of equal length.

Task Marking (medium control)

You must mark all Controlled Assessments using the criteria published on pages 38–39 of this specification. You will mark each task out of 10 marks and give an overall mark out of 10 for accuracy. The marks will be added together to give a final mark out of 30. Controlled Assessment will be moderated by AQA according to the procedures outlined in Section 7.

3

Unit 3 Part b: Your Controlled Assessment questions answered

How much time should I spend teaching this part of the unit?

As the Controlled Assessment is worth 15% of the overall mark, you are advised to spend a total of 15% of the teaching time available to you on the topics you have chosen for this part of Unit 3. You should prepare candidates for the Controlled Assessment tasks by teaching approaches to the chosen topics and by studying style models before giving the tasks to candidates.

You should also ensure that candidates are familiar with the assessment criteria for the Controlled

Assessment task and are aware of the weighting given to each assessment objective.

Which Assessment Objectives will the tasks address?

The tasks will address all three bullet points of assessment objective AO4.

What approaches will the tasks offer?

The tasks will offer a variety of approaches. Tasks will consist of a single title and may have a number of bullet points which will help candidates to plan the structure of their writing.

Unit 3 Part c – Spoken Language Study

Unit 3 Part c: Summary of what candidates have to do

Candidates will submit **one** spoken language study, in a written response, prepared under controlled conditions and chosen from the topics in this unit. The focus of this unit is investigative.

In terms of **Subject Content**, within the broad category **Studying Language**, learners should

Understand how spoken (and written) language evolve in response to changes in society and technology, and how this process relates to identity and cultural diversity.

More specifically within the **Spoken Language Study** learners should

- *reflect critically on their own and others' uses of language in different contexts and how they adapt to different listeners and tasks, exploring these experiences in the contexts of wider language use and variation*
- *engage with real life uses of talk and audiences beyond the classroom and consider aspects of spoken language, eg how language changes over time, attitudes to standard and non-standard forms and regional variations.*

Tasks will be set on topics within this broad area.

Unit 3 Part c: Summary of assessment

This unit will be assessed by means of Controlled Assessment.

Task Setting (high control)

Tasks will be set by AQA. Candidates will complete **one** task. Each year we will provide a bank of six tasks; two tasks for each of the topics covered in this unit:

- Social attitudes to spoken language
- Spoken genres
- Multi-modal talk.

The tasks should be contextualised to meet the needs of the learners and enable a variety of approaches. Candidates should be encouraged to investigate topics that are of personal interest to them and collect their own data when possible.

Tasks will be based on the topics as follows:

Topic

Social attitudes to spoken language

This will provide candidates with an opportunity to think about the ways in which:

- certain types of speech are privileged in some societies, and others less so (for example, standard and non-standard varieties)
- identity is established and conformity resisted or influence shown

Spoken genres

- how attitudes vary over time and place.

This will allow candidates to study talk in various genres, including the media. They could, in particular, look at aspects of speech in different modes and different genres.

Multi-modal talk

This will allow candidates to study ways in which:

- new technologies blur traditional distinctions between speaking and writing, producing new hybrid genres which have aspects of both
- online identity is established and negotiated
- online talk is seen as potentially ambiguous.

Although there is clearly much theoretical work in this field, it must be stressed that this piece of work, consisting of only 10% of the total assessment for this specification, should be practically based and enjoyable: it should be driven by student enquiry, and reflect upon what the data might show rather than by extensive academic study. It will serve potentially as an introduction to further study of language.

Research

Although candidates should be encouraged to collect their own data, if this is not possible you may provide some raw data for them. The data that students have collected will both inform their thinking and then illustrate their Controlled Assessment response.

Typically such data might be in the form of a video and/or audio clip, a written transcript or a print-out of a messaging exchange. Suitable research material would include chat logs, television/radio programmes or extracts from academic sources on regional dialects, bilingualism, journalistic articles or comment about topical issues such as non-standard varieties of spoken language.

As candidates may undertake research under limited supervision, they are able to investigate language in use outside the classroom. Access to users of language beyond the classroom could be in the form of recorded interviews with relatives, for example. Any research of this type should be recorded on the Candidate Record Form.

Candidates may discuss topics or present findings as part of their preparation for this study. You may assess this for Unit 2, Speaking and Listening.

Task Taking (high control)

Candidates must produce **one** spoken language study as a written response.

The assessed piece will require data. The best data is likely to be in the form of speech transcripts (but without complex markings), questionnaire data, media recordings, etc but it may also be more anecdotal, especially where candidates are reflecting on aspects of language in use.

Final outcomes for candidates submitting written responses must be produced under formal supervision. Candidates may use research materials but these must not constitute a detailed writing frame or a draft response to the task. The final outcome should be written work totalling 800–1000 words in a period of two–three hours which may be divided to meet the timetabling requirements of the centre.

Research must be submitted with the final draft for assessment and moderation.

Task Marking (medium control)

You must mark all Controlled Assessments using the criteria published on page 40 of this specification and submit sufficient written evidence to justify marks awarded on the Candidate Record Form. Controlled Assessment will be moderated by AQA according to the procedures outlined in Section 7.

3

Unit 3 Part c: Your Controlled Assessment questions answered

How much time should I spend teaching this part of the unit?

As the controlled assessment is worth 10% of the overall mark, you are advised to spend 10% of the total teaching time available when teaching this part of Unit 3. You should prepare candidates for the Controlled Assessment task by teaching approaches to the investigation, the chosen topic and possibly by studying style models.

