GCSE Specification

English 4700
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Ashburton Park
Trafford Park
Manchester
M17 1EH

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1a Why choose AQA?

We, AQA, are the United Kingdom’s favourite awarding body and more students get their academic qualifications from us than from any other board. But why are we so popular?

We understand the different requirements of each subject by working with teachers.

Our GCSEs:

- help students achieve their full potential
- are relevant for today’s challenges
- are manageable for schools and colleges
- are easy to understand by students of all levels of ability
- lead to accurate results, delivered on time; and
- are affordable and value for money.

We provide a wide range of support services for teachers, including:

- access to subject departments
- training for teachers, including practical teaching strategies and methods that work, presented by senior examiners
- individual support for Controlled Assessment
- 24-hour support through our website and online with Ask AQA
- past question papers and mark schemes
- a wide range of printed and electronic resources for teachers and students
- free online results analysis, with Enhanced Results Analysis.

We are an educational charity focused on the needs of the learner. All our income is spent on improving the quality of our specifications, examinations and support services. We don’t aim to profit from education, we want you to.

If you are already a customer we thank you for your support. If you are thinking of joining us we look forward to welcoming you.
1b Why choose GCSE English?

- This specification allows candidates to demonstrate their ability in functional English; to investigate and analyse language and, to experiment and use language creatively.
- The specification offers a skills-based approach to the study of English. This enables candidates to make ‘fresh’ and individual responses to each element of assessment.
- The specification is most suitable for those who wish to explore a range of literary and language topics and skills but who do not wish to take two separate GCSEs in English Language and English Literature.
- The scheme of assessment is linear. All components must be offered and certificated in the same series.
- The examination paper and Controlled Assessments will be available twice a year. Exam papers will be available at Higher and Foundation Tiers, giving access to the course for candidates of all abilities.
- The externally examined unit is common to GCSE English Language. This gives teachers the flexibility to make late entry decisions where they may choose to enter candidates for either GCSE English (1 GCSE) or GCSE English Language plus GCSE English Literature (2 GCSEs).
- The specification covers the functional elements of English. This is done mainly through the externally examined unit. The term ‘functional’ should be considered in the broad sense of providing learners with the skills and abilities they need to take an active and responsible role in their communities, in their everyday lives, workplaces and educational settings.
- Speaking and Listening is internally assessed and is common to GCSE English Language. This unit draws on the good practice observed during the previous specification and allows teachers to set tasks that are relevant to their students. Candidates need to exhibit their ability to speak and listen in functional contexts which require them to discuss and present. They also need to demonstrate their ability to role play in either functional or dramatic situations. This unit is an excellent preparation for life beyond the classroom. From and including summer 2014 Speaking and Listening will be an endorsement, separately reported on the certificate. Speaking and Listening will no longer contribute 20% towards the overall award in GCSE English.
- Creative writing is also assessed through Controlled Assessment. Drawing on the ‘creative’ agenda in the National Curriculum Programme of Study, candidates will be encouraged to be imaginative and to experiment with language to create writing that goes beyond the ‘real life’ contexts of the writing in the external unit. They may choose to write narrative, script, poetry or indeed any genre that enables an imaginative or even experimental use of English. Tasks will be selected from a bank of questions that encourage invention.
- The study of Literature in this specification is assessed through Controlled Assessment. Tasks will be selected from a bank of questions that encourage the candidate to choose their own aspect of study and develop a personal response. The AQA Anthologies Moon on the Tides and Sunlight on the Grass can be used for this unit.
- This specification offers excellent preparation for GCE specifications in English Language, English Literature or combined Language and Literature courses.
- The specification has been developed in consultation with practising teachers and subject associations.
1c  How do I start using this specification?

To ensure you receive all the teaching and examination material, it is important that the person responsible for making the decision to teach AQA informs both AQA and their Exam Officer.

Step one:
To confirm you will be teaching this specification go to www.aqa.org.uk/signup and complete the online form. You will then receive your free GCSE English welcome pack(s) that contain teaching and support material.

Step two:
Inform your Exam Officer of your choice to ensure you receive all your examination material. Your Exam Officer will make sure that your centre is registered with AQA and will complete the Intention to Enter and Estimated Entries when required to do so.
If your centre has not used AQA for any examinations in the past, please contact our centre approval team at centreapproval@aqa.org.uk.

1d  How can I find out more?

You can choose to find out more about this specification or the services that AQA offers in a number of ways.

Ask AQA
You have 24-hour access to useful information and answers to the most commonly asked questions at www.aqa.org.uk/askaqa
If the answer to your question is not available, you can submit a query through Ask AQA for our team. We will respond within two working days.

Speak to your subject team
You can talk directly to the GCSE English subject team about this specification either by e-mailing english-gcse@aqa.org.uk or by calling 0161 953 1180.

Teacher Support meetings
Details of the full range of current Teacher Support and CPD courses are available on our web site at http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/cpd/index.php
There is also a link to our fast and convenient online booking system for all of our courses at http://coursesandevents.aqa.org.uk/training

Latest information online
You can find out more including the latest news, how to register to use Enhanced Results Analysis, support and downloadable resources on our website at www.aqa.org.uk
## GCSE English

### Unit 1: Understanding and producing non-fiction texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External examination</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60% of the total GCSE marks</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 hours 15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 marks</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section A: Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30% of the total GCSE marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 marks</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section B: Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30% of the total GCSE marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 marks</td>
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</table>

### Unit 2: Speaking and Listening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Controlled Assessment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Endorsement 0% weighting</td>
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<tr>
<td>45 marks</td>
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</table>

### Unit 3: Understanding and producing creative texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Controlled Assessment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40% of the total GCSE marks</td>
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<tr>
<td>6–8 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>90 marks</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Part a: Understanding creative texts (literary reading)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20% of the total GCSE marks</td>
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<tr>
<td>3–4 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>45 marks</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part b: Producing creative texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20% of the total GCSE marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 marks</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note that times indicates the production of final written outcomes.

For assessments and subject awards from June 2014, Speaking and Listening will be an endorsement, separately reported on certificates. Unit 2 Speaking and Listening will still remain part of the subject criteria for GCSE English but will have a 0% weighting. To compensate, the weighting of the Unit 1 examination will be increased to 60%.
Summary of assessment

Structure of units and examination papers

Unit 1: Understanding and producing non-fiction texts

Section A: Reading
Tier H candidates answer four compulsory questions based on three reading sources. Tier F candidates answer five compulsory questions, including those requiring short responses, based on three shorter reading sources.

