GCE A LEVEL

WJEC Eduqas GCE A LEVEL in
ENGLISH LANGUAGE

ACCREDITED BY OFQUAL

SPECIFICATION

Teaching from 2015
For award from 2017

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A LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

Component 1: Language Concepts and Issues
Written examination: 2 hours
30% of qualification

Section A: Analysis of Spoken Language
One question requiring analysis of at least two transcriptions
Section B: Language Issues
One question from a choice of three based on the study of four topic areas

Component 2: Language Change Over Time
Written examination: 2¼ hours
30% of qualification

Section A: Language Change Over Time
One multi-part question and one essay question analysing language change over time
Section B: English in the Twenty-First Century
One question based on the ways language is used in the twenty-first century

Component 3: Creative and Critical Use of Language
Written examination: 1¾ hours
20% of qualification

One question, from a choice of two, requiring two original writing responses and one commentary

Component 4: Language and Identity
Non-exam assessment: 2500-3500 words
20% of qualification

2500-3500 word language investigation based on the study and research of a topic related to language and identity
Learners are required to choose a topic from the following list: language and self-representation; language and gender; language and culture; or language diversity.

This linear qualification will be available in the summer series each year. It will be awarded for the first time in summer 2017.

Qualification Accreditation Number: 601/5043/9

A LEVEL
ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aims and objectives

The WJEC Eduqas A level in English language encourages learners to develop their interest 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
- independently investigate language in use.

This specification is designed to foster learners' independence as they explore English language in a variety of contexts. It provides learners with opportunities to develop a wide and deep knowledge of the systems of the English language and of issues relating to language and its uses. Throughout this course learners are presented with opportunities to develop their own creativity, both in the ways they think about language and in the ways they develop expertise in using language to communicate in different ways.

1.2 Prior learning and progression

Any requirements set for entry to a course following this specification are at the discretion of centres. It is reasonable to assume that many learners will have achieved qualifications equivalent to Level 2 at KS4. Skills in Numeracy/Mathematics, Literacy/English and Information Communication Technology will provide a good basis for progression to this Level 3 qualification.

This specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills established at GCSE. Some learners may have already gained knowledge, understanding and skills through their study of English language at AS.

This specification provides a suitable foundation for the study of English language or a related area through a range of higher education courses, progression to the next level of vocational qualifications or employment. In addition, the specification provides a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for learners who do not progress to further study in this subject.

This specification is not age specific and, as such, provides opportunities for learners to extend their life-long learning.

1.3 Equality and fair assessment

This specification may be followed by any learner, irrespective of gender, ethnic, religious or cultural background. It has been designed to avoid, where possible, features that could, without justification, make it more difficult for a learner to achieve because they have a particular protected characteristic.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The specification has been discussed with groups who represent the interests of a diverse range of learners, and the specification will be kept under review.

Reasonable adjustments are made for certain learners in order to enable them to access the assessments (e.g. candidates are allowed access to a Sign Language Interpreter, using British Sign Language). Information on reasonable adjustments is found in the following document from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ): *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration: General and Vocational Qualifications.*

This document is available on the JCQ website (www.jcq.org.uk). As a consequence of provision for reasonable adjustments, very few learners will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment.

2 SUBJECT CONTENT

This specification provides a framework for learners to develop their appreciation of the interconnectedness of the different areas of study. As learners progress through their studies, they are given the opportunity to hone their skills of interrogating data, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, synthesis and reflection. Across all components, learners are introduced to 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.

Learners will be required to show knowledge and understanding of the different language levels, and how these can be applied to a range of contexts for language use, including how texts and discourses are shaped and interpreted. Learners' contextual study will be based on sound theoretical knowledge relevant to the respective components. Knowledge, understanding and accurate application of the language levels underpin this specification.

The language levels are:

- phonetics, phonology, prosodics: how speech sounds and effects are articulated and analysed
- lexis and semantics: the vocabulary of English, including historical, geographical, social and individual varieties of English
- 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.

2.1 Component 1

Language Concepts and Issues
Written examination: 2 hours (120 marks)
30% of qualification

This component encourages learners to engage with language use in different situations. It gives them the opportunity to apply their critical skills and their language knowledge.