You should also ensure that candidates are familiar with the assessment criteria for the Controlled Assessment task and are aware of the weighting given to each assessment objective.

Which Assessment Objectives will the tasks address?

The tasks cover AO2: Explain variations in spoken language; evaluate their own and others' uses.

Can candidates have access to the Internet during the Controlled Assessment?

If candidates need to access the Internet to collect data from MSN or multi-modal clips this should be allowed. Provided the assessment is based on the candidate's own data, access to the Internet can be allowed.

Unit 3: Your Controlled Assessment questions answered

Task Setting

How often do tasks change?

Tasks will be replaced each year and the same tasks will be available for assessment in January and June.

When are tasks published?

Tasks for the following two years' assessment series will be made available to centres from 1st April. They will be published on e-AQA.

Task Taking: Preparation and Planning

How do I approach preparation and planning

Having taught the topic(s) and studied relevant style models you should give candidates the relevant task(s).

- if you wish, you may give candidates a choice of tasks on the topic(s) you have taught
- you are advised to give candidates the chance to practise writing in this form and to prepare ideas after you have given them the task(s)
- during this time candidates may make use of any further resources available in the school or college, including the Internet, to inform their preparation
- candidates must keep a record of all the primary and secondary sources (including websites) they use
- candidates must keep a record of any style models they use to assist you in authenticating work
- records should be kept in the form of a bibliography
- all this work should be completed under informal supervision.

Can I give candidates feedback?

Yes. You may give feedback to individual candidates during the planning phase. Where this goes beyond general advice, this should be recorded on the Candidate Record Form.

Can candidates work together?

Candidates may work with others during the planning phase. So, for example, they may discuss their ideas in small groups or share resources found on the Internet, but each candidate must produce an individual response to the task.

Task Taking: Production

Does the Controlled Assessment have to take place in one session?

No. The time allowed for the Controlled Assessment may be divided to meet the timetabling requirements of the centre.

Where there is more than one task, you may choose to allow your candidates to do the tasks in the same period or to divide the total time available for this unit so your candidates do their two pieces at different stages of the course that are most appropriate.

Can candidates take drafts or notes into the assessment?

Drafts may **not** be taken into the assessment. Brief notes made in the preparation stage may be taken into the assessment. These must be checked by the teacher to ensure that they are not plagiarised text and do not include a detailed planning grid or pre-prepared final draft. The notes should be submitted with the final piece for moderation.

Can candidates work together during the assessment?

No. While writing up their response, candidates must work independently and complete all work under formal supervision by a teacher or invigilator. You must record any feedback given to candidates during this phase on the Candidate Record Form.

What do we do if the assessment period is broken down into smaller sessions?

Where the total time is divided, the teacher or invigilator must collect all materials in at the end of each session and return them to candidates at the beginning of the next session. No feedback should be given on drafts prepared during the assessment period. Candidates may not bring any new materials into the room once this phase has started.

What is collected at the end of the assessment?

At the end of the Controlled Assessment, the teacher or invigilator must collect in all work, including the final piece of work for assessment and any drafts.

Can candidates use a dictionary or a thesaurus?

For parts a and b of Unit 3 candidates are **not** allowed access to a dictionary or thesaurus or to grammar and spell check programmes during the writing up of the Controlled Assessment.

For part c of Unit 3 candidates **may** have access to a dictionary and thesaurus and to grammar and spell check programmes during the writing up of the Controlled Assessment.

Can PCs be used?

The Controlled Assessment may be either handwritten or produced electronically.

Candidates using laptops/PCs to write their Controlled Assessment cannot have access to the Internet, e-mail, floppy disks or memory sticks as this could breach the controlled conditions. If the assessment period is divided into a number of shorter sessions, centres should ensure that work is saved securely to ensure that candidates cannot amend or add to the saved material between sessions.

Do you have Controlled Assessment Advisers?

Controlled Assessment Advisers will be available to give advice on all aspects of the Controlled Assessment including the marking.

4 Scheme of Assessment

4a Aims and learning outcomes

GCSE courses based on this specification should encourage candidates to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. They should prepare learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices, and to use language to participate effectively in society and employment.

GCSE courses based on specifications in English Language must enable learners to:

- demonstrate skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing necessary to communicate with others confidently, effectively, precisely and appropriately
- express themselves creatively and imaginatively
- become critical readers of a range of texts, including multi-modal texts
- use reading to develop their own skills as writers
- understand the patterns, structures and conventions of written and spoken English
- understand the impact of variations in spoken and written language and how they relate to identity and cultural diversity
- select and adapt speech and writing to different situations and audiences.

4b Assessment Objectives (AOs)

The assessment units will assess the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills set out in Section 3 (Subject Content).

All specifications in English Language must require candidates to demonstrate the following:

AO1 Speaking and Listening

- Speak to communicate clearly and purposefully; structure and sustain talk, adapting it to different situations and audiences; use standard English and a variety of techniques as appropriate.
- Listen and respond to speakers' ideas and perspectives, and how they construct and express meanings.
- Interact with others, shaping meanings through suggestions, comments and questions and drawing ideas together.
- Create and sustain different roles.

AO2 Study of spoken language

- Understand variations in spoken language, explaining why language changes in relation to contexts.
- Evaluate the impact of spoken language choices in their own and others' use.

AO3 Studying written language

- Read and understand texts, selecting material appropriate to purpose, collating from different sources and making comparisons and cross-references as appropriate.
- Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives.
- Explain and evaluate how writers use linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational features to achieve effects and engage and influence the reader.

