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GCSE (9-1) English Language

GETTING STARTED GUIDE

GCSE English Language

Getting Started: GCSE (9-1) English Language 2015

Contents

1. Introduction

This *Getting Started* guide provides an overview of the new GCSE specification, to help you understand the changes to content and assessment, and to help you understand what these mean for you and your students.

Key features of our GCSE English Language

The specification and Sample Assessment Materials have been developed in consultation with the teaching community, higher education, learned societies and subject associations. Teachers from a range of schools and colleges – in focus groups, phone interviews, network groups and face-to-face interviews – have provided feedback at each stage and have helped us to shape the specification.

Drawing on feedback from all parts of the English education community, the 2015 GCSE English Language specification has been built on the following key features.

- **19th-century fiction** as a standalone, unseen text. Students will be asked to respond to a number of questions on one 650-word extract taken from a 19th-century novel. This approach allows you to prepare your students for this requirement by sourcing a variety of interesting fiction texts from the 1800s and by using our free *GCSE English Language Unseen Preparation Anthology*.

- **Comparison of 20th- and 21st-century non-fiction texts**. Comparing two real-world and relevant non-fiction and literary non-fiction texts allows students to learn the challenging skill of comparison by reading modern and accessible texts. This allows students to make deeper and more nuanced comparison, as well as being able to engage with relevant subjects which are linked to world issues and modern concerns. As with the 19th-century fiction, you will be able to prepare students for this requirement by accessing non-fiction texts from a variety of sources as well as using our free *GCSE English Language Unseen Preparation Anthology*.

- **Focus on modern, transactional and relevant texts**. Our Paper 2 is worth 60% of the overall GCSE and focuses on transactional reading and writing. This allows your students to gain valuable skills in by reading and comparing a wide variety of everyday, challenging texts, such as articles from high-quality newspapers and magazines, reviews of books, textbook entries, obituaries, speeches, letters, biographies and autobiographies. Students are then required to produce a piece of transactional writing which will draw on their knowledge of a variety of text forms and of writing for differing audiences. We believe that this renewed emphasis on transactional and modern texts will allow students to learn skills which will prepare them for the next steps of their education and working life.

- **Engaging and relevant writing tasks**. A key feature of our specification is the range of writing tasks. Students will be required to write a creative piece, either based on a set title or on an image, and a transactional piece of writing.

- **Linked topics to improve writing**. Our research with stakeholders and teachers told us that students' focus on structure, audience, and spelling, punctuation and grammar is improved if they have already read around the topic they are then asked to write about. Therefore, the writing tasks in both of our papers have the same topic and focus as our reading tasks. This helps ensure that students can go into the examination feeling prepared.

We will be providing a package of support to help you plan and implement the new specification.

- **Planning**. In addition to the section on planning in this guide, we will be providing course planners and schemes of work that you can adapt to suit your department.

- **Understanding the standard**. We will supply you with 'real life' exemplars which have been written by students and marked by our examiners.

- **Tracking learner progress**. Our well-established ResultsPlus service will help you track student progress, as will our MockAnalysis service.

- **Personal, local support**. Our subject advisor is always on hand to help you and can be contacted at teachingenglish@pearson.com.

- **Free support for the key challenges**. We have been working with both The University of Exeter's Grammar for Writing project and King's College, London's Let's Think in English project to create lesson plans and resources which can be used to teach the Pearson Edexcel GCSE in English Language. These lesson plans will allow you to use tried and tested pedagogies focusing on teaching grammar and unseen texts, ensuring that your students are confident and have the skills to deal with the challenge of unseen texts and writing tasks in the exam.

2. What's changed?

2.1 How has GCSE English Language changed?

Changes to GCSE English Language

- From September 2015, GCSE English Language will be a linear qualification. This means that all examinations must be sat at the end of the course.
- The course is also assessed 100% external examination with no coursework or controlled assessment units.
- This qualification is available in both the summer and November series, with the first assessment in summer 2017. Students who take GCSE English Language in a November series must be at least 16 years of age on the preceding 31 August.
- There is a new 9–1 grading scale, with 9 being the top level.
- Tiering is only permitted in certain GCSE subjects, such as Maths and Science. GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature are therefore untiered.

Changes to GCSE English Language subject criteria

The subject criteria for GCSE English Language have been revised. All awarding organisations' specifications for GCSE English Language must meet these criteria.

- **Reading** and **Writing** are each worth 50% of the GCSE.
- There are **no set texts** – students will need to answer questions on unseen texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.
- These texts must be high-quality texts and cover **fiction**, **non-fiction** and **literary non-fiction**
- The weighting for vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar (AO6) has increased to **20%**
- **Speaking and Listening** is now called **Spoken Language** and is assessed and reported as a separate endorsement.