Section B: Writing
Both Tiers candidates do two compulsory writing tasks – one shorter task worth 16 marks and one longer task worth 24 marks.

Unit 2: Speaking and Listening
Candidates must be assessed on three equally weighted activities:
- presenting
- discussing and listening
- role playing.

Each activity will be marked separately out of 15 and the marks added together to give a final mark out of 45.

Unit 3: Understanding and producing creative texts

Part a: Understanding creative texts (literary reading) – candidates choose up to three tasks from the bank of published titles for the year the candidate certificates. They must write about their study of literary texts, drawing on a play by Shakespeare, a text from the English Literary Heritage and a text from a different culture. Each task will be marked separately out of 15 and the marks added together to give a final mark out of 45.

Part b: Producing creative texts – candidates choose two tasks from the bank of published titles for the year the candidate certificates. The two tasks do not have to be equal in length as this will be determined by the type of creative writing the candidates choose to do. Each task will be marked out of 15 and a further 15 marks are available for accuracy. The marks will be added together to give a final mark out of 45.

Please refer to the Specimen Assessment Materials on aqa.org.uk for examples of examination papers and Controlled Assessment tasks for this specification.
Controlled Assessment

There are three elements to Controlled Assessment:

- Task Setting: Who sets the task
- Task Taking: How the students perform the tasks
- Task Marking: Who does the marking.

Each stage has a level of control (high, medium or low) to ensure reliability and authenticity and to make assessments more manageable for teachers and students.

AQA's Controlled Assessment tasks have been designed to offer you maximum flexibility to:

- choose texts for reading units
- contextualise tasks to meet the needs of your students
- timetable the assessment to meet your needs
- offer assessment in June and November.

In addition to the specification, please refer to the Controlled Assessment Task Bank (www.aqa.org.uk/englishzone) which gives an indication of Controlled Assessment tasks.
This section covers the subject content of the three units:

- Unit 1: Understanding and producing non-fiction texts
- Unit 2: Speaking and Listening
- Unit 3: Understanding and producing creative texts

Each section provides a summary of what candidates have to do, the assessment process and answer to questions.

### 3a Unit 1: Understanding and producing non-fiction texts

#### Unit 1: Summary of what candidates have to do

**Requirements:** Candidates are required to read and understand a range of non-fiction texts, identifying the writers’ crafts and transferring these skills into their own writing for a range of genres, audiences and purposes.

The *functional elements* of English reading and writing are embedded within this unit allowing candidates to demonstrate that they are competent readers and writers in their daily lives.

**Reading texts** will be drawn from a range of non-fiction genres. Some texts will be clearly functional in context (such as information leaflets) and others will be those which candidates can clearly expect to read in their daily lives including media sources (including texts with images, and/or other presentational devices) and literary non-fiction (such as travelogues and biographies). In preparing for this unit, candidates should draw on a variety of text types and transfer their reading skills.

There will be two *writing tasks*, one shorter and one longer. The shorter task will ask candidates to write to inform, explain or describe; the longer task will require more developed and sustained ideas which argue or persuade. Candidates will be required to adapt their style to fit audience and purpose.

#### Unit 1: Summary of assessment

This externally examined unit is common to GCSE English Language.
3b Unit 2: Speaking and Listening

Unit 2: Summary of what candidates have to do:

Candidates will be assessed on three Speaking and Listening tasks although they may well do more than one performance of each activity during the unit. They will be assessed on one activity in each of the following categories:

- Presenting
- Discussing and Listening
- Role playing.

In Speaking and Listening activities, candidates should:

- present and listen to information and ideas
- respond to the questions and views of others, adapting talk appropriately to context and audience
- make a range of effective contributions, using creative approaches to exploring questions, solving problems and developing ideas
- participate in a range of contexts, including real life uses of talk and audiences beyond the classroom.

Unit 2: Summary of assessment

This unit will be assessed by means of Controlled Assessment.

Task Setting (limited control)

AQA will provide guidance on the nature of tasks to be undertaken and you will then set tasks. The tasks should be contextualised to meet the needs of the candidates and enable a variety of approaches.

Some examples of possible tasks are listed below:

Within the Presenting strand typically candidates might:

- individually talk to the class about a topic of interest and then answer questions
- talk to the class about an argument/cause, etc as part of a paired presentation (which may include ICT support such as PowerPoint, visual media clips, etc) and then answer questions
- interview (or be interviewed by) an adult, perhaps focusing on an aspect of occupation, local current affairs, etc
- listen to a speech extract on television and represent its main points and biases or listen to a school assembly and re-present its main points and explain its methods of presentation
- deliver a speech to a wider audience (such as school assembly or another teaching group) either as an individual or as part of a team.

Within the Discussing and Listening strand typically candidates might:

- in a pair, work together to plan a presentation to the class
- in a group of three or four, undertake a problem-solving exercise which is relevant to the local community such as congestion charging, public spending priorities, etc
- in a group of three or four, discuss an issue of interpretation which arises from reading being undertaken elsewhere on the course
- in a group of three or four, discuss the possible schedules for a television station from a range of given possibilities
- listen to a speech extract on television and discuss its main points and biases or listen to a school assembly and discuss its main points and its methods of presentation.

Within the Role playing strand typically candidates might:

- perform as a pair a media interview on a relevant issue, such as child welfare
- perform as a pair an interview between detective and suspect based upon a narrative from literature that has been studied elsewhere
- as an individual perform a 5-minute input for breakfast television called ‘what the papers say today’
perform an improvisation based on literary texts being studied
in a group of three or four, undertake a problem-solving exercise which is relevant to the local community such as congestion charging, public spending priorities and improvise a public debate on the topic.
Note here that within the role playing category, the performance of a written script, even if that script has been learned, is not allowed.

Task Taking (medium control)
Assessment can take place at any point during the course of study. Candidates will need to be informed that assessment is taking place, but clearly all members of a class will not be assessed at the same time.

Unit 2: Your Controlled Assessment questions answered

How do I approach preparation and planning?
Having introduced relevant material and studied relevant speech genres:

- you should give candidates the relevant task(s)
- you may wish to provide stimulus materials for group discussions and role play or access to users of language beyond the classroom.
- you are advised to give the candidates chance to practise speaking or listening in similar contexts to that in which they will be assessed and to prepare ideas after you have given them the task(s).

