



# **A Level English Literature: Coursework Marking Training**

# Welcome to this Professional Development Training

This training supports teachers delivering Pearson Edexcel A Level English Literature. The training covers the coursework element of the qualification.

You will:

- explore the coursework assessment criteria
  - look at examples of marked student coursework
  - carry out some marking on exemplar materials
  - address common issues and frequently asked questions.
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# Agenda

- Introduction and overview
- Assessment criteria/text and title choice
- Non-examination assessment marking
- Common issues and FAQs
- Useful information
- Time for questions
- Finish



# Overview

# Introduction to assessment

## Content

Candidates have a free choice of two text to study.

Chosen texts:

- must be different from those studied in Components 1, 2 and 3
- must be complete texts and may be linked by theme, movement, author or period
- may be selected from poetry, drama, prose or literary non-fiction.

## Assessment Objectives

- AO1
- AO2
- AO3
- AO4
- AO5

## Structure

Candidates produce one assignment:

- one extended comparative essay referring to two texts
- advisory total word count is 2500–3000 words
- total of 60 marks available.



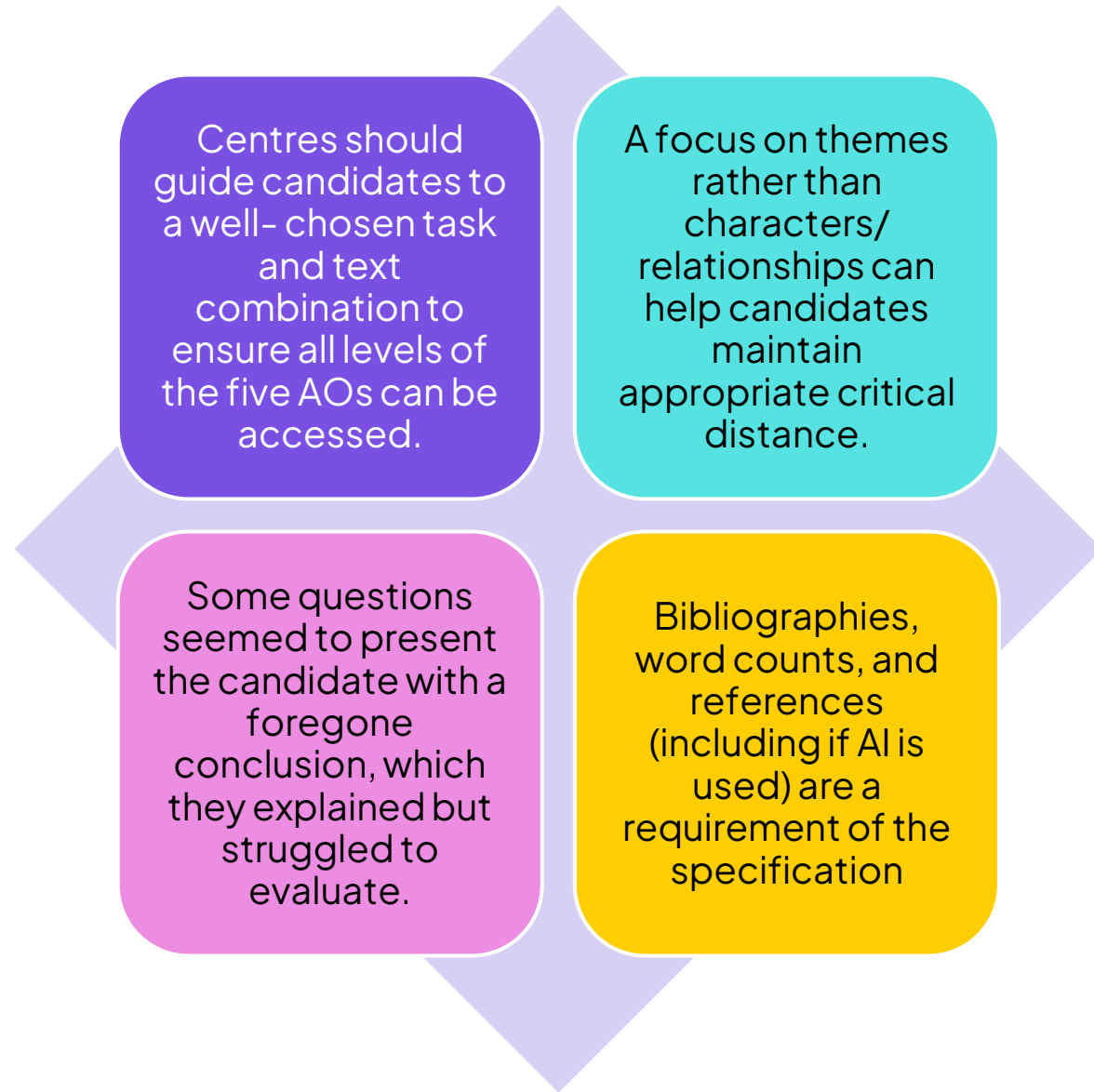
## 2025 Principal Moderator's Feedback

The specification has been running for a number of years and so nearly all centres are aware of the demands of the component.

Most centres were able to upload requested samples promptly and carry out the necessary administration.


Most centres have been providing interesting and stimulating choices of tasks for candidates, broadening their experiences of English by studying a huge range of texts and genres or reinterpreting the stalwart texts in fresh new ways.

# 2025 Principal Moderator's report: Assignment setting



# NEA Authentication Sheet

## Appendix 4: Non-examination assessment authentication sheet

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in English Literature		9ET0/04
Have you received advice on the title from the Assignment Advisory Service?		Y/N
Centre name:		Centre number:
Candidate name:		Candidate number:
Assignment	Marks awarded	Comments
Essay title:	AOs 1, 2 and 3 /36 AOs 4 and 5 /24	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>/60</b>	

Check this reflects final moderated marks and those entered online

Comments can be included here but most centres put them at the end of the assignment – writing “see essay” is fine.



The latest version of the NEA Form can be found [here](#).