Changes to Assessment Objectives

The GCSE English Language Assessment Objectives have been revised. There are now 4 assessment objectives for reading; 2 for writing and 3 for spoken language.

The reading Assessment Objectives, which are listed in full below, focus on interpreting and synthesising information; explaining, commenting and analysing the writers' use of language; comparing texts; and evaluating texts critically.

	Reading – 50%
AO1	- Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas - Select and synthesise evidence from different texts
AO2	Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views
AO3	Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts
AO4	Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references

The writing Assessment Objectives focus on how students communicate and are able to adapt their writing styles to different audiences. These AOs are now split into two: one focuses on tone, style and register (AO5) and the other focuses on vocabulary, sentence structure and spelling and punctuation (AO6).

	Writing – 50%
AO5	- Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. - Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.
AO6	Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

The Spoken Language Assessment Objectives now focus on presentation skills in terms of both speaking and listening. The Spoken Language Endorsement will be reported as a separate grade on the awarding body certificate.

	Spoken Language – separate endorsement
AO7	Demonstrate presentation skills in a formal setting.
AO8	Listen and respond appropriately to spoken language, including to questions and feedback to presentations.
AO9	Use spoken Standard English effectively in speeches and presentations.

2.2 Changes to the specification

Specification overview

The table below provides a brief overview of the GCSE English Language specification.

Component 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing	Component 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing
40% of the GCSE	60% of the GCSE
External examination	External examination
- One unseen 19th-century fiction extract - One creative writing task	- Comparing one literary non-fiction and one non-fiction text from the 20th and 21st century - One transactional writing task
AO1, AO2, AO4, AO5, AO6	AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4, AO5, AO6

Component 3: Spoken Language
Assessed and awarded as a separate endorsement
Internally assessed, externally moderated (TBC)
Presentation in a formal setting
AO7, AO8, AO9

Changes to assessment

There are now nine Assessment Objectives for GCSE English Language.

- Four AOs are attached to Reading – AO1, AO2 and AO4 are assessed in Component 1 with all four AOs assessed in Component 2.
- Two AOs are attached to Writing and both are assessed in Component 1 and Component 2.
- Three AOs are attached to Spoken Language and are all assessed in Component 3.

GCSE English Language assessment model	
Component 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing Total marks: **64** Weighting: **40%** Questions to answer: **5 (4 reading; 1 writing)** Exam time: **1 hour 45 minutes**	**Section A: Reading** Students will answer four questions on one 19th-century fiction extract of approximately 650 words. There will be a mixture of short and extended response questions on the extract. **AO1**, **AO2** and **AO4** will be targeted.
	Section B: Imaginative Writing Writing tasks are linked by a theme to the reading extract. Different aspects of the theme will be reflected in each task. One of the writing tasks will provide two images that students can use to help them generate ideas for their writing. Students can write a response that draws on just one or neither of the images. **AO5** and **AO6** will be targeted.
Component 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing Total marks: **96** Weighting: **60%** Questions to answer: **8 (7 reading; 1 writing)** Exam time: **2 hours 5 minutes**	**Section A: Reading** Two unseen non-fiction extracts, from 20th- and 21st-century texts. One of these texts will be literary non-fiction. The word count across the two extracts will be approximately 1000 words. The minimum length of an extract will be 350 words. Questions will be on Text 1, followed by Text 2. There will be a mixture of short- and extended-response questions on the extracts. The final question of this section requires students to compare the writers' ideas and how they are presented in the two texts. **AO1**, **AO2**, **AO3** and **AO4** will be targeted.
	Section B: Transactional Writing Writing tasks are linked by a theme to the reading extracts. It is possible for the same form (for example a letter or an article) to be present in both tasks in the same paper but with a different focus and/or audience.
Component 3	**TBC**

3. Planning

3.1 Planning and delivering a two-year linear course for GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature

Both the GCSEs in English Language and English Literature are linear, with all assessment at the end of the course. There is a November resit window for post-16 students for GCSE English Language.

There are a number of possible routes through the two-year, two-qualification course and centres will need to decide on a delivery model which suits their teaching methods, school timetables and students. Section 3.3 (see page 12) outlines some of the possible routes and there are a number of course planners available on our website.

(For those wishing to follow a one-year GCSE English Language course, we have also provided some guidance for this route in Section 3.3 and course planners on our website. This route is only available from September 2016 and is designed for post-16 providers.)