How do I prepare candidates for this unit?
Speaking and Listening underpins much of the work done for this subject at GCSE. Although unweighted the skills in Speaking and Listening are important in helping candidates prepare for the assessment of GCSE English. It is important that you prepare candidates for the Controlled Assessment task by teaching approaches to the chosen context/task and by considering various speech genres before giving the task to candidates. You should ensure that candidates are familiar with the assessment criteria for the Controlled Assessment tasks that make up Speaking and Listening.

Can I give candidates feedback?
Yes. You may give feedback to individual candidates during the planning phase.

How are candidates assessed?
Candidates must be assessed by a teacher either directly at the time of the response or by viewing an electronic visual recording of a candidate’s response.

Can candidates use prompts?
Prompts or visual slides may be used in addition to any resources you provide. The Unit 2 record form allows teachers to record brief notes and details of activities undertaken.

Do you have Controlled Assessment Advisers?
Yes. Speaking and Listening Controlled Assessment Advisers will be available to give advice on all aspects of the Controlled Assessment. A rota of advisory visits will include advice on marking of candidates’ performance, task setting and record keeping.

Task Marking (medium control)
You must mark all Controlled Assessments using the criteria published on pages 32–33 of this specification.
The criteria descriptors are banded under three headings:
- Communicating and adapting language
- Interacting and responding
- Creating and sustaining roles.
These headings represent different skills that are part of Speaking and Listening, and how these skills can be assessed. It is important to stress that all these descriptors can be used in any single assessment – it is perfectly possible, for example, to identify aspects of creating a role, when the assessment is being submitted under the Presenting category.
Controlled Assessment will be moderated by AQA according to the procedures outlined in Section 7.
3c Unit 3 Understanding and producing creative texts

There are two parts to this Unit:

- Part a Understanding creative texts (literary reading)
- Part b Producing creative texts (creative writing).

Unit 3 Part a – Understanding creative texts (literary reading)

Unit 3 Part a: Summary of what candidates have to do:

For this part of Unit 3, candidates will submit for assessment three written responses based on tasks chosen from the task bank for this unit. This flexibility allows you to choose texts and tasks which best meet the needs of your candidates and allow them to develop their own personal interest in texts.

Tasks will draw on candidates’ study of the following texts:

- a play by Shakespeare
- a text from the English Literary Heritage
- a text from a different culture or tradition.

There should be equal coverage of the three texts in their response and the work submitted must cover prose, poetry and drama.

Candidates must make reference to the whole text. If using a collection of short texts they must refer to more than one text although comparison is not required.

You may contextualise tasks by choosing texts that meet the needs of your candidates. You may draw on the AQA Anthologies for GCSE English Literature if you wish.

Unit 3 Part a: Summary of assessment

This unit will be assessed by means of Controlled Assessment.

Task Setting (high control)
Tasks will be set by AQA. Each year we will provide a bank of tasks for each of the topics covered in this unit:

- Themes and ideas
- Characterisation and voice

Task Taking (high control)
Candidates must produce work totalling about 1600 words in a period of up to four hours.

Task Marking (medium control)
You must mark all Controlled Assessments using the criteria published on pages 34–35 of this specification.

The criteria descriptors are banded under three headings:

- Prose
- Poetry
- Drama

These headings represent the genres that must be covered. Each task must be marked out of 15 and the marks added together to give a final mark out of 45.

Controlled Assessment will be moderated by AQA according to the procedures outlined in Section 7.
How much time should I spend teaching this part of the unit?
As the Controlled Assessment is worth 20% of the overall mark, you are advised to spend 20% of the teaching time available to you on the texts and topics you have chosen for this part of Unit 3. You should prepare candidates for the Controlled Assessment task by teaching approaches to the chosen texts and topics and by studying style models before giving the task to candidates. You should also ensure that candidates are familiar with the assessment criteria for the Controlled Assessment task and are aware of the weighting given to each assessment objective.

What approaches will the tasks offer?
The tasks will offer a variety of approaches. Tasks will consist of a single generic title that you can contextualise. There will always be a number of exemplar tasks showing how you can adapt the task to meet the needs of your students. You may, for example, make the title more specific or add bullet points.

Which Assessment Objectives will the tasks address?
Each task will address all four bullet points of assessment objective AO2 except the requirement to collate, compare or cross-reference from different sources.

Can the assessment be based on parts of texts?
Candidates’ responses must be informed by knowledge of whole texts but the main focus of the assessment can be based on part of a text (e.g. a scene from a play, a chapter from a novel, a small number of poems or short story from a collection). Where candidates use a collection of short texts, there is no requirement to make comparisons.

Will exemplars be available?
Exemplars will be provided to indicate how candidates can approach the tasks.

Do candidates have to do all reading tasks in the same time period?
Candidates do not have to address all texts/tasks in the same consecutive time period. For example, they may write about a Shakespeare text in response to the task during one half term and then write about a text from a Different Culture based on the same task during a different half term followed by a response based on a Literary Heritage text in yet another half term, providing the total time for the formal assessment does not exceed four hours.

Can candidates use texts during the Controlled Assessment?
Candidates must use clean, unannotated copies of texts during the assessment period.
Unit 3 Part b – Producing creative texts (creative writing)

Unit 3 Part b: Summary of what candidates have to do:

Candidates will submit two pieces of writing prepared under controlled conditions chosen from two of the topics in this unit.

Unit 3 Part b: Summary of assessment:

This part of Unit 3 will be assessed by means of Controlled Assessment.

Task Setting (high control)
Tasks will be set by AQA. Each year we will provide a bank of six tasks; two for each of the topics covered in this unit:
- Moving Images (writing for or about moving images)
- Prompts and Re-creations (using a text or prompt to develop writing)
- Me, Myself, I (writing from personal experience)

Candidates will complete two of these tasks. Each task must be taken from a different topic.

Production
Candidates must produce two pieces of work totalling about 1600 words in a period of up to four hours.
Candidates do not have to complete both pieces of writing in the same time period or at the same part of the course as long as the total time taken does not exceed four hours. This word limit is for guidance only as it will vary with the nature of the task. The pieces do not have to be of equal length.

Task Marking (medium control)
You must mark all Controlled Assessments using the criteria published on pages 36–37 of this specification. You will mark each writing task out of 15 marks and give an overall mark out of 15 for accuracy. The marks will be added together to give a final mark out of 45. Controlled Assessment will be moderated by AQA according to the procedures outlined in Section 7.