# NEA Authentication Sheet

## Teacher declaration

I declare that the work submitted for assessment has been carried out without assistance other than that which is acceptable according to the rules of the specification. I certify that to the best of my knowledge the evidence submitted for this assignment is the learner's own. The learner has clearly referenced any sources and any artificial intelligence (AI) tools used in the work. I have not solely used AI to mark the learner's work. I understand that false declaration is a form of malpractice. I confirm that the candidate has studied at least three pre-1900 texts in the examined components to meet the requirements of the qualification, and the same texts have not been studied for both non-examination assessment and examination.

Assessor name:			
Assessor signed:		Date:	

## Candidate declaration

I certify that the work submitted for this assessment is my own. I have clearly referenced any sources used in the work and any AI tools used in the work. I understand that false declaration is a form of malpractice. I understand that to meet the requirements of the qualification, I must answer examination questions on at least three pre-1900 texts and I must not use texts which I have studied for non-examination assessment in my answers to examination questions. I acknowledge that Pearson may use candidate work for the purposes of standardisation, training, and exemplar material.

Candidate signed:		Date:	
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The teacher who has assessed the work must sign here.



The candidate MUST sign this form as they are authenticating their work. Moderators will follow up with a request if this is NOT signed.

# NEA

## Authentication Sheet

### Texts coverage check

You are reminded that the text choices for the non-examination assessment must be different to the texts studied in Components 1, 2 and 3.

Please tick all texts that have been studied in the other components.

Component 1	Shakespeare		Other drama	
	Tragedy			
	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Les Blancs</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Hamlet</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Doctor Faustus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>King Lear</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Othello</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Comedy			
	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The Rover</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Sweat</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Waiting for Godot</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The text coverage check must be included with every assignment.