3.2 Suggested resources

Unseen texts anthology

In order to help you prepare students for the unseen text elements of the examination, Pearson have prepared the *Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1) English Language Anthology* to complement your teaching. This anthology is available to download from our website and will contain the following texts.

19th-century texts				
Possible theme	**Title**	**Author**	**Year**	**Reference**
Adventure	*Treasure Island*	Robert Louis Stevenson	1883	Chapter 1 – introduction of Captain Billy Bones
Coming of age	*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*	Mark Twain	1876	Chapter 18 – Tom and Becky play mind games
	David Copperfield	Charles Dickens	1850	Chapter 3 – David meets Mr Murdstone
Science fiction	*20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*	Jules Verne	1870	Chapter 7 – the explorers find a strange submarine
Horror	*The Invisible Man*	H G Wells	1897	Chapter 4 – Dr Cuss tells how he encountered the invisible man
Historical	*Anna Karenina*	Leo Tolstoy	1873	Chapter 13 – Levin proposes to Kitty
	Castle Rackrent	Maria Edgeworth	1800	'History of Sir Conolly Rackrent' - Sir Condy brings his new bride home to Castle Rackrent
Family drama	*Northanger Abbey*	Jane Austen	1817	Chapter 1 – introduction to the Morland sisters

| | *Wuthering Heights* | Emily Bronte | 1845 | Chapter 1 - Catherine discusses her feelings about Mr Linton |

20th- and 21st-century non-fiction and literary non-fiction texts

Possible theme	20th century	21st century
Learning	Letter to his Daughter – Kurt Vonnegut (1972)	Extract from *The Guardian* – 'Children are robbed of the right to education worldwide – but we can help' – Julia Gillard (2014)
Winning and losing	Speech reviewing the election win – Tony Blair (1997)	Extract from *Open* – Andre Agassi (2009)
Egypt/exotic travel	Extract from *Notes on a Small Island* – Bill Bryson (1995)	*Tatler* travel promotion on Egypt (2012)
Danger	Extract from *Touching the Void* – Joe Simpson (1998)	Review from *The Independent* – 'Nemesis Sub Terra: Are you scared yet?' (2012)
Imprisonment	Extract from *An Evil Cradling* – Brian Keenan (1991)	Extract from an article from *The Times Magazine* – 'Living without technology' (2013)
The brain	Extract from *Hare Brain, Tortoise Mind* – Guy Claxton (1997)	Review from *The New Scientist* – 'Short Attention Span' – Catherine de Lange (2014)
Challenges	Extract from *The Diving Bell and The Butterfly* – Jean-Dominique Bauby (1997)	Extract from *Dealing with Difficult People* – Rod Lilley (2002)
Tradition	Letter to his children from Father Christmas – J R R Tolkien (1925)	Article from *The Daily Telegraph* – 'The Battle to own Father Christmas' (2013)

Let's Think in English

We have been working with King's College, London to produce some lesson plans for teaching students to tackle unseen texts with confidence. These lessons plans are available on the Pearson website. For further information about this project, please visit www.letsthinkinenglish.org/ or follow the links from the Pearson website.

Grammar for Writing

We have also been working with the University of Exeter to produce lesson plans and resources for teaching grammar and improving reading and writing skills. These lesson plans are available on the Pearson website. For further information about this project, please visit GCSE English Language webpages on the Pearson website.

Other online sources

Text types	Website
Non-fiction and literary non-fiction articles	www.bbc.co.uk www.telegraph.co.uk www.theguardian.com www.independent.co.uk www.dailymail.co.uk There are a number of online broadsheet and tabloid newspaper sites. Those listed above do not have a 'pay wall' and may be used for free. www.lettersofnote.com/ has a large number of interesting and unusual letters in full which can be used in the classroom. www.theguardian.com/theguardian/series/greatspeeches is a good source of full speeches from the 20th century. www.teachit.co.uk/ provides suggestions of articles, lesson plans and advice around teaching non-fiction texts.
19th-century fiction	www.gutenberg.org/ provides a number of free 19th-century novels. www.goodreads.com provides a number of lists and suggestions for 19th-century novels as well as key quotations and chapters.
Writing	As well as the resources listed above, www.cybergrammar.co.uk/ is a very helpful online resource for grammar teaching and learning. www.tes.co.uk/ and www.teachit.co.uk/ also have a number of resources for both transactional and creative writing.

3.3 Delivery models

One of the first decisions you need to make is the approach to teaching GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature. There are a number of different delivery options, two of which are outlined in the tables below. More detail on each is given in the separate course planners available on our website.

