

# **GCE Subject Level Guidance for English Language and Literature**

May 2014

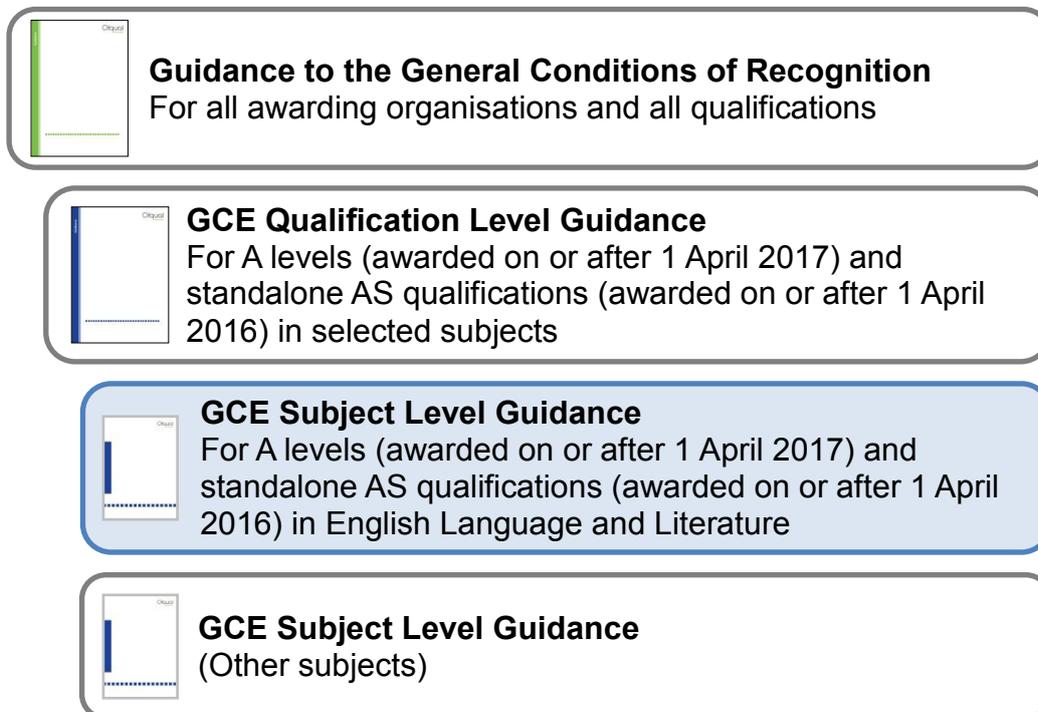
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## Introduction

### About this document

This document (highlighted in the figure below) is part of a suite of documents which outlines our guidance for awarding organisations offering GCE Qualifications.



This document sets out guidance which applies to the following qualifications:

- all GCE A levels in English Language and Literature awarded on or after 1 April 2017; and
- all standalone GCE AS qualifications in English Language and Literature awarded on or after 1 April 2016.

This guidance supports the GCE Subject Level Conditions and associated requirements for English Language and Literature.<sup>1</sup>

This document constitutes guidance for the purposes of section 153 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (the '2009 Act') and Conditions GCE(English Language and Literature)1.2 and GCE(English Language and Literature)2.3.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.ofqual.gov.uk/documents/gce-subject-level-conditions-english-language-literature/](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/documents/gce-subject-level-conditions-english-language-literature/)

An awarding organisation has a legal obligation under the 2009 Act to have regard to this guidance in relation to each GCE Qualification in English Language and Literature that it makes available or proposes to make available. Conditions GCE(English Language and Literature)1.2 and GCE(English Language and Literature)2.3 impose the same obligation in respect of the guidance below which is issued under those Conditions.

An awarding organisation should use the guidance to help it understand how to comply with the GCE Subject Level Conditions and associated requirements for English Language and Literature.