AO4 Writing

- Write to communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, using and adapting forms and selecting vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose in ways that engage the reader.
- Organise information and ideas into structured and sequenced sentences, paragraphs and whole texts, using a variety of linguistic and structural features to support cohesion and overall coherence.
- Use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling.

At least one-third of the available credit should be allocated to this last part of AO4.

Weighting of Assessment Objectives for GCSE English Language

The table below shows the approximate weighting of each of the Assessment Objectives in the GCSE units.

Assessment Objectives	Unit weightings (%)			Overall weighting of AOs (%)
	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	
AO1		20		20
AO2			10	10
AO3	20		15	35
AO4	20		15	35
Overall weighting of units (%)	40	20	40	100

4c National criteria

Candidates can meet the statutory requirements in England and Wales fully through entering candidates for both GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature.

This specification complies with:

- the Subject Criteria for GCSE English Language including the rules for Controlled Assessment
- the Code of Practice
- the GCSE Qualification Criteria
- the Arrangements for the Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: Common Criteria
- the requirements for qualifications to provide access to Levels 1 and 2 of the National Qualification Framework.

4

4d Overlap between GCSE English and GCSE English Language

Entries are not allowed in the same series for both English and English Language.

4e Centres in Wales

In Wales, GCSE English is not approved pre-16. Centres can meet statutory requirements fully through entering candidates for both GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature. For a minority of

candidates entered only for GCSE English Language, centres should ensure their taught curriculum in English fulfils statutory requirements in Wales.

4f Previous learning requirements

There are no previous learning requirements. However, any requirements set for entry to a course based on this specification are at your centre's discretion.

4g Access to assessment: diversity and inclusion

GCSEs often need to assess a wide range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications designed to prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and further study.

The revised GCSE qualification and subject criteria were reviewed to see whether any of the skills or knowledge needed by the subject presented a possible difficulty to any candidates, whatever their ethnic background, religion, sex, age, disability or sexuality. If there were difficulties, the situation was reviewed again to make sure that such tests of

specific competences were only included if they were important to the subject. The findings were discussed with groups who represented the interests of a diverse range of candidates.

Arrangements are made for candidates with special needs to help them access the assessments as long as the competences being tested are not changed. Because of this, most candidates will be able to access any part of the assessment. More details are given in Section 5d.

5 Administration

5a Availability of assessment units and certification

Examinations and certification for this specification are available as follows.

	Availability of units			Availability of certification
	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	GCSE
January 2011	✓		✓	
June 2011	✓	✓	✓	
January 2012	✓	✓	✓	
June 2012 and after	✓	✓	✓	✓
January 2013 and after	✓	✓	✓	✓

5b Entries

Please check the current version of **Entry Procedures and Codes** for up-to-date entry procedures. You should use the following entry codes for the units and for certification.

Unit 1 – ENG1F; ENG1H

Unit 2 – ENG02

Unit 3 – ENL03

GCSE certification – 4707

The 40% terminal rule for GCSE means that 40% of the assessment must be taken in the examination series in which the qualification is awarded. Therefore, in this specification candidates must take the following units or combination of units in the series in which the qualification is awarded: Unit 1 or Unit 3.

The results from 40% terminal assessment must contribute to the candidates' final grade, even if a candidate has a better result from a previous series.

Please note that certification entries are not allowed in the same examination series for both English and English Language.

5c Private candidates

This specification is available to private candidates under certain conditions. Because of the Controlled Assessment, candidates must attend an AQA centre, which will supervise and mark the Controlled

Assessment. Private candidates should write to us for a copy of **Supplementary Guidance for Private Candidates** (for Controlled Assessment specification with practical activities).

5d Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration

We have taken note of the equality and discrimination legislation and the interests of minority groups in developing and administering this specification.

We follow the guidelines in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document: *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration: General and Vocational Qualifications*. This is published on the JCQ website www.jcq.org.uk or you can follow the link from our website www.aqa.org.uk

Access arrangements

We can arrange for candidates with special needs to access an assessment. These arrangements must be made **before** the examination. For example, we can produce a Braille paper for a candidate with sight problems.

Reasonable adjustments

An access arrangement which meets the needs of a particular disabled candidate would be a reasonable adjustment for that candidate. For example a Braille paper would be a reasonable adjustment for a Braille reader but not for a candidate who did not read Braille. The Disability Discrimination Act requires us to make reasonable adjustments to remove or lessen any disadvantage affecting a disabled candidate.

Special consideration

We can give special consideration to candidates who have had a temporary illness, injury or serious problem such as death of a relative, at the time of the examination. We can only do this **after** the examination.

The Examinations Officer at the centre should apply online for access arrangements and special consideration by following the e-AQA link from our website www.aqa.org.uk

5e Examination language

We will only provide units for this specification in English.

5f Qualification titles

The qualification based on this specification is:

- AQA GCSE in English Language.

5g Awarding grades and reporting results

The GCSE qualification will be graded on an eight-grade scale: A*, A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade G will be recorded as 'U' (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

We will publish the minimum raw mark for each grade, for each unit, when we issue candidates' results. We will report a candidate's unit results to centres in terms of uniform marks and qualification results in terms of uniform marks and grades.

For each unit the uniform mark corresponds to a grade as follows.

Unit 1 (maximum uniform mark = 120)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	108–120
A	96–107
B	84–95
C	72–83
D	60–71
E	48–59
F	36–47
G	24–35
U	0–23

Unit 2 (maximum uniform mark = 60)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	54–60
A	48–53
B	42–47
C	36–41
D	30–35
E	24–29
F	18–23
G	12–17
U	0–11

Unit 3 (maximum uniform mark = 120)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	108–120
A	96–107
B	84–95
C	72–83
D	60–71
E	48–59
F	36–47
G	24–35
U	0–23

We calculate a candidate's total uniform mark by adding together the uniform marks for the units. We convert this total uniform mark to a grade as follows.

