Your guide to our new qualifications

AS and A level

English Language

from September 2015
Hello and welcome

Our new Edexcel AS and A level English Language qualifications celebrate the diversity of the English language and how it changes across time and space.

At the heart of these qualifications is descriptive linguistics. Whether exploring the cultural and geographical factors which influence us all or the seemingly miraculous ways in which we learn to talk.

With the inclusion of both creative and investigative tasks, these are qualifications that will maximise students’ freedom and independence, allowing them to develop their personal language specialism.

This guide gives you an overview of our new AS and A level English Language specifications. You will also learn about the comprehensive help and support we are planning for you.

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Take a look through our specification guide to find out more about:

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We’re here to help you understand the changes to AS and A level English Language so you’re ready to teach the new specifications from September 2015. Whether it is on the phone, by email, or in person at a training event, we are here to support you as you plan and teach the new qualifications.

We look forward to meeting you at our Getting Ready to Teach events, and answering any questions you may have.

The English Team
Celebrating the diversity of the English Language

Our approach offers students opportunities to engage with the great variety of English in use, and to consider some critical language debates.

- How does language vary according to the place it is used, not only geographically, but also socially and culturally?
- How has language changed over time?
- Does my own language use vary? When does this happen and why?
- What role does language have in making me who I am? Does it reflect or construct my identity?

Provides plenty of opportunity for creativity

English language study should not only introduce students to how language is used, but it should also develop their ability to use and craft language themselves; to cultivate their own distinct creative voice. We have retained the creative writing coursework tasks to give students plenty of creative opportunities.

Develops research and investigative skills

Developing research, investigation and analytical skills is excellent preparation for further study or entering the workplace. Our Investigating Language component introduces students to these skills in a manageable way, appropriate to the demands of A level study.

- A choice of five engaging topic areas.
- Pre-released subtopics every January, to focus on a specific area of research.
- Guidance on primary and secondary data sources, as well as appropriate wider reading.

Nurtures individual specialism

Together, the creative writing and language investigation components give students maximum opportunity to develop their particular language specialism in their second year of study.

- Students interested in journalism might select to write newspaper articles for their coursework, followed by language and journalism for their investigation component.
- Students interested in law might choose to produce speeches for their coursework, followed by language and power for their investigation component.
- Students interested in story writing might choose to produce short stories showcasing a specific accent or dialect for their coursework, followed by regional language variation for their investigation component.

Co-teachable AS and A level

- The AS specification has been designed to be entirely co-teachable with the first year of a two-year A level course.
- All the AS topics appear in the A level specification, so there is no requirement to make decisions around AS and A level routes prior to the start of the course.

Holistic assessment

- Holistic mark schemes allow examiners to mark the students’ work in the same way as it was written - as a single cohesive piece of writing, with the response to each Assessment Objective integrated throughout.
- We want students to be able to focus on giving their best response to their exam question, not on trying to remember how many marks are attributed to each Assessment Objective.
A level assessment at a glance

A level (first assessment: summer 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component 1: Language Variation</th>
<th>Component 2: Child Language</th>
<th>Component 3: Investigating Language</th>
<th>Coursework: Crafting Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 marks</td>
<td>45 marks</td>
<td>45 marks</td>
<td>50 marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35% weighting</td>
<td>20% weighting</td>
<td>25% weighting</td>
<td>20% weighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 hours 15 mins</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>1 hour 45 mins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students study:
- register and how language varies depending on mode, field, function and audience
- how language choices can create personal identities
- language variation in English from c1550 (the beginnings of Early Modern English) to the present day.

Section A – Individual Variation (30 marks)
One compulsory question on two linked unseen texts/data.

Section B – Variation Over Time (30 marks)
One compulsory question on two thematically linked unseen texts, from two different periods.

Students study:
- spoken language acquisition and how children learn to write between the ages of 0 and 8
- the relationship between spoken language acquisition and literacy skills that children are taught, including the beginnings of reading
- appropriate theories of children’s language development.

One compulsory essay question based on a set of unseen data – either spoken or written.

Students will select a research focus from five topic areas:
- Global English
- Language and Gender Identity
- Language and Journalism
- Language and Power
- Regional Language Variation.

A subtopic for each topic area will be pre-released in the January prior to the summer examination.