Check candidates don't confuse coursework texts with their examined texts in completing this!

## Component 4: NEA marking – AO1, 2, 3

- AO1: centres which marked candidates too leniently tended to overlook:
  - technical errors and inaccurate use of terminology
  - Lapses in expression e.g. colloquialisms or use of first-person, which makes a mark in Level 4 or 5 very hard to justify. Conversely, over-wordy or pretentious expression also impeded quality of communication.
  - Lack of quotation (AO1), which inevitably impacts on the other AOs.
  - Structural weaknesses: eg in presenting a controlled introduction (which should set up rather than resolve an argument at the opening of the essay), or lack of an overarching argument overall.
- Where candidates had identified clear examples of the writer's craft, AO2 was usually fairly awarded by centres. Form and structure were often ignored, and candidates should apply their insights into plays as pieces of theatre (from 9ET0/01), the form and structure of the novel (from 9ET0/02) and poetic form (from 9ET0/03).
- Many candidates considered a range of contexts. The best not only evaluated the importance of these contexts, but made precise references often supported by quotations from wider reading and research. Weaker assertions about context lacked references, or focused excessively on biographical background.

## Component 4: AO4 and 5

- AO4 – Candidates must ensure an even balance between the treatment of the two texts – most submissions managed this.
- A fully integrated comparative approach from the outset is a feature of the highest-achieving candidates.
- Performance with AO5 was variable and is a discriminator at the upper end of the marking grids.
- Candidates are marked on *how they respond* to the AO5 material in relation to their reading of their literary text. Some centres marked this too leniently as critical material was credited as ‘discriminating’ or ‘evaluative’ purely because of the presence of the quotation, rather than how candidates had responded to it. Candidates should be encouraged to think back to how they have been taught to integrate AO5 for the Shakespeare component in 9ET0/01.

**“There was a tendency for critics to be quoted in passing – “as X says...” – which showed Level 3 understanding, but not giving the sense that this critic was being used to shape an argument. Another Level 3 approach was for the candidate to insert the AO5 material at the end of the paragraph, almost as an afterthought, making their own conclusion and remarking “this supports/contradicts Y’s argument that...”.**

## Further advice for AO5

Critical material used by the candidates need not originally have been written about their set text: this is worth considering if text choices are less popular, or involve contemporary fiction. A relevant piece of criticism could have been written about:



the genre

the author, i.e. their output as a whole

critical theory

a literary or cultural movement

a period or context

# Assessment criteria

# Assessment Grids for AO1, AO2 and AO3

<b>Level 3</b>	15–21	<b>Low (15–16 marks)</b> Qualities of levels are inconsistently met	<b>Clear relevant application</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offers a clear response using relevant textual examples. Relevant use of terminology and concepts. Creates a logical, clear structure with few errors and lapses in expression.</li> <li>Shows clear understanding of writer’s craft. Demonstrates knowledge of how meanings are shaped with consistent analysis.</li> <li>Identifies detailed points to link texts and contexts. These are supported by specific textual examples that show clear understanding of significance and influence.</li> </ul>
		<b>Mid (17–19 marks)</b> Qualities of level are largely met	
		<b>High (20–21 marks)</b> Qualities of level are convincingly met	
<b>Level 4</b>	22–29	<b>Low (22–23 marks)</b> Qualities of levels are inconsistently met	<b>Discriminating controlled application</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constructs a controlled argument with fluently embedded examples. Discriminating use of concepts and terminology. Controls structures with precise cohesive transitions and carefully chosen language.</li> <li>Analyses the effects of literary features and demonstrates discriminating understanding of how meanings are shaped. Controlled analysis that is aware of nuances and subtleties of the writer’s craft.</li> <li>Provides a discriminating analysis of how context influences the writer’s craft. Explores links in a detailed way.</li> </ul>
		<b>Mid (24–27 marks)</b> Qualities of level are largely met	
		<b>High (28–29 marks)</b> Qualities of level are convincingly met	