GCSE English Language

(maximum uniform mark = 300)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	270–300
A	240–269
B	210–239
C	180–209
D	150–179
E	120–149
F	90–119
G	60–89
U	0–59

5h Re-sits and how long unit results remain available to count towards certification

Unit results remain available to count towards certification within the shelf life of the specification, whether or not they have already been used.

Candidates may re-sit a unit once only.

The better result for each unit will count towards the final qualification **provided that the 40% rule is satisfied**.

Candidates may re-sit the qualification an unlimited number of times.

Candidates will be graded on the basis of the work submitted for assessment.

Candidates must take units comprising at least 40% of the total assessment in the series in which they enter for certification.

6

Controlled Assessment administration

The Head of Centre is responsible for making sure that Controlled Assessment work is conducted in line with our instructions and JCQ instructions.

6a Authenticating that Controlled Assessment work is genuine

To meet the requirements of Code of Practice, we need the following:

- **Candidates** must sign the Candidate Record Form to confirm that the work they have handed in is their own.
- **Teachers and assessors** must confirm on the Candidate Record Form that the work marked is only that done by that candidate and was conducted in line with the conditions in the specification document (authentication declaration).
- **Centres** must give a mark of zero if candidates cannot confirm the work handed in for assessment is their own.

You should attach the completed Candidate Record Form for each candidate to his or her work. All teachers who have marked the work of any candidate entered for each component must sign the declaration that the work is genuine.

If you have doubts about signing the authentication declaration, you should follow these guidance points.

- If you believe that a candidate had additional assistance and this is acceptable within the guidelines for the relevant specification, you should award a mark which covers only the candidate's achievement without any help. (You should sign the authentication declaration and give information on the relevant form).
- If you cannot sign the authentication declaration, the candidate's work cannot be accepted for assessment.

If, during the external moderation process, there is no evidence that the work has been authenticated, we will award a mark of zero.

6b Malpractice

You should let candidates know about our malpractice regulations.

Candidates must **not**:

- submit work that is not their own
- lend work to other candidates
- give other candidates access to, or the use of, their own independently-sourced research material (this does not mean that candidates cannot lend their books to another candidate, but that candidates should be stopped from copying other candidates' research)
- include work copied directly from books, the Internet or other sources without acknowledgement of the source.
- hand in work typed or word processed by someone else without acknowledgement.

These actions are considered malpractice, for which a penalty (for example being disqualified from the exam) will be applied.

If malpractice is suspected, the Examinations Officer should be consulted about the procedure to be followed.

Where you suspect malpractice in Controlled Assessments after the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, your Head of Centre must submit full details of the case to us at the earliest opportunity. The form JCQ/M1 should be used. Copies of the form can be found on the JCQ website www.jcq.org.uk

Malpractice in Controlled Assessments discovered prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication need not be reported to us, but should be dealt with in accordance with the centre's internal procedures. We would expect centres to treat such cases very seriously. Details of any work which is not the candidate's own must be recorded on the Candidate Record Form or other appropriate place.

6c Teacher standardisation

We will hold standardising meetings for teachers each year, usually in the autumn term, for Controlled Assessment. At these meetings we will provide support in explaining tasks in context and using the marking criteria. The standardising materials used at the meetings will also be available online.

All centres must send a representative to one of the meetings each year. If you have told us you are a new centre, either by signing up to teach AQA, by sending us an intention to enter or an estimate of entry, or by contacting the subject team, we will contact you to invite you to a meeting. It is likely that during the lifetime of this specification online teacher standardising meetings will be made available as an alternative to face-to-face meetings.

6d Internal standardisation of marking

Centres must have consistent marking standards for all candidates. One person must be responsible for ensuring that work has been marked to the same standard, and they need to sign the Centre Declaration Sheet to confirm that internal standardisation has taken place.

Internal standardisation may involve:

- all teachers marking some sample pieces of work and identify differences in marking standards

- discussing any differences in marking at a training meeting for all teachers involved in the assessment
- referring to reference and archive material, such as previous work or examples from our teacher standardising meetings.

6e Annotation of Controlled Assessment work

The Code of Practice states that the awarding body must make sure that teachers marking Controlled Assessments clearly show how the marks have been awarded in line with the marking criteria shown in the specification. The awarding body must provide guidance on how this is to be done.

Annotation helps our moderators to see as precisely as possible where the teacher has identified that candidates have met the criteria in the specification.

Annotation could be used in either of the following ways:

- important pieces of evidence commented on in either the margin or in the text
- comments on the work that refer to the assessment criteria.

When assessing oral responses, summative comments must be provided on the Candidate Record Form.

6f Submitting marks and sample work for moderation

The total mark for each candidate must be sent to us and the moderator on the mark forms provided, by Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) or electronically by the date given (see www.aqa.org.uk/deadlines/coursework_deadlines.php).

Our moderator will contact you to let you know which pieces of work must be sent to them as part of the sample (please see to Section 7a for more guidance on sending in samples).

6g Factors affecting individual candidates

You should be able to accept the occasional absence of candidates by making sure they have the chance to make up missed Controlled Assessments. You may organise an alternative supervised time session for candidates who are absent at the time the centre originally arranged.