Students will:
- develop their research and investigation skills
- undertake a focused investigation
- consolidate their knowledge of language frameworks and key language concepts
- develop their personal language specialism.

Section A (15 marks)
One question on an unseen text related to their chosen subtopic.

Section B (30 marks)
One evaluative essay question drawing upon the knowledge acquired from their own investigation.

Students will:
- research a selected genre
- demonstrate their skills as writers within their selected genre, crafting texts for different audiences and/or purposes
- reflect on their research and writing in a commentary.

Assignment 1 (30 marks)
Two pieces of original writing from the same genre, differentiated by function and/or audience.

Assignment 2 (20 marks)
One commentary, reflecting on the two pieces they have produced.

Advisory word count is 1500–2000 words for the original writing and 1000 words for the commentary.

View the accredited specifications: www.edexcel.com/langenglish15
AS assessment at a glance

AS (first assessment: summer 2016)

### Component 1: Language: Context and Identity

| 50 marks | 50% weighting | 1 hour 30 mins |

Students study:
- the range of contexts in which language is produced and received
- how the contexts of production and reception affect language choices
- how writers/speakers present themselves to their audience in a variety of modes
- how the language of writers/speakers reflects and constructs their identity or identities.

**Section A – Language and Context (25 marks)**
One compulsory question on a small set of thematically-linked unseen data.

**Section B – Language and Identity (25 marks)**
One compulsory question on unseen 21st century texts.

### Component 2: Child Language

| 50 marks | 50% weighting | 1 hour 30 mins |

Students study:
- the development of both speech and writing in children between the ages of 0 and 8
- how language development is influenced by the function and context of language used
- appropriate theories of children’s language development
- producing writing for different functions and audiences.

**Question 1 (20 marks)**
Creative response to one short piece of unseen written data.

**Question 2 (30 marks)**
Response to one longer set of unseen spoken data.

Additional free resources for AS and A level

**Language Transition Unit**

Of all the English A level subjects, the step up from GCSE is perhaps the most challenging in English Language. Our free online transition unit, produced in collaboration with Professor Urszula Clark at Aston University, includes engaging and interesting language topics where students are introduced to some of the key language terminology and concepts.

**Getting Started Teacher Guide**

- Written by a range of experts in the field of English Language, Linguistics and English Studies.
- Provides background information and key concepts for both teachers and students.
- Includes introductions to each of the areas of study within the AS and A level specifications.
- Includes examples of wider reading to support delivery of each topic.

Approaches to co-teaching Edexcel AS and A level English Language

Our specifications have been designed so you can co-teach AS and A level students in the same class, with the same teaching topics. All AS topics appear in the A level specification, so there is no requirement to make decisions around AS and A level routes prior to the start of the course.

| Example of content for the delivery of a co-taught AS and A level cohort |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| **Year 1**                  | **Year 2**                  |
| Language in Context         | Historical Variation        |
| Language and Identity       | Research and investigation skills |
| Child Language Acquisition  | Crafting Language coursework|

Teachers may wish to begin preparation for the coursework with A level two-year students towards the end of year one, whilst the AS students prepare for their AS examinations.

**Only teaching A level classes?**

Whilst the specifications are co-teachable, if you decide not to enter your A level students for the AS exams you can approach the course content in any order, as best suits your students.

**How are they assessed?**

AS and A level content will be assessed to a different standard, appropriate to the level of study. Students who sit the AS exams and then continue to the full A level will be assessed on their AS content again, at the end of their course of study, to the A level standard.

Please see the Sample Assessment Materials for each specification on pages 10-17 for examples of the different question structures.

Learn more at [www.edexcel.com/langenglish15](http://www.edexcel.com/langenglish15)
SECTION A: Individual Variation

Read Texts A and B on pages 3−4 of the source booklet before answering Question 1 in the space provided.

1 Analyze and compare the ways that both writers use language to convey personal and social identity.

You should refer to any relevant language frameworks and levels, as well as social, cultural, and other contextual factors.

Text A

The next day is always an affair of business for me. Usually, I spend the morning working at my desk, and then I go out in the afternoon to meet with clients and do some errands. It's not exactly glamorous, but it's a way to make a living and support myself. And, honestly, I don't see myself doing anything else. I enjoy the work, and I'm good at it. I like the challenge of coming up with new ideas and making them happen. But, sometimes, I wish I could do something different. I've always had this fascination with the arts, and I've always wanted to make a difference in the world. Perhaps one day, I'll take the plunge and start my own business. Who knows? The possibilities are endless.