# Assessment Grids for AO4 and AO5

<b>Level 3</b>	10–14	<b>Detailed exploration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Makes clear connections between texts, developing an integrated, connective approach with clear examples.</li><li>• Offers clear understanding of different interpretations and alternative readings of texts. Explores different interpretations in support or contrast to own argument.</li></ul>
<b>Level 4</b>	15–19	<b>Discriminating exploration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analyses connections between texts. Takes a controlled discriminating approach to integration with detailed examples.</li><li>• Produces a developed exploration of different interpretations and alternative readings of texts. Discussion is controlled and offers integrated exploration of alternative interpretations in development of own critical position.</li></ul>
<b>Level 5</b>	20–24	<b>Critical and evaluative</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evaluates connections between texts. Exhibits a sophisticated connective approach with exemplification.</li><li>• Applies a sustained evaluation of different interpretations of texts. This is cogent and supported by sophisticated use of application of alternative interpretations to illuminate own critical position.</li></ul>



# NEA text choices and titles

# Text and Title choices

Centres can choose whether to set both texts, give candidates an entirely free choice of text, or anything in between:

- **Free choice of text:** slightly fewer centres are doing this, year on year. This can inspire and enthuse very able candidates, but centres must take care to guide them towards appropriate choices of texts and task, and provide ongoing support to ensure the AOs are being met, e.g. choosing secondary reading for AO3 and AO5.
- **Teaching a ‘core’ text with a selection of others:** this approach often strikes a good balance.
- **Teaching both texts:** this is entirely permissible, though makes it even more important to ensure candidates are given a wide range of question choices. In centres with more than one teaching set, different classes studied different texts; there are hardly any centres where all teaching groups are directed to study the same two coursework texts.

# Text and Title choices

Some candidates would benefit from more guidance on how to source and integrate AO3 and 5.

Text choices need to facilitate the AOs – this can be very individual to the candidate, so our advice is to follow the rubric:

- texts in translation are not allowed
- texts must be complete texts, published in their own right as ‘books’.
- a collection of short stories or poems must consider adequate range in the NEA submission – equivalent to what is defined as ‘a text’ in 9ET03, for example.
- consider carefully whether contemporary, popular texts will facilitate high achievement in AO2 and AO5.

# Text and Title choices continued

- All AOs should be “flagged” in the title.
- A clear single focus in a title can support candidates well. More than one potential focus can confuse.
- Titles that focus on characterisation can restrict the range of AO2, which can limit achievement for some.
- ‘Questions focusing on the presentation of a theme were more likely to elicit closer engagement with writers’ craft than tasks which focus on how characters interact.’
- ‘There were quite a few tasks this series which focused on the oppression of women (especially in the context of ‘toxic masculinity’), mental health issues, loss of identity, and gender fluidity. As in previous series, this led to a tendency towards assertion rather than analysis. Mental health issues tended to lead candidates into psychological theory rather than literary criticism. In assignments where the studied text had an autobiographical component, there was more tendency to forget the writer at work and talk about characters as people.’

# Text and Title choices support

Look at [coursework support](#) which includes:

- Past marking training packs
- Coursework clinic
- [Summer 2020 webinar](#)
- Peer evaluation of titles document – for use in the classroom with candidates. ([Autumn network 2017](#))
- [Coursework Advisory Service](#) available to support development of titles – this does NOT ‘approve’ titles, merely advises on them and is not compulsory.

# Problem Titles used in past training

- ‘One is not born but rather becomes a woman’. (Simone de Beauvoir) In the light of this quotation, with reference to critical theory and contextual knowledge, compare how Margaret Atwood and Alice Walker present the subversion of gender norms in ‘The Handmaid’s Tale’ and ‘The Color Purple’.
- How is violence shown to be the by-product of Power in *Things Fall Apart* and *The Kite Runner*?
- Compare and contrast to what extent have authors presented the many facets of womanhood through the presentation of influential female relationships and examined how the inherent vices of masculinity act as a springboard for female coming-of-age in the books *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker and *Rebecca* by Daphne Du Maurier. Using wider critical research.
- Compare how Malcolm X and Maya Angelou convey ethnicity, equality and justice in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and *I know why the Caged Bird Sings*.