Option 1: Complementary teaching across the two GCSEs

Equal split between GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature teaching (two lessons each per week).

Year 10	Language	Literature	Spoken Language
Autumn 1	Intro to Language AOs	Intro to Literature AOs	Literature introduction could be used as a means of building presentation confidence and introducing Spoken Language AOs
Autumn 2	Reading and Writing skills	Shakespeare play introduction and reading of whole play	
Spring 1	AO3 – comparison writing skills	Post-1914 text – introduction	
Spring 2	Mock exam	Post-1914 text – reading the whole text	Students could research/present on one era or literary genre, or research changes in language to build skills for AO8
Summer 1	Reading skills – 19th century. Link to Spoken Language tasks	19th-century text – read whole text – make links with GCSE English Language	
Summer 2	Imaginative writing	Introduction to poetry – anthology and unseen	
Year 11	**Language**	**Literature**	**Spoken Language**
Autumn 1	Reading and Writing – non-fiction	Poetry – focus on comparing anthology poetry and unseen poems	Continue to use Spoken Language as a means of developing independent study skills. Students could research and present on aspects of poetry through the ages, or on aspects of rhetoric via famous speeches/orators
Autumn 2		Revisit Shakespeare play	
Spring 1	Revise Language Paper 1	Revise Literature Paper 1	
Spring 2	Revise Language Paper 2	Revise Literature Paper 2	
Summer	Revision – focus on timings and SAMs. Exam	Revision – focus on timings and SAMs. Exam	Final assessments for Spoken Language certification, if not already covered

Option 2: Separate teaching of Language and Literature

Where a teaching block for GCSE English Literature uses *italics*, it is intended that the main focus for that half-term is language, with the literature text read either for one lesson a week in class or for homework.

Year 10	Language	Literature	Spoken Language
Autumn 1	Reading skills – 20th- and 21st-century texts	*Familiarity with post-1914 text*	Literature introduction could be used as a means of building presentation confidence and introducing Spoken Language AOs
Autumn 2		Read whole post-1914 text	
Spring 1	Reading skills – 19th-century extracts	*Familiarity with 19th-century text*	Students could research/present on one era or literary genre, or research changes in language to build skills for AO8. Students could also talk about a Shakespearean theme or character
Spring 2		Read whole 19th-century text	
Summer 1	Writing skills	*Familiarity with Shakespeare play*	
Summer 2		Read whole Shakespeare play	
Year 11	**Language**	**Literature**	**Spoken Language**
Autumn 1	*Writing skills – one lesson per week*	Introduction to poetry – anthology and unseen	Continue to use Spoken Language as a means of developing independent study skills. Students could research and present on aspects of poetry through the ages, or aspects of rhetoric via famous speeches/orators
Autumn 2	*Writing skills – one lesson per week*	Poetry in detail – finish anthology collection and concentrate on comparison and unseen preparation	
Spring 1	Reading – comparison of non-fiction	*Revision of texts – one lesson per week*	Final assessments for Spoken Language certification, if not already covered
Spring 2	Reading and Writing	*Revision of texts – one lesson per week*	
Summer	Revision – focus on timings and SAMs Exam	Revision – focus on timings and SAMs Exam	

Option 3: One-year course planner for GCSE English Language (resit and/or post-16 option)

Paper 1 is 40 per cent of the marks; paper 2 is higher at 60 per cent. This route suggests starting with the smaller paper as an introduction to the AOs and key skills, in order to build the confidence/expertise needed to approach the larger paper.

Year 10	First half term	Second half term	Spoken Language
Autumn	Reading 19th century fiction Writing skills (AO6)	Imaginative writing	Presentations on 19th-century literary heroes/genres or forms
Spring	Reading 20th- and 21st- century non-fiction and literary non-fiction	Transactional writing Mock exam	Students could research and present on non-fiction topics from their own extracts
Summer	Revision – comparison and writing from reading	Revision and exam	Final assessments for Spoken Language certification, if not already covered

4. Content guidance

Component 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing

Section A: Reading

The focus of this section is on reading and understanding one unseen 19th-century fiction extract. This extract will be approximately 650 words long and students will be required to answer a mixture of short- and extended-response questions on the extract.

Students should read selections from a range of high-quality, challenging prose fiction in preparation for responding to the unseen 19th-century prose fiction extract in the examination. They should be able to read substantial pieces of writing (extended texts) that make significant demands on them in terms of content, structure and the quality of language. Throughout the qualification, students should develop the skills of inference, analysis and evaluation.

Students also studying GCSE English Literature should be encouraged to analyse and evaluate the use of English language in a full range of their literature texts.