Task Taking (high control)
Preparation and Planning
You may choose to allow your candidates to do two tasks in the same period or to divide the total time available for this unit so your candidates do their two pieces at different stages of the course that are most appropriate.

Part b: Your Controlled Assessment questions answered

How much time should I spend teaching this part of the unit?
As the Controlled Assessment is worth 20% of the overall mark, you are advised to spend a total of 20% of the teaching time available to you on the topics you have chosen for this part of Unit 3. You should prepare candidates for the Controlled Assessment tasks by teaching approaches to the chosen topics before giving the tasks to candidates.
You should also ensure that candidates are familiar with the assessment criteria for the Controlled Assessment task and are aware of the weighting given to each assessment objective.

What approaches will the tasks offer?
The tasks will offer a variety of approaches. Tasks will consist of a single title and may have a number of bullet points which will help candidates to plan the structure of their writing.

Which Assessment Objectives will the tasks address?
The tasks will address all three bullet points of assessment objective AO3.
Unit 3: Your Controlled Assessment questions answered

Task Setting

How often do tasks change?
Tasks will be replaced each year and the same tasks will be available for assessment in January and June.

When are tasks published?
Tasks for the following two years’ assessment series will be made available to centres from 1st April. They will be published on e-AQA.

Task Taking: Preparation and Planning

How do I approach preparation and planning
Having taught the topic(s) and studied relevant style models you should give candidates the relevant task(s).
- if you wish, you may give candidates a choice of tasks on the topic(s) you have taught
- you are advised to give candidates the chance to practise writing in this form and to prepare ideas after you have given them the task(s)
- during this time candidates may make use of any further resources available in the school or college, including the Internet, to inform their preparation
- candidates must keep a record of all the primary and secondary sources (including websites) they use
- candidates must keep a record of any style models they use to assist you in authenticating work
- records should be kept in the form of a bibliography
- all this work should be completed under informal supervision.

Can I give candidates feedback?
Yes. You may give feedback to individual candidates during the planning phase. Where this goes beyond general advice, this should be recorded on the Candidate Record Form.

Can candidates work together?
Candidates may work with others during the planning phase. So, for example, they may discuss their ideas in small groups or share resources found on the Internet, but each candidate must produce an individual response to the task.

Task Taking: Production

Does the Controlled Assessment have to take place in one session?
No. The time allowed for the Controlled Assessment may be divided to meet the timetabling requirements of the centre.

Where there is more than one task, you may choose to allow your candidates to do the tasks in the same period or to divide the total time available for this unit so your candidates do their two pieces at different stages of the course that are most appropriate.

Can candidates take drafts or notes into the assessment?
Drafts may not be taken into the assessment. Brief notes made in the preparation stage may be taken into the assessment. These must be checked by the teacher to ensure that they are not plagiarised text and do not include a detailed planning grid or pre-prepared final draft. The notes should be submitted with the final piece for moderation. For first examination June 2015 any notes must be produced on the AQA pro-forma in the space given and should not exceed 150 words. These must be checked by the teacher to ensure that they are not plagiarised text and do not include a detailed planning grid or pre-prepared final draft. The notes should be submitted with the final piece for moderation. Examples of acceptable and unacceptable notes will be placed on the AQA website.

Can candidates work together during the assessment?
No. While writing up their response, candidates must work independently and complete all work under formal supervision by a teacher or invigilator. You must record any feedback given to candidates during this phase on the Candidate Record Form.

What do we do if the assessment period is broken down into smaller sessions?
Where the total time is divided, the teacher or invigilator must collect all materials in at the end of each session and return them to candidates at the beginning of the next session. No feedback should be given on drafts prepared during the assessment period. Candidates may not bring any new materials into the room once this phase has started.

Can candidates use a dictionary or a thesaurus?
During the writing up of the Controlled Assessment, candidates are not allowed access to a dictionary or thesaurus, or to grammar and spell check programmes.

Can PCs be used?
The Controlled Assessment may be either handwritten or produced electronically.
Candidates using laptops/PCs to write their Controlled Assessment cannot have access to the Internet, e-mail, floppy disks, memory sticks, or grammar and spell check programmes as this could breach the controlled conditions. If the assessment period is divided into a number of shorter sessions, centres should ensure that work is saved securely to ensure that candidates cannot amend or add to the saved material between sessions.

Do you have Controlled Assessment Advisers?
Controlled Assessment Advisers will be available to give advice on all aspects of the Controlled Assessment including the marking.
4 Scheme of Assessment

4a Aims and learning outcomes

GCSE courses based on this specification should encourage candidates to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. They should prepare learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices, to use language to participate effectively in society and employment and to develop their enthusiasm for reading.

**GCSE courses based on specifications in English must enable candidates to:**

- demonstrate skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing necessary to communicate with others confidently, effectively, precisely and appropriately
- express themselves creatively and imaginatively
- understand the patterns, structures and conventions of written and spoken English
- select and adapt speech and writing to different situations and audiences
- understand how variations in spoken and written language relate to identity and cultural diversity
- become critical readers of a range of texts, including multi-modal texts
- use reading to gain access to knowledge and to develop their own skills as writers
- understand that texts from the English, Welsh and Irish Literary Heritage have been influential and significant over time and explore the meaning of these today
- understand how literature from other cultures is influential
- connect ideas, themes and issues, drawing on a range of texts.

4b Assessment Objectives (AOs)

The assessment units will assess the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills set out in Section 3 (Subject Content).

**AO1 Speaking and Listening**

- Speak to communicate clearly and purposefully; structure and sustain talk, adapting it to different situations and audiences; use standard English and a variety of techniques as appropriate.
- Listen and respond to speakers’ ideas, perspectives and how they construct and express their meanings.
- Interact with others, shaping meanings through suggestions, comments and questions and drawing ideas together.
- Create and sustain different roles.

**AO2 Reading**

- Read and understand texts, selecting material appropriate to purpose, collating from different sources and making comparisons and cross-references as appropriate.
- Develop and sustain interpretations of writers’ ideas and perspectives.

**AO3 Writing**

- Explain and evaluate how writers use linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational features to achieve effects and engage and influence the reader.
- Understand texts in their social, cultural and historical contexts.

- Write clearly, effectively and imaginatively, using and adapting forms and selecting vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose in ways that engage the reader.
- Organise information and ideas into structured and sequenced sentences, paragraphs and whole texts, using a variety of linguistic and structural features to support cohesion and overall coherence.
- Use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling.