There are two sections of equal weight. Learners must answer the compulsory question in Section A and **one** question from Section B.

Section A: Analysis of Spoken Language

Section A is based on the study of spoken language and covers a range of situations and genres. It is designed to introduce learners to the ways in which speakers use language and interact. For reference, a list of phonemic symbols will be printed on the question paper.

There will be two or more transcripts. The question requires candidates to write an extended analytical response in which they explore the effects created by key language features and make connections between the transcripts. In preparation for this question, candidates must study a range of examples, and be familiar with the features of spoken language and relevant theoretical perspectives.

In this section, candidates are required to demonstrate that they can:

- apply critical skills in close reading
- apply appropriate linguistic concepts such as, but not limited to, register, genre and variation
- describe spoken linguistic features, using appropriate terminology accurately
- support points with apt quotation
- explore connections between the transcripts
- organise their response effectively using coherent written expression.

Section B: Language Issues

Section B is based on the study of four language topic areas: Standard and Non-Standard English; language and power; language and situation; and language acquisition. It is designed to introduce learners to how language affects all aspects of our lives.

Candidates are required to choose **one** essay question from a choice of three. Each question requires learners to write an extended response in which they show their knowledge and understanding of language issues, evaluate contextual factors and explore meaning. In preparation for this section, learners should study all four topic areas.

In this section, candidates are required to demonstrate that they can:

- show critical understanding of concepts and issues underpinning language use
- provide appropriate examples to support their argument
- make accurate references to relevant language theories
- critically evaluate how contextual factors and language features shape meaning.

2.2 Component 2

Language Change Over Time
Written examination: 2 ¼ hours (120 marks)
30% of qualification

This component encourages learners to engage with language across time. It gives them the opportunity to apply their analytical skills and their knowledge of language change.
There are two sections. Section A accounts for two thirds of the available marks for this component and Section B accounts for one third of the marks for this component. Candidates must answer **all** questions.

Section A: Language Change Over Time

Section A is based on the study of unseen written texts from different periods, linked by genre. It is designed to introduce learners to orthography, etymology, lexical and grammatical changes in context.

There will be three texts, none earlier than 1500. There will be two questions. Question one will require candidates to answer several short questions based on archaic language features taken from the text. Question two will require learners to write an extended response in which they explore and make connections across the texts in the light of a given focus. In preparation for this question, candidates should study a range of written texts from different periods, and understand the key features of language from the Middle English period onwards.

In this section, candidates are required to demonstrate that they can:

- apply critical skills in close reading
- describe and analyse key features of language change, using associated terminology accurately
- analyse and evaluate contextual factors
- explore connections between the texts
- demonstrate understanding of relevant concepts and issues
- support points with apt quotation
- organise their response effectively using coherent written expression.

Section B: English in the Twenty-First Century

Section B is based on the study of the ways in which language is used distinctively in the twenty-first century. It is designed to introduce learners to how language is evolving to reflect technological and cultural change.

There will be a set of data with a focused question. This section requires candidates to write an extended response in which they show their understanding of contemporary language concepts and issues. They must consider the effect of contextual factors (pragmatics), and analyse the way language is used to construct meaning. In preparation for this section, learners should be familiar with concepts such as new channels of communication, code shifting, changes in the vocabulary and structural patterns of twenty-first century English.

In this section, candidates are required to demonstrate that they can:

- show critical understanding of concepts and issues underpinning language use
- provide appropriate examples to support their argument
- critically evaluate how contextual factors affect form and structure
- analyse how language features shape meaning.

2.3 Component 3

Creative and Critical Use of Language
Written examination: 1¾ hours (80 marks)
20% of qualification

This component will give learners the opportunity to communicate in different ways and to explain how they have used language to shape meaning.

Candidates will choose **one** from a choice of two questions. Each question will have a stimulus text followed by three tasks. Two of these tasks require original writing and the third requires a commentary of one of the texts produced.

Creative Writing

This component presents candidates with stimulus texts which may be literary or non-literary. It is designed to engage candidates in the creative process, giving them the opportunity to demonstrate their expertise. Candidates will be required to produce original writing in any genre. In preparation for this question, learners should study a range of literary and non-literary texts and practise producing texts in a variety of genres.