Section B: Imaginative Writing

The focus of this section is on writing an imaginative piece of work which is structured, with a clear sense of audience and using a range of vocabulary, spelling and punctuation.

Students should use what they have learned about the writers' craft in their reading of fiction to inspire and influence their own imaginative writing. They should develop a range of creative writing techniques, plus planning and proofreading skills.

Component 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing

Section A: Reading

The focus of this section is on reading and comparing non-fiction and literary non-fiction texts from the 20th and 21st centuries.

Students should read a variety of high-quality, challenging non-fiction and literary non-fiction in preparation for responding to unseen 20th- and 21st-century non-fiction in the examination. They should be able to read substantial pieces of writing, including whole and extended texts, that make significant demands in terms of content, structure and the quality of the language. Throughout the qualification, students should develop the skills of interpretation, analysis and evaluation.

Text types studied should include a range of non-fiction forms such as journalism (for example articles and reviews), speeches, journals and reference book extracts. Text types should also include literary non-fiction such as selections from autobiography, letters, obituaries and travel writing. These lists are not exhaustive. Texts that are essentially transient, such as instant news feeds and advertisements, will not form part of the assessment.

Section B: Transactional Writing

The focus of this section is writing a transactional piece of work which is structured, with a clear sense of audience and using a range of vocabulary, spelling and punctuation.

Students should use what they have learned about different text types to feed into their transactional writing. They should be introduced to, and be given the opportunity to practise, a range of non-fiction writing techniques, plus planning and proofreading skills.

5. Assessment guidance

5.1 Assessment Objectives and weightings

Students must:				% in GCSE
Reading	**AO1**	● Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. ● Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.		9.4
	AO2	Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.		13.1
	AO3	Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts.		8.8
	AO4	Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.		18.8
Writing	**AO5**	● Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. ● Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.		30
	AO6	Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.		20
Spoken Language	***AO7**	Demonstrate presentation skills in a formal setting.		n/a
	***AO8**	Listen and respond appropriately to spoken language, including to questions and feedback to presentations.		n/a
	***AO9**	Use spoken Standard English effectively in speeches and presentations.		n/a
				100%

5.2 Breakdown of Assessment Objectives

Component	Assessment Objectives						Total
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**	**AO4**	**AO5**	**AO6**	
Component 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing							64 marks
Question 1	1						
Question 2	2						2
Question 3		6					6
Question 4				15			15
Question 5 or 6					24	16	40
Component 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing							
Question 1	2						2
Question 2	2						2
Question 3		15					15
Question 4	1						1
Question 5	1						1
Question 6				15			15
Question 7a	6						6
Question 7b			14				14
Question 8 or 9					24	16	40
Total for this qualification	**15**	**21**	**14**	**30**	**48**	**32**	**160 marks**
Total % Assessment Objectives for qualification	**9.4%**	**13.1%**	**8.8%**	**18.8%**	**30%**	**20%**	**100%**

5.3 Assessment Objectives and mark schemes

In this section are some examples of how all six of the Assessment Objectives will be interpreted within the mark grids. These examples have been taken from our Sample Assessment Materials, which can be found on our website.

AO1: Explicit and implicit understanding

This element of the AO has been attached to the shorter questions in both Components 1 and 2. The mark scheme below is for Component 1, Section A, questions 1 and 2.

Question number	(AO1) Answer	Mark
1	Accept only the following: ● 'A tub had caught all'	(1)

Question number	(AO1) Answer	Mark
2	Accept any reasonable answer based on lines 13 to 19, up to a maximum of 2 marks. **Quotations and candidate's own words are acceptable.** For example: ● he asks what he has to fear as if the answer is 'nothing' ● he smiles ● he welcomes the policemen in ● he is able to make up an excuse for the noise ● he shows them the whole house ● he encourages them to search 'well'/wherever they want ● he shows them the old man's room/things	(2)

AO1: Select and synthesise

AO1 requires students to 'select and synthesise evidence from different texts'. This mark scheme is for Component 2, Question 7a. Students are not required to compare the two texts but they must consider both of the texts in their response.

