



# GCE AS and A level subject content for English language

## Introduction

1. AS and A level subject content sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills common to all AS and A level specifications in English language.

## Aims and objectives

2. AS and A level specifications must encourage students to develop their interest in and enjoyment of English as they:

- develop and apply their understanding of the concepts and methods appropriate for the analysis and study of language
- explore data and examples of language in use
- engage creatively and critically with a varied programme for the study of English
- develop their skills as producers and interpreters of language

3. In addition, A level specifications must encourage students to develop their interest in and enjoyment of English as they independently investigate language in use.

## Subject content

4. AS and A level specifications in English language must build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established at GCSE level.

5. All AS and A level specifications must introduce students to the concepts and methods of the disciplines of English language/linguistics in relation to a wide range of spoken and written forms of English, including electronic and multimodal forms.

6. In both AS and A level specifications students' contextual study of language must be based on sound theoretical knowledge developed through a coherent course of study.

## Knowledge and understanding

7. AS and A level specifications must require students to show broad knowledge and understanding of the language levels, including:

- phonetics, phonology and prosodics: how speech sounds and effects are articulated and analysed

- lexis and semantics: the vocabulary of English, including social and historical variation
- grammar including morphology: the structural patterns and shapes of English at sentence, clause, phrase and word level
- pragmatics: the contextual aspects of language use
- discourse: extended stretches of communication occurring in different genres, modes and contexts

8. AS specifications must require students to show knowledge and understanding of how relevant language levels from paragraph 7 can be applied to a range of contexts for language use, including how texts and discourses are shaped and interpreted.

9. In addition, A level specifications must require students to show deeper knowledge and understanding of the language levels from paragraph 7 and how these can be applied to a range of contexts for language use, including:

- historical, geographical, social and individual varieties of English
- aspects of language and identity

10. A level specifications must also enable students to show understanding of how the different areas of study connect across their course as a whole.

## Skills

11. AS and A level specifications must require students to:

- apply language concepts and methods of analysis appropriately and systematically to data
- apply critical and creative skills in close reading, description, evaluation, analysis, interpretation and production of texts and discourses
- use accurately a range of terminology associated with the study of language
- make accurate references to texts and sources

12. In addition, A level specifications must require students to:

- critically evaluate attitudes towards language and its users
- undertake independent investigations of language, selecting appropriate methods and techniques
- synthesise and reflect on language knowledge and understanding drawn from different areas of their studies of English language