If work is lost, you must tell us immediately the date it was lost, how it was lost, and who was responsible. Inform our Centre and Candidate Support Services using the JCQ form *Notification of Lost Coursework JCQ/LCW form 15*.

Where special help which goes beyond normal learning support is given, use the Candidate Record Form to inform us so that this help can be taken into account during moderation.

Candidates who move from one centre to another during the course sometimes need additional help to meet the requirements of a scheme of Controlled Assessment work. How this can be dealt with depends when the move takes place. If it happens early in the course the new centre should be responsible for Controlled Assessment work. If it happens late in the course it may be possible to arrange for the moderator to assess the work as a candidate who was 'Educated Elsewhere'. Centres should contact us as early as possible for advice about appropriate arrangements in individual cases at **english-gcse@aqg.org.uk**

6h Keeping candidates' work

From the time the work is marked, centres must keep the work of all candidates, with Candidate Record Forms attached, under secure conditions, to allow the work to be available during the moderation period

or should there be an Enquiry about Results. You may return the work to candidates after the deadline for Enquiries about Results, or once any enquiry is resolved.

7 Moderation

7a Moderation procedures

Written Controlled Assessment

Controlled Assessment work is moderated by inspecting a sample of candidates' work sent (by post or electronically) from the centre to a moderator appointed by us. The centre marks must be sent to us and the moderator by the deadline given (see www.aqa.org.uk/deadlines/coursework_deadlines.php). Centres entering fewer candidates than the minimum sample size (and centres submitting work electronically) should send the work of all of their candidates. Centres entering larger numbers of candidates will be told which candidates' work must be sent as part of the sample sent in for moderation.

Following the re-marking of the sample work, the moderator's marks are compared with the centre marks to check whether any changes are needed to bring the centre's assessments in line with our agreed standards. In some cases the moderator may need to ask for the work of other candidates in the centre. To meet this request, centres must keep the Controlled Assessment work and Candidate Record Forms of every candidate entered for the examination under secure conditions, and they must be prepared to send it to us or the moderator when it is requested.

Any changes to marks will normally keep the centre's rank order, but where major differences are found, we reserve the right to change the rank order.

Moderation will take place in **January** and **June**.

Spoken Controlled Assessment

Centres will normally receive routine advisory visits from a moderator on a rolling programme. The moderator will advise on Speaking and Listening. The moderator will ask to see a range of candidate performances. Centres must keep the Candidate Record Forms of every candidate entered for the examination under secure conditions and be prepared to show this to the visiting moderator if required.

Additional visits may be triggered if there is any doubt about a centre's accuracy in oral assessment. Where there is evidence that the centre's mark differs significantly from the AQA standard, taking other evidence into account where applicable (eg pattern of marks, centre history, reports on previous visits), an adjustment will be applied to the centre to bring its marking into line with the AQA standard.

7b Consortium arrangements

If you are a consortium of centres with joint teaching arrangements (where candidates from different centres have been taught together but where they are entered through the centre at which they are on roll), you must tell us by filling in the JCQ/CCA form *Application for Centre Consortium Arrangements for centre-assessed work*.

You must choose a consortium coordinator who can speak to us on behalf of all centres in the consortium.

If there are different coordinators for different specifications, a copy of the JCQ/CCA form must be sent in for each specification.

We will allocate the same moderator to each centre in the consortium and the candidates will be treated as a single group for moderation.

7c Procedures after moderation

When the results are published, we will give centres details of the final marks for the Controlled Assessment work.

We will return candidates' work to you after the exam. You will receive a report, at the time results are

issued, giving feedback on any adjustments that were made to your marks.

We may keep some candidates' work for awarding, archive or standardising purposes and will inform you if this is the case.

Appendices

A Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates who were awarded particular grades. The descriptions should be considered in relation to the content outlined in the specification – they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend on how well the candidate has met the assessment objectives (see Section 4). If a candidate has performed less well in some areas this may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade	Description
A	Candidates select suitable styles and registers of spoken English for a range of situations and contexts, showing assured use of standard English where appropriate. They confidently vary sentence structures and choose from a broad repertoire of vocabulary to express information, ideas and feelings in an engaging manner. They explain expertly, and evaluate persuasively, how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. They initiate conversations and demonstrate sensitive listening through contributions that sustain and develop discussion. They recognise and fulfil the demands of different roles, whether in formal settings or creative activities. Candidates respond personally and persuasively to a variety of texts, developing interpretations and evaluating how details of language, grammar, structure and presentation engage and affect the reader. They identify and discuss writers' perspectives in narrative, argument, explanation or analysis. They choose apt quotations and make telling comparisons and cross-references that illuminate the purpose and meanings of texts. Candidates' writing shows confident, assured control of a range of forms and styles appropriate to task and purpose. Texts engage and hold the reader's interest through logical argument, persuasive force or creative delight. Linguistic and structural features are used skilfully to sequence texts and achieve coherence. A wide range of accurate sentence structures ensures clarity; choices of vocabulary, punctuation and spelling are ambitious, imaginative and correct.
C	Candidates adapt their talk to the demands of different situations and contexts. They recognise when standard English is required and use it confidently. They use different sentence structures and select vocabulary so that information, ideas and feelings are communicated clearly and the listener's interest is engaged. They explain and evaluate how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. Through careful listening and by developing their own and others' ideas, they make significant contributions to discussion and participate effectively in creative activities. Candidates understand and demonstrate how meaning and information are conveyed in a range of texts. They make personal and critical responses, referring to specific aspects of language, grammar, structure and presentational devices to justify their views. They successfully compare and cross-reference aspects of texts and explain convincingly how they may vary in purpose and how they achieve different effects. Candidates' writing shows successful adaptation of form and style to different tasks and for various purposes. They use a range of sentence structures and varied vocabulary to create different effects and engage the reader's interest. Paragraphing is used effectively to make the sequence of events or development of ideas coherent and clear to the reader. Sentence structures are varied and sometimes bold; punctuation and spelling are accurate.