# Examples of secure titles

- With reference to your wider critical reading around *Look Back in Anger* and *Death of a Salesman*, compare the ways in which John Osborne and Arthur Miller explore the effects of the past on the present.
- Compare the ways in which zealotry is presented in *The Crucible* and *Oranges are not the Only Fruit*, exploring relevant contextual factors and critical reading.

# NEA Folders – Marking



# Folder 1 – Kingsolver and Conrad

This folder was awarded full marks,  
i.e. 60 out of 60.

We will not spend extended time on  
this folder today. Please do however  
read this and then move on to Folder 2.

# Folder 2 – Rhys and Coetzee

- Consider the folder title and the introduction.
- Share any feedback on the chat.
- Read the whole folder to consider where you would place this response.

# Folder 2 marks

*Wild Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys and *Foe* by J M Coetzee

**AOs 1–3 – 32 marks (mid Level 5)**

**AOs 4–5 – 21 marks (low Level 5)**

**53 marks in total**



# Folder 3 – Fitzgerald and Narayan

- Share any feedback on the chat.

# Folder 3 marks

*The Great Gatsby* by F Scott Fitzgerald and *The Guide* by RK Narayan.

**AOs 1–3 – 27 marks (Level 4)**

**AOs 4–5 – 20 marks (Borderline Level 4/5)**

**47 marks in total**

# Folder 4 – Walker and Selvon

- What marks would you give for each grid?
- Share your feedback on the chat.

# Folder 4 marks

*The Color Purple* by Alice Walker and *Lonely Londoners* by Selvon

**AOs 1–3 – 20 (high Level 3)**

**AOs 4–5 – 14 (high Level 3)**

**34 marks in total**



# Folder 5 – Orwell and Butler

- Would you put this higher or lower than Folder 4, and for what reasons?
- What mark would you give for each grid?
- Please type in the chat window to answer.



# Folder 5 marks

*1984* by George Orwell and *The Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler

**AOs 1–3 – 12 marks (Level 2)**

**AOs 4–5 – 9 marks (Level 2)**

**21 marks in total**

# Summary

You have now seen:

- Folder 1 – 60 marks (Level 5)
- Folder 2 – 53 marks (Level 5)
- Folder 3 – 47 marks (Level 4)
- Folder 4 – 34 marks (Level 3)
- Folder 5 – 21 marks (Level 2)

# Common Issues and FAQs

# Common Issues

- Word counts
- Plagiarism/AI use
- Critical reading
- Text selection

# Presentation of Folders

- Candidate name, centre and candidate number as header throughout.
- Page numbers to ensure moderator can see all pages are included.
- Font size 12 and double spaced appreciated.
- Evidence of internal moderation where more than one teacher has taught the cohort (no prescribed format for this).
- Marking should not be in pencil, as this does not scan well and is hard for the moderator to read.
- Include bibliography and final word count.
- No need to include plans, drafts, notes.
- Evidence of summative assessment (this is nearly always provided at the end of the essay).