## **Guidance set out in this document**

<p>This document provides guidance in relation to non-examination assessment for GCE A level qualifications in English Language and Literature, and on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in English Language and Literature</p>
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## **Guidance in relation to non-examination assessment for GCE A levels in English Language and Literature**

Under Condition GCE(English Language and Literature)2.2(b) an awarding organisation must ensure that 20% of the total marks available for a GCE A level in English Language and Literature are made available through non-examination assessments.

In order to promote consistency and comparability between such non-examination assessments, as designed and set by different awarding organisations, we suggest that these assessments should take the form of one or more extended responses, within the meaning of Condition GCE5.4, independently produced by a Learner. We would expect the total length of such an extended response, or extended responses, to be between 2,500 and 3,500 words.

Although we will expect an awarding organisation to set an indicative word limit within these parameters, we would not expect a Learner to be specifically penalised on the basis that the length of his or her extended response(s) differed from that indicative word limit.

## Guidance on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in English Language and Literature

Condition GCE(English Language and Literature)1.2 allows us to specify requirements and guidance relating to assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in English Language and Literature.

We published our requirements in relation to assessment objectives in *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for English Language and Literature*, and reproduce them in the table below.

		<i>A level</i>	<i>AS</i>
<b>AO1</b>	Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression	<i>Each of AO1, AO2 and AO3 can be targeted in the range 20-30%</i>	<i>Each of AO1, AO2 and AO3 can be targeted in the range 20-30%</i>
<b>AO2</b>	Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts		
<b>AO3</b>	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which texts are produced and received		
<b>AO4</b>	Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic and literary concepts and methods	<i>Each of AO4 and AO5 can be targeted in the range 10-15%</i>	<i>Each of AO4 and AO5 can be targeted in the range 10-15%</i>
<b>AO5</b>	Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways <i>Note: This assessment objective must be targeted with at least one of AO2, AO3 or AO4, either in the same task or in two or more linked tasks</i>		

We set out below our guidance for the purposes of Condition GCE(English Language and Literature)1.2. This guidance explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret these assessment objectives in terms of:

- the discrete 'elements' within each assessment objective which questions and tasks could target and/or seek to credit – our expectation is that each and every question/task should target or seek to credit at least one of these elements, and may target or seek to credit multiple elements across one or more assessment objectives;

- the coverage expectations, such as in relation to the different elements within each assessment objective and how those elements should be sampled over time; and
- the key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective and the particular meaning for the subject of any key terms and phrases used; defined terms are shown in bold text, followed by their definitions.

In line with the obligations set out in Condition GCE(English Language and Literature)1.2, we expect awarding organisations to be able to demonstrate how they have had regard to this guidance. For example, an awarding organisation could map how it has regard to the guidance as it:

- develops its sample assessment materials;
- delivers the qualification;
- develops and applies its approach to sampling the elements into which the assessment objectives are divided; and
- monitors the qualification to make sure it addresses all elements appropriately.

AO1: Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression		20-30% (A level) 20-30% (AS)	
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Agreements and definitions
n/a	<p>1a – Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate</p> <p>1b – Use associated terminology</p> <p>1c – Use coherent written expression</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasonable coverage of each element in each set of assessments (but not every assessment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>concepts</b> and <b>methods</b> here are inter-connected so should not be targeted and credited discretely.</li> <li><b>Coherent</b> means the ability to engage in clear and effective academic discourse, which is well organised and adopts an academic style and register.</li> <li>The emphasis should be on Learners being able to deploy the concepts and methods in an appropriate way rather than the appropriateness of the concepts and methods themselves; the skill of selection is not targeted directly; it is not necessary to target accuracy here as ‘expertise...in the use of English’ is targeted by AO5.</li> </ul>

AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts			20-30% (A level) 20-30% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Agreements and definitions
n/a	<i>The AO is a single element</i>	Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not every assessment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The emphasis here should be on the ability to analyse.</li> <li>■ The <b>ways</b> here are multifarious: they cover an extremely broad range of areas – all of those that affect how texts ‘work’; there is not an accepted set of them – they are manifested differently for different types of text, as well as being heavily dependent on each individual text; different responses, even to the same text, may focus on them to differing degrees as this will depend on the approach that is adopted.</li> <li>■ The phrase <b>meanings are shaped</b> acknowledges that authorial intentions in this regard can never be definitively known.</li> <li>■ Each awarding organisation should take particular care to explain its approach to this assessment objective in its assessment strategy for this subject.</li> </ul>

AO3: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which texts are produced and received			20-30% (A level) 20-30% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Agreements and definitions
n/a	1a – Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which texts are produced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reasonable coverage of each element in each set of assessments (but not every assessment)</li> <li>■ The degree to which each element is covered overall will depend on the approach to the subject taken in the specification, as well as the nature of the specific tasks and texts/topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The question of context is a fundamental concern both for this individual subject and for the suite of English subjects as a whole.</li> <li>■ There is an extremely wide range of considerations that can legitimately be addressed through a treatment of context.</li> <li>■ It is very difficult to specify them in relation to literary study and as such any attempt to do so would be likely to be inaccurate.</li> <li>■ With regard to texts more widely, these considerations would include historical, geographical, social and individual varieties of English, as well as aspects of language and identity. In addition, each text has its own unique context, such as genre, period, social, historical, geographical and regional, as well as whether it takes the form of spoken language, written language or is multi-modal.</li> <li>■ <b>Significance</b> has a dual meaning for literary texts: it is a synonym for ‘importance’ in general use; it also alludes to ‘signification’ – the making of signs – in relation to literary study more specifically. And, it is inter-connected with <b>influence</b>, so these facets should not be targeted and credited separately.</li> <li>■ Each awarding organisation should take particular care to explain its approach to context in its assessment strategy for this subject.</li> </ul>
	1b – Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which texts are received		

AO4: Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic and literary concepts and methods			10-15% (A level) 10-15% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Agreements and definitions
n/a	1a – Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reasonable coverage of each element in each set of assessments (but not every assessment)</li> <li>■ The degree to which each element is covered overall will depend on the approach to the subject taken in the specification, as well as the nature of the specific tasks and texts/topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The concepts and methods here should not generally be targeted and credited discretely in each of linguistic and literary approaches.</li> <li>■ The connections here would usually be between one text and another or others.</li> <li>■ However, connections might also be within a single published text if this comprises multiple discrete, standalone parts – this is particularly likely to be the case for collections of poetry and short stories.</li> <li>■ Equally, connections might be addressed through consideration of a given literary genre – discussion of any tendencies in this regard would necessitate awareness of a relevant range of texts.</li> <li>■ It is crucial for this subject that there is the potential to explore literary texts through linguistic approaches and vice versa.</li> </ul>
	1b – Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic methods		
	1c – Explore connections across texts, informed by literary concepts		
	1d – Explore connections across texts, informed by literary methods		

AO5: Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways		10-15% (A level)	
Note: This assessment objective must be targeted with at least one of AO2, AO3 or AO4, either in the same task or in two or more linked tasks		10-15% (AS)	
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Agreements and Definitions
n/a	1a – Demonstrate expertise in the use of English to communicate in different ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reasonable coverage of each element in each set of assessments (but not every assessment)</li> <li>■ The degree to which each element is covered overall will depend on the approach to the subject taken in the specification, as well as the nature of the specific tasks and texts/topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Expertise</b> relates to accuracy and control of style for audience, form and purpose.</li> <li>■ <b>Creativity</b> relates to originality and producing engaging writing.</li> <li>■ Although AO5 must be targeted in conjunction with one or more of AO2, AO3 and AO4, this requirement does not preclude it from also targeting AO1.</li> <li>■ Where AO5 is targeted in a single task, this might or might not involve the production of a commentary.</li> </ul>
	1b – Demonstrate creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways		

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