Grade**Description****F**

Candidates talk confidently in familiar situations, showing some awareness of purpose and of listeners' needs. They convey information, develop ideas and describe feelings clearly, using the main features of standard English as appropriate. They listen with concentration and make relevant responses to others' ideas and opinions. They show some awareness of how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. In formal and creative activities, they attempt to meet the demands of different roles.

Candidates describe the main ideas, themes or argument in a range of texts and refer to specific aspects or details when justifying their views. They make simple comparisons and cross-references that show some awareness of how texts achieve their effects through writers' use of linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational devices.

Candidates' writing shows some adaptation of form and style for different tasks and purposes. It communicates simply and clearly with the reader. Sentences sequence events or ideas logically; vocabulary is sometimes chosen for variety and interest. Paragraphing is straightforward but effective; the structure of sentences, including some that are complex, is usually correct. Spelling and basic punctuation are mostly accurate.



B Spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legislative, sustainable development, economic and cultural issues, and health and safety considerations

We have taken great care to make sure that any wider issues (for example, spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legal, sustainable development, economic and cultural issues), including those relevant to the education of students at Key Stage 4, have been taken into account when preparing this specification. They will only form part of the assessment requirements where they are relevant to the specific content of the specification and have been identified in Section 3: Subject Content.

European Dimension

We have taken the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community into account when preparing this specification and associated specimen units.

Environmental Education

We have taken the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report 'Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education' 1993 into account when preparing this specification and associated specimen units.

Avoiding bias

We have taken great care to avoid bias of any kind when preparing this specification and specimen units.

C Overlaps with other qualifications

Functional English

This specification embeds the level 2 functional skills standards. In addition, the specification covers the key processes and range and content sections of the KS4 English programme of study which also reflect the functional English standards at level 2 and build on the embedding of the level 1 standards in the key stage 3 programme of study. The specification also reflects the curriculum opportunities section of the KS4 English programme of study which requires that pupils speak, listen and write for contexts beyond the classroom.

The term ‘functional’ should be considered in the broad sense of providing learners with the skills and abilities they need to take an active and responsible role in their communities, in their everyday lives, workplaces and educational settings.

53.33% of this specification is Functional. In preparing schemes of work and delivery, the Functional Skills Standards will be covered in the following GCSE units:

Functional Skills English	GCSE English
Speaking and Listening	Unit 2 13.33%
Reading	Unit 1 20%
Writing	Unit 1 20%

Candidates preparing for this specification will cover the Functional Skills Standards but will not be awarded a qualification for Functional English.

Functional English is available for assessment and certification in the stand-alone qualification Functional English.

Note that centres entering candidates for both Functional Skills English and GCSE English or GCSE English Language can use the same assessment opportunity to assess Speaking and Listening. Centres must assess the activities against both sets of relevant criteria.

D Wider Key Skills – Teaching, developing and providing opportunities for generating evidence

Introduction

The Key Skills Qualification requires candidates to demonstrate levels of achievement in the Key Skills of Communication, Application of Number and Information and Communication Technology. The Wider Key Skills of Improving own Learning and Performance, Working with Others and Problem Solving are also available. The acquisition and demonstration of ability in these 'wider' Key Skills is deemed highly desirable for all candidates.

The units for each key skill comprise three sections:

- What you need to know
- What you must do
- Guidance.

Candidates following a course of study based on this specification for English Language can be offered opportunities to develop and generate evidence of attainment in aspects of the Key Skills of:

- Communication
- Application of Number
- Information and Communication Technology
- Working with Others
- Improving own Learning and Performance
- Problem Solving.

Areas of study and learning that can be used to encourage the acquisition and use of Key Skills, and to provide opportunities to generate evidence for Part B of units, are provided in the Teachers' Resource Bank for this specification.

The above information is given in the context of the knowledge that Key Skills at levels 1 and 2 will be available until 2010 with last certification in 2012.

Key Skills Qualifications of Communication, Application of Number and Information and Communication Technology will be phased out and replaced by Functional Skills qualifications in English, Mathematics and ICT from September 2010 onwards. For further information see the AQA website:

<http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/keyskills/com04.php>



F Assessment Criteria for Controlled Assessment

GCSE English Language Unit 2 Speaking and Listening Controlled Assessment Criteria

AO1

- **Speak to communicate clearly and purposefully; structure and sustain talk, adapting it to different situations and audiences; use standard English and a variety of techniques as appropriate.**
- **Listen and respond to speakers' ideas, perspectives and how they construct and express their meanings.**
- **Interact with others, shaping meanings through suggestions, comments and questions and drawing ideas together.**
- **Create and sustain different roles.**