# Annotation/ internal moderation: examples of best practice

Coursework Final Comments:

Name:

Assessment Objective	Level	Comments	Mark
<b>A01</b> Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression	4	Overall, this is a controlled response with a sustained argument throughout. Expression is mostly sophisticated and the candidate frequently employs discriminating terminology. Examples are fluently embedded across response.	28 ✓
<b>A02</b> Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts	4 +	Analysis is mostly discriminative + sophisticated, and begins to explore the nuances of the writer's craft. This can be seen on page 5. Candidate identifies a broad range of techniques.	
<b>A03</b> Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received	4	Some clear knowledge of contexts with often detailed links being made. Candidate draws a sophisticated link to <sup>that</sup> writer's technique on page 7. Context is largely historical but there is confident knowledge displayed.	
<b>A04</b> Explore connections across literary texts	3	Candidate makes some clear and integrated connections across the response with relevant examples. However much discussion is separate and connections are infrequent.	18
<b>A05</b> Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations	4 1 4 4 3	Some sophisticated and thoroughly applied critical theory. There are moments of critical evaluation using an interpretation e.g. middle of page 9. Clear application of general critical theories - Argument (p3-9, p6-7) underpinned by critical theories; all explored through theorists' ideas.	14 15 42 EM
Total Mark:			46 / 60 43 R?

# Annotation/ internal moderation: examples of best practice

An interesting and well-structured comparison with some perceptive understanding, particularly of Eliot. AO2 is strongest on Eliot too with good discussion of language, structure and poetic form. An understanding of the 1920s social and historical context provides a framework around which the argument is structured.

\* Better than Folder 2 in standardisation material, awarded 32? AO1, 2, 3 ~~31~~ 34\*  
31?  $\downarrow$  30

Critics are apt and evaluated. Texts are handled together throughout ~~to~~ with a slight imbalance, stronger on Eliot.

49?

Final agreement after  
extensive discussion  
31+18 (49)

disputed

AO3, 4

~~18~~ 18

I disp- to this as although ways of reading are explored the engagement is not critical/evaluative.

160

Mod 31+18 49  
60

for me ~~29~~ 29/36 and 17/24 (46)



# Annotation/ internal moderation: examples of best practice

MOD moderation  
after rank vis  
 $19+11=30$

Ad1+2+3 = Clear and Relevant  
overall - not consistent but  
mostly not thorough.  
Some lapses in expression but  
doesn't detract from overall  
argument. Unfinished bibliography  
Agreed 13.  
Could perhaps go mid 13  
19/20?

Ad4 + Ad5  
→ Connections are clear  
but not developed/  
consistent.  
→ Ad5 is clear and  
used to support own  
argument (but not fully  
explored)  
Agreed 11/24  
Total =  $19+11=30$  JM



# Submitting Folders

On Edexcel Online there will be the required sample.

**With the selected folders, also include:**

- highest **AND** lowest marked folders (if not already included)
- a substitute folder for any ticked ones where candidates have been withdrawn, with a note to indicate this.
- A note to the moderator if you are a single teacher centre (to confirm why there will not be evidence of internal moderation).

Please scan in each candidate's submission as one file, with the form at the front. If you have marked electronically, please combine into one PDF.

Please double-check each folder before uploading to ensure that all pages are present, in the correct order, and the right way up, remembering that moderators will mark on screen.

# Submitting Folders continued

When selecting folders please ensure that the correct number are included. This has been updated for 2026 in line with Ofqual requirements.

Sometimes the system is not updated to reflect withdrawals and this affects the sample size:

Cohort size	Sample size requested
Up to 15	All
16 – 100	15
101– 200	20
More than 200	25

# Submission of Evidence

- Centres and moderators use the Learner Work Transfer (LWT). This is where the work is uploaded.
- Please see this [guidance document](#) for further information. Please ensure all steps are taken, including clicking the final “submit” button at the end.
- Information about the LWT can be found on [our website](#) and the platform is accessed through Edexcel Online (EOL) and any issues should be made through EOL.

# Submission Deadline

**The submission date never changes!**

- The final date for submission of marks is:

# 15 May

- Marks must be entered online and the folders submitted on or before this date – moderators are required to comment on the meeting of the submission date.
- If the sample is sent late, please print out the approval from the Pearson Edexcel team that approves a late submission and include this with the sample.