Candidates are required to demonstrate that they can:

- apply creative skills in the production of engaging writing
- recognise the importance of audience, form and purpose
- show expertise in their use of English to communicate in different ways.

Commentary

Candidates are required to write a commentary on **one** of the two texts they have produced. This task is designed to encourage candidates to analyse and evaluate the language choices they have made. In preparation for this task, learners should practise analysing and evaluating their own writing.

Candidates are required to demonstrate that they can:

- apply critical skills to their chosen text
- analyse and evaluate contextual features
- articulate reasons for the language choices made
- support points with apt quotation.

2.4 Component 4

Language and Identity
Non-exam assessment: 2500-3500 word folder (80 marks)
20% of qualification

This component gives opportunities for learners to select an aspect of study that interests them from the list below related to the theme of language and identity. Learners are required to independently conduct a language investigation, to develop their methods of language analysis through research, data collection and interpretation and to select material that is culturally, personally and academically of interest to them.

Learners must select **one** of the following four areas for their language investigation.

1. **Language and self-representation**
   A study of how context affects the learner's own language choices. This topic would allow learners to use their knowledge of the levels of language and of key concepts and issues to explore and interpret their own idiolect. Learners are free to define their own area(s). Possible areas for investigation could include:

   - register
   - communication strategies
   - accommodation
   - politeness.

2. Language and gender

A study of how gender might affect language choices. This topic would allow learners to use their knowledge of the levels of language and of key concepts and issues to explore and interpret gender issues. Learners are free to define their own area(s). Possible areas for investigation could include:

- representation
- attitudes
- gender neutral language
- linguistic conventions.

3. Language and culture

A study of how language reflects culture. This topic would allow learners to use their knowledge of the levels of language and of key concepts and issues to explore and interpret cultural ideologies. Learners are free to define their own area(s). Possible areas for investigation could include:

- the arts
- sports and entertainment
- education
- belief systems.

4. Language diversity

A study of how a distinctive variety of English differs from Standard English. This topic would allow learners to use their knowledge of the levels of language and of key concepts and issues to explore and interpret aspects of diversity. Learners are free to define their own area(s). Possible areas for investigation could include:

- geographical and social variation
- African American Vernacular English (AAVE)
- other Englishes
- occupational language.

This component provides key opportunities for research, investigation and independent study. It encourages learners to:

- undertake independent investigations of language, selecting appropriate methods and techniques for exploring data
- critically evaluate attitudes to language and its users
- synthesise insights developed through the application of linguistic knowledge to the study of speech and writing
- show how critical understanding of meaning and variation in language is informed by the appropriate use of linguistic analyses
- write insightful, accurate, well-argued responses making accurate references to texts and sources.

Refer to Section 3.2 for further details regarding 'Arrangements for Non-exam Assessment'.

3 ASSESSMENT

3.1 Assessment objectives and weightings

Below are the assessment objectives for this specification. Learners must demonstrate their ability to:

AO1
Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression

AO2
Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use

AO3
Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning

AO4
Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic concepts and methods

AO5
Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways

The table below shows the weighting of each assessment objective for each component and for the qualification as a whole.

	AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	AO5	Total
Component 1	10%	10%	5%	5%	-	30%
Component 2	7.5%	7.5%	10%	5%	-	30%
Component 3	-	-	5%	-	15%	20%
Component 4	10%	5%	5%	-	-	20%
Overall weighting	**27.5%**	**22.5%**	**25%**	**10%**	**15%**	**100%**

3.2 Arrangements for non-exam assessment

Non-exam assessment accounts for 20% of this A level. Please refer to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) *Instructions for Conducting Coursework* on the JCQ website, *www.jcq.org.uk*, for further information.

In this specification, non-exam assessment:

- enables learners to undertake independent and sustained studies into an aspect of language use
- encourages learners to hypothesise a theory in relation to language and identity; to gather data to support the investigation; to interrogate data and to reflect on the findings of the investigation
- encourages learners to use appropriate linguistic theory to inform their study

- develops learners' independent judgements in considering their findings and others' views of language use and, in turn, develops learners' confidence in rejecting or confirming views based on analysis of evidence
- allows centres and learners to select an area of study that is culturally, personally and academically relevant
- develops skills related to planning, drafting and editing
- requires learners to adopt an academic style.