Question number	Indicative content
7a	- Both men seem quiet and reserved. Nick is 'softly spoken' and Leo is not comfortable speaking to 'the girls'. - Both are intelligent and educated. Nick was 'the first in his family to attend university' and Leo uses specialist language that shows his intelligence, such as 'frequency count' and 'substitution code'. - Both Nick and Leo know the importance of being secretive. Nick has 'managed to conceal his clandestine life from his friends' while Leo sees how codes are created to protect secrets – 'And it was possible that the three messages had been enciphered on the same Playfair phrase'. - Both men realise the importance of being part of a team. Nick says he was 'amazed' how friendly it was and Leo says 'the cheer that went up in the code room could have been heard in the Netherlands'. - Both realise the work can involve long hours. Nick says 'occasionally you do work long hours' and Leo spends more than three days on the code in the extract. - Both Nick and Leo have an international focus. Nick was 'initially attracted to MI6 by the chance to travel' and Leo mentions German and Dutch. - Both Nick and Leo seem to be men who prefer to be behind the scenes. Nick says it is important to be a person who doesn't 'crave the limelight'. Leo also is more comfortable working alone and, talking to the girls, he has to do his best 'not to stammer'. **Students must draw on BOTH texts to access marks.**

Level	Mark	(AO1 bullet 2) Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	- Limited understanding of similarities. - Limited synthesis of the two texts. - The use of evidence is limited.
Level 2	3–4	- Sound understanding of similarities. - Clear synthesis of the two texts. - The selection of evidence is valid but not developed and there may be an imbalance.
Level 3	5–6	- Detailed understanding of similarities. - Detailed synthesis of the two texts. - The selection of evidence is appropriate and relevant to the points being made.

AO2: Language, structure and form

This AO targets extended response questions. The focus of AO2 is on the ways writers use language to create effect; the focus is on specific writer techniques rather than a judgement of overall success of type, form or purpose, which is AO4.

Below is an example of how AO2 is rewarded in an extended response question. In this mark scheme, students are rewarded for the points they make about language *and* structure. Therefore, students need to refer to both elements in order to attain marks in the higher bands. This mark scheme is taken from Component 2, Section A, question 3.

Question number	Indicative content
3	Reward responses that analyse how the article uses language and structure to interest and engage readers.
	Responses may include the following points about the language of the text:
	• the writer uses literary techniques such as personification to create interest in the reader. Referring to SIS as someone 'tiptoeing' into the modern world creates a sense that they want to do it quietly and without fuss or that they are not sure about it
	• the colloquial tone helps to strengthen rapport with the reader, e.g. 'Could you tell your mum?'
	• the use of humour is designed to interest the reader and engage them in what is being said. It also helps to make SIS seem less secret and 'untouchable', e.g. 'the kind who know what to do with scatter cushions', 'Could you tell your mum?'
	• the quotations from the officers make the job sound 'normal' and so more appealing, with references to family – 'I do get to drop my daughter at nursery and pick her up' – and skills many people have such as 'building relationships'

		• the article contrasts the normal with the unusual – the references to family are contrasted with the references to exotic foreign travel – 'Africa and the Middle East'.
		Responses may include the following points about the structure of the text:
		• the use of short sentences at the start sets a conversational tone as if the writer is talking to the reader and telling them a secret about the types of people being recruited, e.g. 'That increasingly means people from the ethnic minorities' and 'There is a demand for more women, too'
		• the structure of the article is used to surprise the reader and make them realise that their ideas about spies are incorrect, e.g. lines 10–18 show that the recruitment drive is unusual and the last part, from line 38, shows that there are particular qualities and requirements
		• the use of short sentences in the section on application emphasises how difficult it is, e.g. 'Five per cent of applicants fail personal vetting'
		• the repetition of percentages and 'half' in lines 43–46 shows how hard it is to be selected and this contrasts with the idea of it being open and friendly.

Level	Mark	(AO2) Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	• Limited comment on the text. • Identification of the language and/or structure used to achieve effects and influence readers. • The use of references is limited.
Level 2	4–6	• Comment on the text. • Comment on the language and/or structure used to achieve effects and influence readers, including use of vocabulary. • The selection of references is valid, but not developed. **NB: The mark awarded cannot progress beyond the top of Level 2 if only language *or* structure has been considered.**
Level 3	7–9	• Explanation of the text. • Explanation of how both language and structure are used to achieve effects and influence readers, including use of vocabulary and sentence structure. • The selection of references is appropriate and relevant to the points being made.
Level 4	10–12	• Exploration of the text. • Exploration of how both language and structure are used to achieve effects and influence readers, including use of vocabulary, sentence structure and other language features. • The selection of references is detailed, appropriate and fully supports the points being made.
Level 5	13–15	• Analysis of the text. • Analysis of how both language and structure are used to achieve effects and influence readers, including use of vocabulary, sentence structure and other language features. • The selection of references is discriminating and clarifies the points being made.

AO3: Comparison

This Assessment Objective is assessed in one extended question in Component 2, Section A, question 7b.