*At least one-third of the available credit should be allocated to this last part of AO3.*
Weighting of Assessment Objectives for GCSE English

The table below shows the approximate weighting of each of the Assessment Objectives in the GCSE units.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Objectives</th>
<th>Unit weightings (%)</th>
<th>Overall weighting of AOs (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unit 1</td>
<td>Unit 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AO1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AO2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AO3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall weighting of units (%)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4c National criteria

This specification complies with:

- The Subject Criteria for GCSE English including the rules for Controlled Assessment
- The Code of Practice
- The GCSE Qualification Criteria
- The Arrangements for the Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: Common Criteria
- The requirements for qualifications to provide access to Levels 1 and 2 of the National Qualification Framework.

4d Overlap between GCSE English and GCSE English Language

Entries are not allowed in the same series for both English and English Language.

4e Centres in Wales

In Wales, GCSE English is not approved pre-16. Centres can meet statutory requirements fully through entering candidates for both GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature. For a minority of candidates entered only for GCSE English Language, centres should ensure their taught curriculum in English fulfils statutory requirements in Wales.

4f Previous learning requirements

There are no previous learning requirements. However, any requirements set for entry to a course based on this specification are at your centre’s discretion.
4g Access to assessment: diversity and inclusion

GCSEs often need to assess a wide range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications designed to prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and further study.

The revised GCSE qualification and subject criteria were reviewed to see whether any of the skills or knowledge needed by the subject presented a possible difficulty to any candidates, whatever their ethnic background, religion, sex, age, disability or sexuality. If there were difficulties, the situation was reviewed again to make sure that such tests of specific competences were only included if they were important to the subject. The findings were discussed with groups who represented the interests of a diverse range of candidates.

Arrangements are made for candidates with special needs to help them access the assessments as long as the competences being tested are not changed. Because of this, most candidates will be able to access any part of the assessment. More details are given in Section 5d.
5 Administration

5a Availability of assessment units and certification

Examinations and certification for this specification are available as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability of units</th>
<th>Availability of certification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENG1F</td>
<td>ENG1H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2013</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2014</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2014</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2015</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2016</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2016</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ofqual’s revisions to the Code of Practice mean that from June 2014: 100% of the assessment (both external assessments and moderation of controlled assessment) has to be taken in the examination series in which the qualification is awarded.

5b Entries

Please check the current version of Entry Procedures and Codes for up-to-date entry procedures. You should use the following entry codes for the units and for certification:

- Unit 1 – ENG1F; ENG1H
- Unit 2 – ENG02
- Unit 3 – ENG03
- GCSE certification – 4702

Candidates have to enter all the assessment units at the end of the course, at the same time as they enter for the subject award. Please note that certification entries are not allowed in the same examination series for both English and English Language.

5c Private candidates

This specification is available to private candidates under certain conditions. Because of the Controlled Assessment, candidates must attend an AQA centre, which will supervise and mark the Controlled Assessment. Private candidates should write to us for a copy of Supplementary Guidance for Private Candidates (for Controlled Assessment specification with practical activities).
5d Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration

We have taken note of the equality and discrimination legislation and the interests of minority groups in developing and administering this specification. We follow the guidelines in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document: Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration: General and Vocational Qualifications. This is published on the JCQ website www.jcq.org.uk or you can follow the link from our website www.aqa.org.uk

Access arrangements
We can arrange for candidates with special needs to access an assessment. These arrangements must be made before the examination. For example, we can produce a Braille paper for a candidate with sight problems.

Reasonable adjustments
An access arrangement which meets the needs of a particular disabled candidate would be a reasonable adjustment for that candidate. For example a Braille paper would be a reasonable adjustment for a Braille reader but not for a candidate who did not read Braille. The Disability Discrimination Act requires us to make reasonable adjustments to remove or lessen any disadvantage affecting a disabled candidate.

Special consideration
We can give special consideration to candidates who have had a temporary illness, injury or serious problem such as death of a relative, at the time of the examination. We can only do this after the examination.

The Examinations Officer at the centre should apply online for access arrangements and special consideration by following the e-AQA link from our website www.aqa.org.uk

5e Examination language
We will only provide units for this specification in English.

5f Qualification titles

The qualification based on this specification is:

- AQA GCSE in English.
5g Awarding grades and reporting results

The GCSE qualification will be graded on an eight-grade scale: A*, A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade G will be recorded ‘U’ (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

We will publish the minimum raw mark for each grade, for each unit, when we issue candidates’ results. We will report a candidate’s unit results to centres in terms of uniform marks and qualification results in terms of uniform marks and grades.

For each unit the uniform mark corresponds to a grade as follows.

**Unit 1** (maximum uniform mark = 180)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Uniform Mark Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A*</td>
<td>162–180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>144–161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>126–143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>108–125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>90–107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>72–89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>54–71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>36–53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>0–23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Unit 2** will be graded separately as the grade for the Speaking and Listening will be an endorsement reported on a numerical scale of 5–1 (where 5 is the top grade) and unclassified. The endorsement and grade will be listed on a separate line on the certificate.

**Unit 3** (maximum uniform mark = 120)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Uniform Mark Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A*</td>
<td>108–120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96–107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84–95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>72–83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60–71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>48–59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>36–47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>24–35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>0–23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We calculate a candidate’s total uniform mark by adding together the uniform marks for the units. We convert this total uniform mark to a grade as follows.

**GCSE English** (maximum uniform mark = 300)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Uniform Mark Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A*</td>
<td>270–300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>240–269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>210–239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>180–209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>150–179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>120–149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>90–119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>60–89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>0–59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5h Examination series

Candidates have to enter all the assessment units at the end of the course, at the same time as they enter for the subject award.

As a consequence of the move to linear assessment, candidates will be allowed to carry forward their controlled assessment unit result(s) following the initial moderation and aggregation during the lifetime of the specification.
6 Controlled Assessment administration

The Head of Centre is responsible for making sure that Controlled Assessment work is conducted in line with our instructions and JCQ instructions.

6a Authenticating that Controlled Assessment work is genuine

To meet the requirements of Code of Practice, we need the following:

- **Candidates** must sign the Candidate Record Form to confirm that the work they have handed in is their own.
- **Teachers and assessors** must confirm on the Candidate Record Form that the work marked is only that done by that candidate and was conducted in line with the conditions in the specification document (authentication declaration).
- **Centres** must give a mark of zero if candidates cannot confirm the work handed in for assessment is their own.

You should attach the completed Candidate Record Form for each candidate to his or her work. All teachers who have marked the work of any candidate entered for each component must sign the declaration that the work is genuine.