# Moderator Reports

- On Results Day your moderator report is available through your Edexcel Online account.
- Speak to your Exams Officer about access to Edexcel Online.
- Moderators will not be aware of any adjustments to your marks made by the system, so the report will not discuss mark changes. Moderators will comment on whether marks were accurate, lenient, or severe according to the agreed national standard, and may mention “adjustment was recommended”, but will not have been aware of the exact nature of any changes.

# Summary and support



# Support guide

Our [support guide](#) highlights all the support available on our website for delivering Pearson Edexcel A Level English Literature.

## Key support for NEA

- [Key guidance on coursework](#)
- [Candidate video about CW](#)
- [Network summary](#)
- [Past coursework training packs](#)
- [Literature coursework guides](#)



# Subject Advisor Support



Our subject advisors are experts in their fields and are here to support you throughout the year.

**Email:** [teachingenglish@pearson.com](mailto:teachingenglish@pearson.com)

**Phone:** +44 (0) 344 463 2535 (Mon–Fri, 9:00–17:00)

[Book an appointment with your Subject Advisor](#)

[Sign up](#) to receive regular updates from your Subject Advisor on qualification news and support for your subject.

Follow our [Facebook page](#) and join our Pearson Edexcel teacher groups for private, professional discussions managed by your Subject Advisor.

- [GCSE English](#)
- [A Level English](#)

**English**  
**Clare Haviland**





# Upcoming A Level English Literature training

- [Targeting Levels 4 and 5 in Component 1 Shakespeare and Other Drama](#)  
26 January 16:00-18:00
- [Component 3 Section A Unseen Poetry and the Forward Poems of the Decade](#)  
25 March 16:00-18:00

You can also find recordings of past events and pre-record training on our [YouTube playlist](#).



Now also available is the [\*\*New to Pearson Edexcel\*\*](#) self-paced, interactive online training course which will provide you with an overview of the qualification before exploring each component in more detail.

# Help shape the future of English

[Let's Talk English](#) is all about reimagining what English means for today's learners.

Throughout 2025, we've brought together thousands of voices from across education to explore bold questions about the future of English.

This autumn, we will be sharing:

- reports with **the key findings from each of these conversations**
- more opportunities to have your say and **help shape the future of English**.

 [Sign up](#) to join the conversation and stay-up-to-date.



# Qualification Services

The following services are included as part of your qualification fees:



## examWizard

An online resource bank of past paper questions and support materials, enabling you to create customised mock exams and tests tailored to your students' needs.



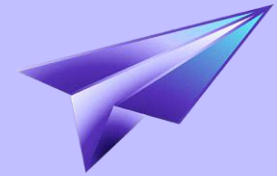
## ResultsPlus

An online results analysis tool that provides a detailed breakdown of students' performance in our exams, helping you identify areas for improvement and track progress effectively.



## Access To Scripts

An online service that allows you to view and download your candidates' marked scripts. This tool offers transparency and insight into the marking process.



## Mocks Service

We offer a paid service for mocks, including paper-based and onscreen assessments. Marked by examiners, results are uploaded to ResultsPlus for detailed analysis to aid student progression and teacher training. Note that this service is not available for all subjects; please check availability for your specific subject.

# Teaching and learning resources



## Rapid Plus

Approved and recommended by Catch Up Literacy and developed alongside SEN experts, Rapid Plus was carefully designed to help SEND, EAL and struggling readers to reach their full potential.

**Sign up to browse** through our free samples and trial our digital resources with your students.



## Accessible Shakespeare

Help all your students to connect and engage with Shakespeare with the most accessible and best value editions available.

We're delighted to offer a **50% discount** on all orders of Accessible Shakespeare until the end of December 2025.

Use code **ACCSHAKE50** at the checkout.



# Find out more

For more professional development courses please see [Pearson's Professional Development Academy](#).



Following this event, you will receive a survey to share your thoughts about the session. Please let us know what you'd like to see more of and what areas could be improved.





Thank you.