Students are required to compare two unseen non-fiction texts and compare how the writers present the same theme. The comparison of content (information and ideas), language and structure are rewardable.

There should be sufficient evidence in the response analysing each text, and comparing the texts, in order to reward responses. Responses that are unbalanced are unlikely to be able to access band 3, where explanation of writers' ideas and perspectives is required alongside a wide range of comparisons between texts.

This mark scheme is taken from Component 2, Section A, question 7b.

Question number	Indicative content
7b	Reward responses that compare how each writer presents the idea of working for an intelligence agency.
	Responses may include:
	● both texts show it can be difficult – Text 1 shows how difficult it is to be selected and Text 2 shows how difficult the work can be and how you need to be patient
	● both texts show that working in intelligence can be just like a normal job, where you need to be able to work well in a team
	● both texts show how people who work in intelligence are just ordinary people who have normal feelings and aren't superhuman, 'Doing my best not to stammer'
	● even though each text shows the ordinary aspects of working in intelligence, it also shows how important it can be, as in Text 2 they crack a code to help with the war and in Text 1 you could be placed 'in danger' and can travel the world
	● both texts use humour – in Text 1 by mocking the clichés of working in intelligence and in Text 2 by showing the relationships when the pressure is on
	● Text 1 suggests that the application process is making a lot of demands of the people who apply for the job, e.g. 'motivated problem-solvers', but in Text 2 Marks cracks the code by just getting lucky
	● Text 1 says SIS are looking for target groups of people from ethnic minorities and women but in Text 2 it is a white male who is in charge of 'the girls'. However, this could just reflect the time in which Text 2 was set.

Level	Mark	(AO3) Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	● The response does not compare the texts.
		● Description of writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure.
		● The use of references is limited.
Level 2	3-5	● The response considers obvious comparisons between the texts.
		● Comment on writers' ideas and perspectives, including

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		theme, language and/or structure.
		● The selection of references is valid, but not developed.
		NB: The mark awarded cannot progress beyond the top of Level 2 if only ONE text has been considered in detail.
Level 3	6-8	● The response considers a range of comparisons between the texts.
		● Explanation of writers' ideas and perspectives including theme, language and/or structure.
		● The selection of references is appropriate and relevant to the points being made.
Level 4	9-11	● The response considers a wide range of comparisons between the texts.
		● Exploration of writers' ideas and perspectives including how the theme, language and/or structure are used across the texts.
		● References are balanced across both texts and fully support the points being made.
Level 5	12-14	● The response considers a varied and comprehensive range of comparisons between the texts.
		● Analysis of writers' ideas and perspectives including how the theme, language and/or structure are used across the texts.
		● References are balanced across both texts, they are discriminating, and clarify the points being made.

AO4: Evaluate

This AO is addressed in two extended response questions: one in Component 1 and one in Component 2.

This AO asks students to look at **how well** the writer presents ideas, events, themes and settings rather than **how** they are presented. Students must put forward their own critical judgements about how well a text fulfils the requirements of type, form or purpose. Their comments must be supported with appropriate references to the text(s) and these may include content, language and/or structure analysis to support their positive or negative comments. The focus here is on the student's ability to make a critical judgement of the type, form or purpose of a text and, where students refer to the writer's techniques without making a judgement on a text, they will not be able to move up to the higher bands of the mark scheme. At the highest level, AO4 requires a sustained critical overview from the student and a level of critical distance.

This mark scheme is taken from Component 1, Section A, question 4.

Question number	Indicative content
4	Reward responses that evaluate how successfully the purpose of conveying tension is achieved.
	References to writer's techniques should only be credited at level 2 and above if they support the critical judgement of the text.
	Responses may include:
	● the narrator's mental state is evident throughout the extract which

allows the reader to feel closer to him and experience the tension with him

- the reader would feel that the narrator is too confident for his own good. He enjoys showing the policemen around the house as he is so certain he won't be found out. This builds tension for the reader and they will want to find out if he does get caught

- it is clear exactly what the narrator is thinking and feeling, and the contrast to the blissful ignorance of the policemen makes it even more tense for the reader

- the narrator's gradual breakdown is carefully crafted throughout the extract and by the end of the extract the narrator is consumed by his paranoia – 'They were making a mockery of my horror!'

- the description of the narrator's extreme behaviour at the end of the extract ('I foamed – I raved – I swore!') puts across how his feelings have been building through the extract

- structure is manipulated in the extract and in the last-but-one paragraph the narrator's loss of control chills the reader.