	Communicating and adapting language	Interacting and responding	Creating and sustaining roles
Band 5 'Sophisticated Impressive' 13–15	Candidates ■ highlight priorities and essential detail when communicating complex and demanding subject-matter ■ use a sophisticated repertoire of strategies to meet challenging contexts and purposes ■ show an assured choice and flexible use of standard English vocabulary and grammar in appropriate situations.	Candidates ■ sustain concentrated listening, showing understanding of complex ideas through interrogating what is said ■ shape direction and content of talk, responding with flexibility to develop ideas and challenge assumptions ■ initiate, develop and sustain discussion through encouraging participation and interaction, resolving differences and achieving positive outcomes.	Candidates ■ create complex characters and fulfil the demands of challenging roles through insightful choice of dramatic approaches ■ explore and respond to complex ideas, issues and relationships in varied formal and informal scenarios.
Band 4 'Confident, Assured' 10–12	Candidates ■ confidently convey and interpret information, ideas and feelings, emphasising significant points and issues ■ adapt and shape talk and non-verbal features to meet the demands of different situations, contexts and purposes ■ make appropriate, controlled, effective use of standard English vocabulary and grammar.	Candidates ■ challenge, develop and respond to what they hear in thoughtful and considerate ways, seeking clarification through apt questions ■ analyse and reflect on others' ideas to clarify issues and assumptions and develop the discussion ■ identify useful outcomes and help structure discussion through purposeful contributions.	Candidates ■ create convincing characters and roles using a range of carefully selected verbal and non-verbal techniques ■ respond skilfully and sensitively in different situations and scenarios, to explore ideas and issues and relationships.

	Communicating and adapting language	Interacting and responding	Creating and sustaining roles
Band 3 'Clear, Consistent' 7– 9	Candidates - effectively communicate information, ideas and feelings, promote issues and points of view - adapt talk to a variety of situations and audiences, using non-verbal features to add to impact - use a range of well-judged vocabulary and sentence structures to achieve different purposes, including competent and appropriate use of standard English.	Candidates - listen closely and attentively, engaging with what is heard through perceptive responses - make significant contributions that move discussions forward - engage with others' ideas and feelings, recognising obvious bias or prejudice and referring to precise detail.	Candidates - develop and sustain roles and characters through appropriate language and effective gesture and movement - make contributions to the development of situations and ideas, showing understanding and insight into relationships and significant issues.
Band 2 'Some' 4– 6	Candidates - convey straightforward information and ideas, coherent accounts and narratives in extended turns - begin to adapt talk and non-verbal features to meet the needs of different audiences - use a variety of vocabulary and structures for different purposes, including appropriate features of standard English with reasonable accuracy.	Candidates - respond positively to what they hear, including helpful requests for explanation and further detail - make specific, relevant contributions to discussion - allow others to express ideas or points of view that may differ from their own and respond appropriately.	Candidates - show understanding of characters by creating straightforward roles using speech, gesture and movement - engage with situations and ideas, showing understanding of issues and relationships.
Band 1 'Limited' 1–3	Candidates - briefly express points of view, ideas and feelings - sometimes develop detail to add interest to accounts, narratives and information, supported by appropriate non-verbal features - use straightforward vocabulary and grammar, showing awareness of some main features of standard English.	Candidates - respond what they hear, showing some interest including non-verbal reactions - make brief, occasional contributions and general statements in discussion - follow central ideas and possibilities in what they hear and raise straightforward questions.	Candidates - draw on obvious and sometimes stereotypical ideas to create simple characters - react to situations in predictable but appropriate ways, demonstrating some understanding of relationships and familiar ideas.
0 marks	Nothing worthy of credit		

GCSE English Language Unit 3 Part a Understanding written texts (extended reading)

Controlled Assessment Criteria

AO3

- **Read and understand texts, selecting material appropriate to purpose.**
- **Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives.**
- **Explain and evaluate how writers use linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational features to achieve effects and engage and influence the reader.**

Band 5 'Sophisticated, Impressive' 25–30	Candidates demonstrate ■ sophisticated interpretation of texts ■ sophisticated engagement with writers' ideas and attitudes; sophisticated interpretations using imaginatively selected supporting textual detail ■ sophisticated analysis of aspects of language and structure.
Band 4 'Confident, Assured' 19–24	Candidates demonstrate ■ confident and developed interpretations of texts ■ engagement with writers' ideas and attitudes and provide perceptive interpretations using precisely selected supporting textual detail ■ analysis of aspects of language and structure in convincing detail.
Band 3 'Clear, Consistent' 13–18	Candidates demonstrate ■ clear evidence of understanding significant meanings of the text ■ ability to explain writers' ideas clearly offering relevant and appropriate supporting textual detail ■ ability to display understanding of features of language and structure supported by relevant and appropriate quotation.
Band 2 'Some' 7–12	Candidates demonstrate ■ some awareness of more obvious meanings in the text ■ some awareness of writers' ideas supported by relevant textual detail ■ some awareness of obvious features of language and structure supported by some relevant textual detail.
Band 1 'Limited' 1–6	Candidates demonstrate ■ limited understanding of the texts ■ limited engagement with the writers' ideas ■ reference to a limited range of textual detail.
0 marks	■ Nothing worthy of credit

GCSE English Language Unit 3 Part b Producing creative texts (creative writing) Controlled Assessment Criteria

See table overleaf.

GCSE English Language Unit 3 Part b Producing creative texts (creative writing)

Controlled Assessment Criteria

AO4

- Communicate clearly and imaginatively, using and adapting forms and selecting vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose in ways that engage the reader.
- Organise information and ideas into structured and sequenced sentences, paragraphs and whole texts, using a variety of linguistic and structural features to support cohesion and overall coherence.
- Use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling.