Task-setting

It is important that centres give due consideration to the setting of assignments to ensure that they make full use of the non-exam assessment situation and allow candidates to display those skills necessary for attainment at the highest levels of performance.

Candidates should be directed to the assessment objectives relevant to the non-exam assessment for this component. Refer back to Section 2.4 for full details of the requirements for this component.

If in doubt about a non-exam assessment task, then it is always possible to consult the Subject Officer at WJEC.

Word count

It is the centre's responsibility to inform **learners** of the **guidance** relating to word count for the language investigation in Component 4:

Component 4	Advisory Word Count
Language Investigation: Language and Identity	2500-3500 words

The advisory word count includes quotations used within a candidate's assignment. References made through footnotes and bibliographies are excluded from the word count.

Candidates are expected to follow the guidelines on the length of folders as stated in this specification. Candidates who offer work that is too short are penalising themselves by not allowing appropriate coverage of the required assessment objectives. Candidates who exceed the advisory word count are penalising themselves through a lack of precision and focus.

Learners are required to record the total word count on the coversheet.

Authentication

It is important that **non-exam assessment is rigorously monitored by centres to ensure that candidates' work is their own**.

Centres should monitor candidates' work by:

- keeping a careful record of the progress of learners' work, particularly the submission of drafts
- carefully considering whether the work submitted is characteristic of the learner's ability/attainment
- keeping the work that students have submitted secure in a securely locked cabinet or cupboard.

All candidates are required to sign a statement endorsing the originality of their assignment(s) and centres must countersign that they have taken all reasonable steps to validate this. The **Non-Exam Assessment Folder coversheet** should be completed for **all candidates**, not just for those candidates selected for the sample to be sent to the moderator. The forms can be downloaded from the subject page at www.eduqas.co.uk. Validity can be further enhanced by careful attention to the following points:

Acknowledgements

References to particular linguists' work or other sources must always be clearly acknowledged: by direct reference if a quotation is used; and **by an appended bibliography.**

Drafting

Guidance may be given by teachers in the re-drafting of assignments but this must only consist of general observations. Once an assignment is finally submitted and marked the work may not be further revised. In no cases are fair copies of marked work acceptable. Drafts must be included for the external moderator where they are likely to be important for a fair assessment of the final version.

Plagiarism

Centres are required to be vigilant and to refuse to award marks or submit for moderation any work which they consider to be not the candidate's own. Candidates will be penalised for any attempt to plagiarise. General advice and guidance on how to proceed if plagiarism is suspected can be found on the JCQ website.

Assessment grids

When assessing folders of non-exam assessment, teachers should study the assessment grids, which are designed to present a system that links the assessment objectives to marks, and which helps to discriminate clearly between the varying levels of achievement. Refer to **Appendix A**.

The grids will be of most value when used in conjunction with examples of non-exam assessment which will be issued annually to help centres identify the quality of work associated with the various mark bands.

Teachers must make specific reference to the assessment objectives in the comments that they write on the work and on the coversheets. Teachers are required to record separate marks for each assessment objective in the spaces provided on the coversheet and to total the overall mark in the box provided. A summative comment and individual assessment objective comments for each task must be included on each candidate's coversheet showing clearly how marks have been awarded by the centre.

A copy of the assessment grid can be located in Appendix A.

Submission of marks and administration

Centres need to submit marks for internally assessed work online during the summer term of the year when the work is to be submitted for moderation. When the marks have been submitted to WJEC, the online system will apply the sample formula based on the overall rank order for the total entry and immediately identify the sample of candidates whose work is selected for moderation.

- Only the candidates **selected for the sample** should be sent to the moderator **in rank order**.
- Each selected candidate's non-exam assessment folder must be accompanied by a **Non-Exam Assessment Folder coversheet** on which the candidate must supply a brief title and/or explanation of their area of investigation, and the teacher must provide an overall comment for the moderator.
- **The coversheet must be signed by both the candidate and the teacher**.

N.B. Please remember that **all** candidates' work, not just the sample, must be authenticated internally by signing a coversheet.

The moderation sample of candidates' work should be sent to the external moderator by an agreed date in the final summer term of the A level course.