Text B

I was born, I have always told people, at the age of four in a woodcutter's cottage in the woods. I was the second of three children, and my parents were very proud of me. They named me John Robert Parker Ravenscroft, after my father's father and mother. I was a good child, and I always did well in school. I was fascinated by the world around me, and I loved to learn about new things. I was always asking questions, and I was always eager to explore. I knew that I wanted to be a writer, and I worked hard to achieve my dream. I wrote stories and poems, and I entered every writing contest I could find. I was determined to succeed. And, finally, I did. I became a successful writer, and I was able to support myself and my family. I was proud of what I had achieved, and I knew that I had done what I had set out to do.

SECTION B: Variation over Time

Read Texts C and D on pages 6−9 of the source booklet before answering Question 2 in the space provided.

2 Texts C and D raise issues about the state of the theatres.

Evaluate the ways that both texts demonstrate how language has changed over time.

You should refer to any relevant language frameworks and levels, as well as social, cultural, and other contextual factors.

Text C

This text is from a pamphlet printed in 1643 in which an anonymous actor complains to the Attorney General of the undesirable effects of the theatres on society. The author uses language that was common in the early modern period, including words like "meretricious" and "barbarisme.

Text D

This text is a speech given by an actor at the end of a performance. It demonstrates how language has changed over time, as well as how language is used to address different audiences.


Curve of economic and social change is likely to be tied to the importance of the arts. Theatres have always been a source of entertainment and escapism, and they have also been a means of social and political commentary. Theatre has provided a platform for the expression of ideas and emotions, and it has been a way to celebrate and explore the human condition. Theatres have also been a source of livelihood for actors, playwrights, and others involved in the production of theatre. Theatres have played a significant role in the history of the arts, and they have been important in the development of language and culture.
Read Text A in the source booklet before answering Question 1 in the space provided.

1 Analyse how Thomas and his parents use language to interact with each other and the role this could have in shaping language development.

In your response you should consider any relevant language frameworks, levels and theories as appropriate.

Text C

A big lump of horse ran into your burger?
Don't wave it around or everyone'll want one.

This text is written by the writer and broadcaster, Charlie Brooker, and was published on The Guardian newspaper website. He is writing about concerns over processed food in England.

To what extent is Text C representative of the ways in which language is used in current opinion articles?

Source Booklet

This text is selected from a printed collection of English Phonemic Reference Sheet. It is used to help you understand the different sounds of the English language.


*Students will respond to one question based upon EITHER written OR spoken data.*

Section A

Topic: Language and Journalism

Subtopic: Opinion Articles

Read the data provided on pages 8–9 of the source booklet.

To what extent is Text C representative of the ways in which language is used in current opinion articles?

Section B

Topic: Language and Journalism

Subtopic: Opinion Articles

Discuss this statement with reference to your own research.

You should consider:

- any relevant language frameworks
- any relevant social, historical and cultural factors.

*Students will respond to one question on their studied pre-release topic, drawing upon examples from their own research.*
SECTION A: Language and Context

Read Texts A–C on pages 3–5 of the source booklet before answering Question 1 in the space provided.

1 Texts A–C are all forms of birthday greetings drawn from different contexts. Analyse and compare how contextual factors affect language choices in these texts.

You should refer to any relevant language frameworks and levels to support your answer and consider:

- mode
- field
- function
- audience.

Students will respond to one set of thematically linked data.

Section B

SECTION B: Language and Identity

Read Text D on pages 6–7 of the source booklet before answering Question 2 in the space provided.

2 Analyse how the company ‘method’ presents itself in Text D.

You should refer to any relevant language frameworks and levels to support your answer and consider:

- mode
- field
- function
- audience.

[25] Students will respond to one question on one piece of data.

Source Booklet

View more Sample Assessment Materials at www.edexcel.com/langenglish15
**AS Sample Assessment Materials**

**Paper 2: Child Language**

**Question 1**

Answer ALL questions.

Read Text A on page 5 of the source booklet before answering Question 1 in the space provided below.

