

FAQs for Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) English Language 2.0



1. Is GCSE 2.0 aimed predominantly at post-16 learners?

We know from talking to our teachers that, while GCSE 1EN0 is suitable for most students studying GCSE, there is a need for an alternative qualification. GCSE 2.0 is suitable for post-16 learners taking a less literary route, and for students considering a different, less literary and more functional, pathway. However, it can be studied by all GCSE learners regardless of age.

2. What is the contact time (teaching hours) of 2.0 compared to other GCSEs in English Language?

There are 120 Guided Learning Hours allocated to this GCSE which is exactly the same as the other GCSEs in English Language that are currently available. As with all GCSEs, the most common approach is to teach the qualification over two years, but the equally, some schools and colleges deliver it in one year.

Some students taking Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) English Language 2.0 may be taking it as a standalone GCSE English qualification, without GCSE English Literature. Others will be following a two-year GCSE course and studying GCSE English Language alongside GCSE English Literature.

3. How can the GCSE carry the same marks (160) as the two year-GCSE over one year? (i.e. is it the same teaching time but more condensed?)

This GCSE is comparable and holds exactly the same weight as all other GCSEs in English Language. Therefore, the subject marks are identical. This is a skills-based qualification and does allow for centres to switch exam boards during the course of study. It can be delivered either as a one-year or two-year course.

4. How are you ensuring that the standards are the same?

Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) English Language 2.0 is accredited by Ofqual and holds exactly the same weight as all other GCSEs in English Language (9-1) that are currently available.

GCSE English Language 2.0 counts in schools' performance measures in exactly the same way as existing GCSEs in English Language.

As part of the development of this new GCSE, we have completed analysis on the sample assessment materials against the live GCSE exam papers to ensure that standards are the same in terms of question setting.

We have a common Chair of Examiners overseeing both GCSE Language qualifications – they are involved in the production of the question papers, overseeing the marking and examining teams and the awarding of the qualification.

When it comes to awarding, we conduct the same statistical analysis as we do for the current GCSE (9-1) English Language qualification. Awarding will usually also involve a comparative judgement exercise to ensure that the standard across GCSEs in English Language are comparable.

Students' achievements on Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) English Language 2.0 are of exactly the same value as the existing GCSEs in English Language.

5. Is this an 'easier' GCSE to support post-16 students in resits?

No. The value of GCSE 2.0 is exactly the same as all GCSEs in English Language in terms of standards and grading. Differences are found in the question styles, the text types and the non-literary focus of the 19th-century text choices. We have made the texts more relevant and engaging for post-16 students. We have also included more scaffolding in the writing tasks to support students.

GCSE 2.0 is accredited by Ofqual and holds exactly the same weight as all other GCSEs in English Language. The design of this GCSE reflects feedback from teachers about a style of assessment that will better suit some learners.

6. Why is this paper 'less literary'? Does that mean institutions offering more academic pathways should discredit it as a qualification when considering applications?

Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) English Language 2.0 does offer a more functional approach to GCSE English Language. For example the 19th-century non-fiction texts selected may be newspaper articles and instructional pieces of writing, rather than 19th century fiction. This may appeal to students whose main aim in gaining an English qualification is to be able to progress to the next stage of their education or career. Many students opting to take Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) English Language 2.0 are taking it as a standalone English qualification, without English Literature.

We invite schools and colleges to consider 2.0 alongside our current GCSE English Language and to choose the qualification that best meets their students' needs. 2.0 may be more engaging for students who are re-sitting the GCSE, who need a recognisably different GCSE to the one they have already tried.

7. How are the papers weighted and why?

There are two exam papers in GCSE 2.0, Paper 1 Non-fiction and Paper 2 Contemporary Fiction. They are weighted equally at 50% (and 80 marks each).

Redistribution of the assessment objectives and marks make the final assessments equally weighted and therefore equal stakes. Due to the difference in the assessments (to the current GCSE 1EN0) the AOs have been distributed appropriately for the text types in each paper.

In order to fulfil an equal weighting of marks across the two papers and to support students in their study and revision, all AO4 evaluation marks are on Paper 1 Non-fiction and all AO3 comparison marks are on Paper 2 Contemporary Fiction.

We have not removed anything from the requirements of the current GCSE. We have simply redistributed the marks.

8. What sort of texts are used in the assessments?

The 19th-century requirement is met in Paper 1 using non-fiction, functional, texts. Rather than one long 19th-century text, we use two shorter pieces in the assessments. We include an image with the first, shorter, text in order to support students.

Students are able to relate to the contemporary 20th- and 21st-century texts in Paper 2. In both papers we reprint smaller extracts from the texts above certain questions in order to focus students on the relevant lines needed to answer the question.

Examples of extracts in the Unseen Anthology which exemplify the style of texts which may be selected for assessments:

Paper 1

- Extract from *The Yorkshire Gazette* – a newspaper article describing the Barnum and Bailey circus show which is about to come to York in England (1899).
- Extract from *The New York Sun* – newspaper article about Harriet Tubman (1896), American abolitionist who helped dozens of enslaved people to freedom using the escape networks of the Underground Railroad.

Paper 2

- Extract from *Jaws*, Peter Benchley (1974). Text type: fiction
- Extract from *Life of Pi*, Yann Martel (2001). Text type: fiction

9. How many papers are available?

The following specimen papers are available:

- one set of Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs)
- two sets of specimen papers
- three secure mock papers
- past live papers for both June and November from June 2022 to present
- three anthologies of unseen texts with suggested questions and tasks to use in teaching and learning.

10. Can students re-sit GCSE 2.0?

Yes – the re-sit rules are identical to existing GCSEs. Students may re sit GCSE (9-1) English Language providing they are 16 years of age or over on or prior to the 31 August in the academic year in which they wish to resit in November.

There is a November and summer exam series for Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) English Language 2.0.

11. How does this GCSE support students who have missed teaching time and, as a result, fallen behind in their GCSE English studies?

GCSE 2.0 takes a fresh approach and aims to reinvigorate both students and teachers.

With this GCSE being something different we hope that it offers a new way of engaging students with English Language. As you can see from the SAMs and the anthologies, the texts are relevant and engaging for students who may have otherwise been put off by having to study 19th-century fiction or having to use 19th-century non-fiction to make comparisons to more modern fictional texts.

Students can use modern, transactional texts as a way of accessing the 19th-century non-fiction texts and reading a variety of transactional texts helps develop students' evaluative judgements of the texts. Using modern as well as 19th-century texts also offers the opportunity to see how society has changed over time. During the course of study, students will also engage with topics and themes with universal relevance, for example health and exercise, as featured in the SAMs.

12. Do candidates taking Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) English Language 2.0 have to submit the Spoken Language Endorsement?

Yes. The requirement for and assessment of the Spoken Language Endorsement (SLE) is identical to GCSE 1EN0. There is no change to the SLE requirement.

13. Do re-sit candidates have to re-submit the Spoken Language Endorsement?

A student who is re-taking GCSE English Language (post-16) may re-use a previous pass, merit or distinction result for the Spoken Language Endorsement, even if it was awarded by another awarding body.