Standardisation and moderation

It is essential that where there is more than one teacher in a centre, work from all teaching groups is standardised internally. This is designed to ensure that the final assessment reflects a single agreed standard for all teaching groups involved. Standardising material will be issued by WJEC to assist with this process.

In order that assessments may be standardised fairly, each centre is assigned an external moderator by WJEC. It is essential that the moderator is aware of the aims of the assignments and the way that criteria have been used to make a final assessment. All centres will receive detailed feedback from the moderation.

4 TECHNICAL INFORMATION

4.1 Making entries

This is a linear qualification in which all assessments must be taken at the end of the course. Assessment opportunities will be available in the summer series each year, until the end of the life of this specification. Summer 2017 will be the first assessment opportunity.

Where candidates wish to re-sit the qualification, all components must be re-taken.

The entry code appears below.

WJEC Eduqas A level English Language: A700QS

The current edition of our *Entry Procedures and Coding Information* gives up-to-date entry procedures.

4.2 Grading, awarding and reporting

A level qualifications are reported as a grade from A* to E. Results not attaining the minimum standard for the award will be reported as U (unclassified).

APPENDIX A

Appendix A: Assessment grid for Component 4: Language and Identity

BAND	AO1 Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression		
	Apply appropriate methods of language analysis **20 marks**	Use associated terminology **10 marks**	Use coherent written expression **10 marks**
5	**17-20 marks** • Sophisticated knowledge and methods of analysis • Perceptive interpretation of topic	**9-10 marks** • Confident, precise use of a wide range of terminology	**9-10 marks** • Coherent, academic style; sophisticated organisation
4	**13 -16 marks** • Effective knowledge and methods of analysis • Secure interpretation of topic	**7-8 marks** • Sustained, apt use of a range of terminology	**7-8 marks** • Expression accurate and generally fluent; effective organisation
3	**9 -12 marks** • Competent knowledge and methods of analysis • Sensible interpretation of topic	**5-6 marks** • Generally sound use of terminology	**5-6 marks** • Mostly accurate, controlled expression; logical organisation
2	**5-9 marks** • Basic knowledge and methods of analysis • Uneven discussion of topic	**3-4 marks** • Using some terminology with some accuracy	**3-4 marks** • Straightforward expression; some technical inaccuracy; adequate organisation
1	**1-4 marks** • Limited knowledge and methods of analysis • Undeveloped discussion of topic	**1-2 marks** • Some grasp of basic terminology	**1-2 marks** • Errors in expression; lapses in clarity; difficulties organising material
0	**0 marks**: response not credit worthy or not attempted		

BAND	AO2 **Demonstrate critical understanding of language concepts and issues relevant to language use** **20 marks**	AO3 **Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning** **20 marks**
5	**17-20 marks** • Detailed critical understanding of concepts linked to chosen study • Perceptive exploration of relevant issues • Confident and concise selection of supporting examples	**17-20 marks** • Confident understanding of contextual factors • Intelligent discussion of the construction of meaning • Perceptive overview and assured evaluation
4	**13-16 marks** • Secure understanding of concepts linked to chosen study • Some intelligent discussion of relevant issues • Consistent selection of apt supporting examples	**13-16 marks** • Effective understanding of contextual factors • Some insightful discussion of the construction of meaning • Focused overview and detailed evaluation
3	**9-12 marks** • Sound understanding of concepts linked to chosen study • Sensible discussion of relevant issues • Generally appropriate selection of supporting examples	**9-12 marks** • Sensible understanding of contextual factors • Generally clear discussion of the construction of meaning • Relevant overview and competent evaluation
2	**5-8 marks** • Some understanding of concepts linked to chosen study • Straightforward discussion of relevant issues • Some points supported by examples	**5-8 marks** • Some valid understanding of contextual factors • Undeveloped discussion of the construction of meaning • Inconsistent overview and some generalised evaluation
1	**1-4 marks** • A few simple points made about concepts linked to chosen study • Limited discussion of relevant issues • Few examples cited	**1-4 marks** • Some awareness of context • Little sense of how meaning is constructed • Limited overview and evaluation
0	**0 marks:** Response not credit worthy or not attempted	