1. Produce an article for a magazine called 'The Linguist' analysing and exploring Georgi’s spelling development. The article is part of a series charting Georgi’s language development aimed at A Level English Language students.

In your answer you should:
- use an appropriate writing style
- write with accuracy and control
- write to engage your audience
- introduce relevant theories and research
- focus on language frameworks and levels as appropriate.

**Source Booklet**

**Question 2**

Read Texts B to D on pages 6−7 of the source booklet before answering Question 2 in the space provided below.

2. Analyse the way Eleanor’s spoken language has developed between the ages of 22 months and 3 years 6 months in Texts B to D.

You should refer to the following language frameworks and levels as appropriate:
- phonology
- morphology
- lexis
- syntax
- discourse.

**Source Booklet**

**Sample Assessment Materials – Issue 1 – October 2014 © Pearson Education Limited 2014**

**Text B**

Age 2 years 2 months

E: It’s Granny say hello Granny Eleanor.
G: Hi Eleanor.
E: Say hello Gramps.
G: Hi Gramps.
E: Hello Gramps love cuddles/say/Grandma/say/cuddles yoghurt/Ask if at dinner.
G: do you want some yoghurt? I have some more now.
E: I have had some before, some peaches at dinner.
G: that’s yummy. Those peas, that is Eleanor’s.
E: help (holds out bowl)

This question will always be based on a small example of written data.

**Text C**

Age 2 years 4 months

E: I got pigs cows horses.
G: No you didn’t.
E: OK so what animals have you got on your farm.
G: You’re going to the swings, park? and feeding the ducks?
E: Yes. I love the swings. OK we are you later.

This question will always be based on spoken data.

**Text D**

Age 3 years 6 months

E: Say hello. The baby goats and the ducks.
M: right
E: in to the shoe box.
M: oh are you not going to have sheep on your farm.
E: No.
M: Why.
E: I don’t want to.
M: I don’t want to?
E: Because it is my pet and I can’t make it go/busy
E: oh you are that true.
E: But I don’t want to.
M: OK.
E: An a goat.
M: But I thought you liked lambs.
E: No, you’re sheep.
M: right.
E: But then (I) don’t want sheep on your farm.
M: OK is what animals have you got on your farm.

**Source Booklet**

View more Sample Assessment Materials at www.edexcel.com/langenglish15
What you can expect from us

We’ll provide you with free support and help so that you can implement the new Edexcel AS and A level English Language specifications with confidence.

Designing your curriculum

- **A Getting Started Guide**, including introductions and wider reading resources for all topic areas, a glossary of key concepts and terminology in language study, and exemplar coursework titles.
- **Mapping documents** highlighting the key differences between the 2008 and 2015 specifications.
- **Schemes of Work and course planners** for teaching AS and A level courses separately or together.

Understanding the new standard

- **A bank of exemplar student work and examiner commentaries** will be available before first teaching to help you and your students to understand the expected standard.
- **Free training** on how to mark mock papers.
- **Additional Sample Assessment Materials** available at launch to help you familiarise yourself with the new assessment styles.

Teaching and learning

- **A Language Transition Unit** introducing students to key language terminology and concepts to help bridge the gap from GCSE to AS and A level.

Tracking student progress

- **ResultsPlus** – a free, online service giving detailed, instant feedback on your students’ exam performance.
- **A secure mock paper** available to you each year.
- **Mocks Analysis** – a specific component of our ResultsPlus service that allows you to use past papers as mocks and receive a detailed analysis of students’ exam performance.
- **examWizard** – a free, online, easy-to-use exam preparation tool containing a bank of past questions to help you create your own mock exams and tests.

Subject and local support

- **Getting Ready to Teach events** to support you as you prepare to teach our new AS and A level English qualifications from September 2015.
- **Training events** throughout the academic year to help you deliver the AS and A level courses.
- **An expert Subject Advisor, Clare Haviland**, and her team are on hand for you to ask questions about the content or teaching of the specifications, whenever you need it.
  *There may be a charge for these events.*

Learn more at
www.edexcel.com/langenglish15
Get in touch!

We’re here to help you in the run-up to 2015 and beyond.

Email us: teachingenglish@pearson.com

Call us: 0844 372 2188

Learn more and get involved at www.edexcel.com/langenglish15