If you have doubts about signing the authentication declaration, you should follow these guidance points.

- If you believe that a candidate had additional assistance and this is acceptable within the guidelines for the relevant specification, you should award a mark which covers only the candidate’s achievement without any help. (You should sign the authentication declaration and give information on the relevant form).
- If you cannot sign the authentication declaration, the candidate’s work cannot be accepted for assessment.

If, during the external moderation process, there is no evidence that the work has been authenticated, we will award a mark of zero.

6b Malpractice

You should let candidates know about our malpractice regulations.

Candidates must **not**:

- submit work that is not their own
- lend work to other candidates
- give other candidates access to, or the use of, their own independently-sourced research material (this does not mean that candidates cannot lend their books to another candidate, but that candidates should be stopped from copying other candidates’ research)
- include work copied directly from books, the Internet or other sources without acknowledgement of the source
- hand in work typed or word processed by someone else without acknowledgement.

These actions are considered malpractice, for which a penalty (for example being disqualified from the exam) will be applied.

If malpractice is suspected, the Examinations Officer should be consulted about the procedure to be followed.

Where you suspect malpractice in Controlled Assessments after the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, your Head of Centre must submit full details of the case to us at the earliest opportunity. The form JCQ/M1 should be used. Copies of the form can be found on the JCQ website [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk).

Malpractice in Controlled Assessments discovered prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication need not be reported to us, but should be dealt with in accordance with the centre’s internal procedures. We would expect you to treat such cases very seriously. Details of any work which is not the candidate’s own must be recorded on the Candidate Record Form or other appropriate place.
6c Teacher standardisation

We will hold standardising meetings for teachers each year, usually in the autumn term, for Controlled Assessment. At these meetings we will provide support in explaining tasks in context and using the marking criteria. The standardising materials used at the meetings will also be available online.

All centres must send a representative to one of the meetings each year. If you have told us you are a new centre, either by signing up to teach AQA, by sending us an intention to enter or an estimate of entry, or by contacting the subject team, we will contact you to invite you to a meeting. It is likely that during the lifetime of this specification online teacher standardising meetings will be made available as an alternative to face-to-face meetings.

6d Internal standardisation of marking

Centres must have consistent marking standards for all candidates. One person must be responsible for ensuring that work has been marked to the same standard, and they need to sign the Centre Declaration Sheet to confirm that internal standardisation has taken place.

**Internal standardisation may involve:**

- all teachers marking some sample pieces of work and identifying differences in marking standards
- discussing any differences in marking at a training meeting for all teachers involved in the assessment
- referring to reference and archive material, such as previous work or examples from our teacher standardising meetings

6e Annotation of Controlled Assessment work

The Code of Practice states that the awarding body must make sure that teachers marking Controlled Assessments clearly show how the marks have been awarded in line with the marking criteria shown in the specification. The awarding body must provide guidance on how this is to be done.

Annotation helps our moderators to see as precisely as possible where the teacher has identified that candidates have met the criteria in the specification.

**Annotation could be used in either of the following ways:**

- important pieces of evidence commented on in either the margin or in the text
- comments on the work that refer to the assessment criteria.

When assessing oral responses, summative comments must be provided on the Candidate Record Form.

6f Submitting marks and sample work for moderation

The total mark for each candidate must be sent to us and the moderator on the mark forms provided, by Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) or electronically by the date given (see [www.aqa.org.uk/deadlines/coursework_deadlines.php](http://www.aqa.org.uk/deadlines/coursework_deadlines.php)). Our moderator will contact you to let you know which pieces of work must be sent to them as part of the sample (please see to Section 7a for more guidance on sending in samples).
6g Factors affecting individual candidates

You should be able to accept the occasional absence of candidates by making sure they have the chance to make up missed Controlled Assessments. You may organise an alternative supervised time session for candidates who are absent at the time the centre originally arranged.

If work is lost, you must tell us immediately the date it was lost, how it was lost, and who was responsible. Inform our Centre and Candidate Support Services using the JCQ form Notification of Lost Coursework JCQ/LCW form 15.

Where special help which goes beyond normal learning support is given, use the Candidate Record Form to inform us so that this help can be taken into account during moderation.

Candidates who move from one centre to another during the course sometimes need additional help to meet the requirements of a scheme of Controlled Assessment work. How this can be dealt with depends when the move takes place. If it happens early in the course the new centre should be responsible for Controlled Assessment work. If it happens late in the course it may be possible to arrange for the moderator to assess the work as a candidate who was ‘Educated Elsewhere’. Centres should contact us as early as possible for advice about appropriate arrangements in individual cases at english-gcse@aqa.org.uk

6h Keeping candidates’ work

From the time the work is marked, centres must keep the work of all candidates, with Candidate Record Forms attached, under secure conditions, to allow the work to be available during the moderation period or should there be an Enquiry about Results. You may return the work to candidates after the deadline for Enquiries about Results, or once any enquiry is resolved.
7a  Moderation procedures

Written Controlled Assessment

Controlled Assessment work is moderated by inspecting a sample of candidates’ work sent (by post or electronically) from the centre to a moderator appointed by us. The centre marks must be sent to us and the moderator by the deadline given (see www.aqa.org.uk/deadlines/coursework_deadlines.php). Centres entering fewer candidates than the minimum sample size (and centres submitting work electronically) should send the work of all of their candidates. Centres entering larger numbers of candidates will be told which candidates’ work must be sent as part of the sample sent in for moderation. Following the re-marking of the sample work, the moderator’s marks are compared with the centre marks to check whether any changes are needed to bring the centre’s assessments in line with our agreed standards. In some cases the moderator may need to ask for the work of other candidates in the centre. To meet this request, centres must keep the Controlled Assessment work and Candidate Record Forms of every candidate entered for the examination under secure conditions, and they must be prepared to send it to us or the moderator when it is requested.

Any changes to marks will normally keep the centre’s rank order, but where major differences are found, we reserve the right to change the rank order.

Moderation will take place in January and June.

Spoken Controlled Assessment

Centres may receive a visit from a moderator as part of our commitment to maintain standards and ensure parity in the marking and application of standards in Speaking and Listening. The moderator will advise on Speaking and Listening. The moderator will ask to see a range of candidate performances. Centres must keep the Candidate Record Forms of every candidate entered for the examination under secure conditions and be prepared to show this to the visiting moderator or post to a moderator if required.