AO4 i and ii Mark/Band	Communicating clearly/ using forms	Organising information and ideas	AO4 iii Mark/Band	Using sentence structures/ writing accurately
Band 5 'Sophisticated, Impressive' 9–10	■ sophistication and subtlety prevail; distinct reasons for readers <i>wanting</i> to read this: 'delightful', 'flair'; 'originality' ■ subject matter/ideas presented in completely measured and effectively judged depth/detail ■ artful and self-conscious use of language, with consistent crafting for impact ■ impressive exploitation of form for purpose and audience, with impressive sense of immersion in the chosen genre.	■ high levels of whole text coherence; a strong sense of the text's wholeness ■ paragraphs/other structural and organisational devices complement and fully support the purpose and thrust of the piece ■ cohesive features embedded throughout; sophisticated and impressively used.	Band 5 'Sophisticated, Impressive' 9–10	■ varied and sophisticated sentence structures used to impressive effect ■ uses a range of punctuation highly purposefully and effectively; punctuation is another means to heighten impact of writing ■ spelling is almost always accurate; accurate spelling of specialist or less commonplace vocabulary; impressive control over even highly irregular spellings.
Band 4 'Confident, Assured' 7–8	■ writing is shaped by an assured awareness of purpose and audience throughout ■ subject matter/ideas presented in appropriately sustained way; assured judgements made about the impact of depth/detail on readers' engagement ■ assured and confident control and crafting of language, with words' effects deliberately worked for ■ confident and skilful use of form, with assured absorption of generic elements.	■ well-constructed and assured whole text shaping ■ uses structural/organisational devices to clarify and support purpose, and to navigate readers through the writing ■ wider range of discourse markers and cohesive ties to heighten fluency.	Band 4 'Confident, Assured' 7–8	■ phrase and sentence constructions self-consciously crafted for effect ■ full range of punctuation marks used assuredly and accurately ■ few spelling lapses; near misses with some unfamiliar words, but only very occasionally.

AO4 i and ii Mark/Band	Communicating clearly/ using forms	Organising information and ideas	AO4 iii Mark/Band	Using sentence structures/ writing accurately
Band 3 'Clear, consistent' 5–6	- clearly matches style and form to purpose and audience - subject matter/ideas presented in a more sustained way; clear sense of depth and detail - consistently uses vocabulary and stylistic devices to achieve effects - clear evidence of a form being knowingly used throughout; conventions of genre consistently evident.	- clear sense of whole text coherence - uses clear and distinctive organisational devices; paragraphs/ other organisational devices consistently deployed - clear links between sentences; some discourse markers and referencing to create fluency.	Band 3 'Clear, consistent' 5–6	- clear variety and range of sentence structures: simple, compound and complex - consistent accuracy with greater range of punctuation - commonly used words are consistently spelt correctly; more complex vocabulary is generally accurately spelt.
Band 2 'Some' 3–4	- increasing sense of clarity and intent in the writing - subject matter/ideas presented in some depth; some detail to better engage readers - some attempts to match style and form to purpose and audience - form and genre used more intentionally and knowingly.	- some sense of whole text structure and organisation - shows some grasp of organising sentences into paragraphs/other organisational and structural devices used for effect - some attempts to create sentence cohesion.	Band 2 'Some' 3–4	- uses greater range of sentence structures – simple and compound sentences; some complex sentences - punctuation is generally accurate, with secure use of commas, question marks, etc - increased accuracy when spelling less familiar words.
Band 1 'Limited' 1–2	- communicates ideas with limited clarity - subject matter/ideas skimpily presented limited depth or detail - occasional instances of language choices moving away from the most basic - some rudimentary features of form and genre used appropriately.	- limited whole text structure - some organisational and structural devices used; paragraphed, albeit randomly/possible use of headings and sections - limited sentence cohesion; time-focused discourse markers may be used; eg 'and then', 'then'.	Band 1 'Limited' 1–2	- limited syntactical variety – simple and compound sentences with a limited range of connectives - sentences used, even though not all are properly demarcated - simple words spelt correctly; valid - approximations when spelling more complex words.
0 marks	Nothing worthy of credit			

GCSE English Language Unit 3 Part c Spoken Language Study

Controlled Assessment Criteria

A02

- Understand variations in spoken language, explaining why language changes in relation to contexts.
- Evaluate the impact of spoken language choices in their own and others' use.

Band 5 'Sophisticated, Impressive' 17–20 marks	Candidates demonstrate ■ perceptive analysis and evaluation of aspects of how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes ■ sustained and sophisticated interpretations of key features found in spoken language data ■ sophisticated analysis and evaluation of key issues arising from public attitudes to spoken language varieties.
Band 4 'Confident, Assured' 13–16 marks	Candidates demonstrate ■ confident explanation and analysis of how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes ■ confident analysis and reflection on features found in some spoken language data ■ confident analysis of some issues arising from public attitudes to spoken language varieties.
Band 3 'Clear, Consistent' 9–12 marks	Candidates demonstrate ■ explanation of how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes ■ exploration of features found in some spoken language data ■ exploration of some issues arising from public attitudes to spoken language varieties.
Band 2 'Some' 5–8 marks	Candidates demonstrate ■ some awareness of how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes ■ some understanding of significant features found in some spoken language data ■ some awareness of public attitudes to spoken language varieties.
Band 1 'Limited' 1–4 marks	Candidates demonstrate ■ limited awareness of how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes ■ description of a limited range of features to be found in some spoken language data ■ limited awareness of public attitudes to spoken language varieties.
0 marks	■ Nothing worthy of credit

Notes:

1. The phrase 'spoken language' here refers to the range of texts which are possible in each of the three categories.
2. Data here can take different forms, such as transcripts, recordings, journalism etc.



GCSE English Language from 2010 onwards

Qualification Accreditation Number: 500/7918/9

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