Level	Mark	(AO4) Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	• Description of ideas, events, themes or settings. • Limited assertions are offered about the text. • The use of references is limited.
Level 2	4–6	• Comment on ideas, events, themes or settings. • Straightforward opinions with limited judgements are offered about the text. • The selection of references is valid, but not developed.
Level 3	7–9	• Explanation of ideas, events, themes or settings. • Informed judgement is offered about the text. • The selection of references is appropriate and relevant to the points being made.
Level 4	10–12	• Analysis of ideas, events, themes or settings. • Well-informed and developed critical judgement is offered about the text. • The selection of references is appropriate, detailed and fully supports the points being made.
Level 5	13–15	• Evaluation of ideas, events, themes or settings. • There is a sustained and detached critical overview and judgement about the text. • The selection of references is apt and discriminating and is persuasive in clarifying the points being made.

AO5: Composition and organisation

This AO is the first of the writing AOs. When assessing composition, the focus will be on an awareness of purpose and audience as well as the creation of style, tone and register. Organisation and structure focuses on content management in terms of constructing paragraphs as well as overall text cohesion.

AO6: Range of vocabulary and sentence structure, accurate spelling and punctuation

The focus is on the following areas:

● spelling – accuracy of spelling is the focus with an acknowledgement that this is directly related to vocabulary used

● punctuation and grammar – the focus is on how the accuracy and complexity of punctuation impacts on sentence structure.

Assessment Objectives 5 and 6 are assessed in Section B in both Components 1 and 2. The example mark schemes below are taken from Component 1, Section B, question 5.

Question number	Indicative content
*5	**Purpose**: to write a real or imagined piece about a time a person tried to hide something. This may involve a range of approaches, including: description, anecdote, speech, literary techniques.
	Audience: the writing is for a general readership. Candidates can choose to write for an adult audience or an audience of young people.
	Form: the response must be narrative, description or monologue. There should be organisation and structure with a clear introduction, development of points and a conclusion. Some candidates may intentionally adapt their language and style to their audience by using, for example, a more informal or colloquial approach. Candidates may introduce some literary elements.
	Responses may:
	● use an example of something physically being hidden, e.g. hiding a secret book to prevent information being lost, or metaphorically being hidden, e.g. keeping information from someone
	● give reasons why it was being hidden and the impact on the person hiding and being hidden from
	● use appropriate techniques for creative writing, e.g. vocabulary, imagery, language techniques
	● use a voice that attempts to make the piece interesting and believable to the chosen audience
	● demonstrate particular understanding of the form used
	● be written in a register and style appropriate for the chosen form, which may include colloquial elements, dialogue within description or narrative, a sustained single voice in monologue.
	40 marks

Writing mark scheme

Assessment Objective 5

Level	Mark	The candidate:
	0	• provides no rewardable material
Level 1	1–4	• offers a basic response, with audience and/or purpose not fully established • expresses information and ideas, with limited use of structural and grammatical features
Level 2	5–9	• shows an awareness of audience and purpose, with straightforward use of tone, style and register • expresses and orders information and ideas; uses paragraphs and a range of structural and grammatical features
Level 3	10–14	• selects material and stylistic or rhetorical devices to suit audience and purpose, with appropriate use of tone, style and register • develops and connects appropriate information and ideas; structural and grammatical features and paragraphing make meaning clear
Level 4	15–19	• organises material for particular effect, with effective use of tone, style and register • manages information and ideas, with structural and grammatical features used cohesively and deliberately across the text
Level 5	20–24	• shapes audience response with subtlety, with sophisticated and sustained use of tone, style and register • manipulates complex ideas, utilising a range of structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion.

Assessment Objective 6

Level	Mark	The candidate:
	0	• provides no rewardable material
Level 1	1–3	• uses basic vocabulary, often misspelled • uses punctuation with basic control, creating undeveloped, often repetitive, sentence structures
Level 2	4–6	• writes with a range of correctly spelt vocabulary, e.g. words with regular patterns such as prefixes, suffixes, double consonants • uses punctuation with control, creating a range of sentence structures, including coordination and subordination
Level 3	7–9	• uses a varied vocabulary and spells words containing irregular patterns correctly • uses accurate and varied punctuation, adapting sentence structure to contribute positively to purpose and effect

Level 4	10–12	• uses a wide, selective vocabulary with only occasional spelling errors
		• positions a range of punctuation for clarity, managing sentence structures for deliberate effect
Level 5	13–16	• uses an extensive vocabulary strategically; rare spelling errors do not detract from overall meaning
		• punctuates writing with accuracy to aid emphasis and precision, using a range of sentence structures accurately and selectively to achieve particular effects.