Additional visits may be triggered if there is any doubt about a centre’s accuracy in oral assessment. Where there is evidence that the centre’s mark differs significantly from the AQA standard, taking other evidence into account where applicable (eg pattern of marks, centre history, reports on previous visits), an adjustment will be applied to the centre to bring its marking into line with the AQA standard.

7b  Consortium arrangements

If you are a consortium of centres with joint teaching arrangements (where candidates from different centres have been taught together but where they are entered through the centre at which they are on roll), you must tell us by filling in the JCQ/CCA form Application for Centre Consortium Arrangements for centre-assessed work.

You must choose a consortium co-ordinator who can speak to us on behalf of all centres in the consortium.

If there are different co-ordinators for different specifications, a copy of the JCQ/CCA form must be sent in for each specification.

We will allocate the same moderator to each centre in the consortium and the candidates will be treated as a single group for moderation.

7c  Procedures after moderation

When the results are published, we will give centres details of the final marks for the Controlled Assessment work.

We will return candidates’ work to you after the exam. You will receive a report, at the time results are issued, giving feedback on any adjustments that were made to your marks.

We may keep some candidates’ work for awarding, archive or standardising purposes and will inform you if this is the case.
A Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates who were awarded particular grades. The descriptions should be considered in relation to the content outlined in the specification – they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend on how well the candidate has met the assessment objectives (see Section 4). If a candidate has performed less well in some areas this may be balanced by better performances in others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptors for endorsed Speaking &amp; Listening are being finalised with the regulator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Candidates respond personally and persuasively to a variety of texts, developing interpretations and evaluating how details of language, grammar, structure and presentation engage and affect the reader. They identify and discuss writers’ perspectives in narrative, argument, explanation or analysis. They choose apt quotations and make telling comparisons and cross-references that illuminate the purpose and meanings of texts, explaining the impact of their social, cultural and historical contexts where appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Candidates’ writing shows confident, assured control of a range of forms and styles appropriate to task and purpose. Texts engage and hold the reader’s interest through logical argument, persuasive force or creative delight. Linguistic and structural features are used skilfully to sequence texts and achieve coherence. A wide range of accurate sentence structures ensures clarity; choices of vocabulary, punctuation and spelling are ambitious, imaginative and correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptors for endorsed Speaking &amp; Listening are being finalised with the regulator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Candidates understand and demonstrate how meaning and information are conveyed in a range of texts. They make personal and critical responses, referring to specific aspects of language, grammar, structure and presentational devices to justify their views. They successfully compare and cross-reference aspects of texts and explain convincingly how they may vary in purpose and how they achieve different effects. They comment on how social, cultural and historical contexts affect readers’ responses to texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Candidates’ writing shows successful adaptation of form and style to different tasks and for various purposes. They use a range of sentence structures and varied vocabulary to create different effects and engage the reader’s interest. Paragraphing is used effectively to make the sequence of events or development of ideas coherent and clear to the reader. Sentence structures are varied and sometimes bold; punctuation and spelling are accurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptors for endorsed Speaking & Listening are being finalised with the regulator.

Candidates describe the main ideas, themes or argument in a range of texts and refer to specific aspects or details when justifying their views. They make simple comparisons and cross-references that show some awareness of how texts achieve their effects through writers’ use of linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational devices. They are aware that some features of texts relate to their specific social, cultural and historical contexts.

Candidates’ writing shows some adaptation of form and style for different tasks and purposes. It communicates simply and clearly with the reader. Sentences sequence events or ideas logically; vocabulary is sometimes chosen for variety and interest. Paragraphing is straightforward but effective; the structure of sentences, including some that are complex, is usually correct. Spelling and basic punctuation are mostly accurate.
B Spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legislative, sustainable development, economic and cultural issues, and health and safety considerations

We have taken great care to make sure that any wider issues (for example, spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legal, sustainable development, economic and cultural issues), including those relevant to the education of students at Key Stage 4, have been taken into account when preparing this specification. They will only form part of the assessment requirements where they are relevant to the specific content of the specification and have been identified in Section 3: Subject Content.

European Dimension
We have taken the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community into account when preparing this specification and specimen units.

Environmental Education
We have taken the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report ‘Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education’ 1993 into account when preparing this specification and associated specimen units.

Avoiding bias
We have taken great care to avoid bias of any kind when preparing this specification and specimen units.
C Overlaps with other qualifications

Functional English

This specification embeds the level 2 functional skills standards. In addition, the specification covers the key processes and range and content sections of the KS4 English programme of study which also reflect the functional English standards at level 2 and build on the embedding of the level 1 standards in the key stage 3 programme of study. The specification also reflects the curriculum opportunities section of the KS4 English programme of study which requires that pupils speak, listen and write for contexts beyond the classroom.

The term ‘functional’ should be considered in the broad sense of providing learners with the skills and abilities they need to take an active and responsible role in their communities, in their everyday lives, workplaces and educational settings.

53.33% of this specification is Functional. In preparing schemes of work and delivery, the Functional Skills Standards will be covered in the following GCSE units:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Skills English</th>
<th>GCSE English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking and Listening</td>
<td>Unit 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Unit 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Unit 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Candidates preparing for this specification will cover the Functional Skills Standards but will not be awarded a qualification for Functional English.

Functional English is available for assessment and certification in the stand-alone qualification Functional English.

Note that centres entering candidates for both Functional Skills English and GCSE English or GCSE English Language can use the same assessment opportunity to assess Speaking and Listening. Centres must assess the activities against both sets of relevant criteria.
Wider Key Skills

The replacement of Key Skills with Functional Skills

The Key Skills qualifications have been replaced by the Functional Skills. However, centres may claim proxies for Key Skills components and/or certification in the following series: January, March and June 2012. The Administration Handbook for the Key Skills Standards 2012 has further details. All Examination Officers in centres offering AQA Key Skills and Wider Key Skills have been sent a letter outlining the details of the end dates of these subjects. Copies of the letters have also been sent to the Head of Centre and Key Skills coordinator. This is a brief outline of that information. It is correct as at August 2011 and replaces the information on the same subject found in other documents on the AQA website:

- **Key Skills Levels 1, 2 and 3 Test and Portfolio** The final opportunity for candidates to enter for a level 1, 2 or 3 Key Skills test or portfolio was June 2011 with the last certification in 2012.

- **Key Skills Level 4** The last series available to candidates entering for the Key Skills Level 4 test and portfolio was June 2010 with the last certification in the June series 2012.

- **Basic Skills Adult Literacy Levels 1 and 2, Adult Numeracy Levels 1 and 2** AQA Basic Skills qualifications will now be available until, at least, the June 2012 series.

Funding

We have received the following advice on the funding of learners undertaking these qualifications:

- Currently the Skills Funding Agency funds Basic Skills in literacy and numeracy for adult, 19 plus, learners only. There are various support funds for learners aged 16–18 administered by the Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA). These include EMA (until the end of the 2010/11 academic year), Care to Learn and discretionary learner support hardship funding for learners living away from home.

- This information is correct at the time of publication. If you would like to check the funding provision post-June 2011, please call the Skills Funding Agency helpdesk on 0845 377 5000.

Wider Key Skills

The AQA Wider Key Skills qualifications are no longer available. The last portfolio moderation took place in June 2011.

Further updates to this information will be posted on the website as it becomes available.

The English Literary Heritage: This includes authors with an enduring appeal that transcends the period in which they were writing. For example, the novels of Jane Austen or the plays of Shakespeare continue to be widely read, studied and reinterpreted in print and on screen for contemporary audiences. The study of texts by these authors should be based on whole texts and presented in ways that will engage students (e.g., supported by the use of film resources and drama activities).


Texts from different cultures and traditions: When choosing texts from different cultures and traditions, it is important to look for authors who are so familiar with a particular culture or country that they represent it sensitively and with understanding. The texts should help students learn about the literature of another culture, as well as reflect on their own experiences. Texts appropriate for study at Key Stage 4 include some works by the following authors: Chinua Achebe, John Agard, Monica Ali, Moniza Alvi, Maya Angelou, Isaac Bashevis Singer, James Berry, Edward Braithwaite, Anita Desai, Emily Dickinson, F Scott Fitzgerald, Athol Fugard, Jamila Gavin, Nadine Gordimer, Doris Lessing, Arthur Miller, Les Murray, Beverley Naidoo, RK Narayan, Grace Nichols, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Bali Rai, Wole Soyinka, John Steinbeck, Meera Syal, Mildred D Taylor, Mark Twain, Derek Walcott, Walt Whitman, Tennessee Williams, Adeline Yen Mah and Benjamin Zephaniah. The study of texts by these authors should be based on whole texts and presented in ways that will engage students.
F Assessment Criteria for Controlled Assessment

See table overleaf.
## GCSE English Unit 2 Speaking and Listening
### Controlled Assessment Criteria

**AO 1**
- Speak to communicate clearly and purposefully; structure and sustain talk, adapting it to different situations and audiences; use standard English and a variety of techniques as appropriate.
- Listen and respond to speakers’ ideas, perspectives and how they construct and express their meanings.
- Interact with others, shaping meanings through suggestions, comments and questions and drawing ideas together.
- Create and sustain different roles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band 5</th>
<th>Communicating and adapting language</th>
<th>Interacting and responding</th>
<th>Creating and sustaining roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Sophisticated, Impressive’ 13–15</td>
<td>Candidates</td>
<td>Candidates</td>
<td>Candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidates</td>
<td>highlight priorities and essential detail when communicating complex and demanding subject-matter</td>
<td>sustain concentrated listening, showing understanding of complex ideas through interrogating what is said</td>
<td>create complex characters and fulfil the demands of challenging roles through insightful choice of dramatic approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>use a sophisticated repertoire of strategies to meet challenging contexts and purposes</td>
<td>shape direction and content of talk, responding with flexibility to develop ideas and challenge assumptions</td>
<td>explore and respond to complex ideas issues and relationships in varied formal and informal scenarios.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>show an assured choice and flexible use of standard English vocabulary and grammar in appropriate situations.</td>
<td>initiate, develop and sustain discussion through encouraging participation and interaction, resolving differences and achieving positive outcomes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band 4</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Confident, Assured’ 10–12</td>
<td>confidently convey and interpret information, ideas and feelings, emphasising significant points and issues</td>
<td>challenge, develop and respond to what they hear in thoughtful and considerate ways, seeking clarification through apt questions</td>
<td>create convincing characters and roles using a range of carefully selected verbal and non-verbal techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>adapt and shape talk and non-verbal features to meet the demands of different situations, contexts and purposes</td>
<td>analyse and reflect on others’ ideas to clarify issues and assumptions and develop the discussion</td>
<td>respond skilfully and sensitively in different situations and scenarios, to explore ideas and issues and relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>make appropriate, controlled, effective use of standard English vocabulary and grammar.</td>
<td>identify useful outcomes and help structure discussion through purposeful contributions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 3</td>
<td>Candidates</td>
<td>Communicating and adapting language</td>
<td>Interacting and responding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Clear, Consistent’ 7–9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidates</td>
<td>effectively communicate information, ideas and feelings, promote issues and points of view</td>
<td>listen closely and attentively, engaging with what is heard through perceptive responses</td>
<td>develop and sustain roles and characters through appropriate language and effective gesture and movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>adapt talk to a variety of situations and audiences, using non-verbal features to add to impact</td>
<td>make significant contributions that move discussions forward</td>
<td>make contributions to the development of situations and ideas, showing understanding and insight into relationships and significant issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>use a range of well-judged vocabulary and sentence structures to achieve different purposes, including competent and appropriate use of standard English.</td>
<td>engage with others’ ideas and feelings, recognising obvious bias or prejudice and referring to precise detail.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band 2</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Communicating and adapting language</th>
<th>Interacting and responding</th>
<th>Creating and sustaining roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Some’ 4–6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidates</td>
<td>convey straightforward information and ideas, coherent accounts and narratives in extended turns</td>
<td>respond positively to what they hear, including helpful requests for explanation and further detail</td>
<td>show understanding of characters by creating straightforward roles using speech, gesture and movement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>begin to adapt talk and non-verbal features to meet the needs of different audiences</td>
<td>make specific, relevant contributions to discussion</td>
<td>engage with situations and ideas, showing understanding of issues and relationships.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>use a variety of vocabulary and structures for different purposes, including appropriate features of standard English with reasonable accuracy.</td>
<td>allow others to express ideas or points of view that may differ from their own and respond appropriately.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band 1</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Communicating and adapting language</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Limited’ 1–3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidates</td>
<td>briefly express points of view, ideas and feelings</td>
<td>respond to what they hear, showing some interest, including non-verbal reactions</td>
<td>draw on obvious and sometimes stereotypical ideas to create simple characters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sometimes develop detail to add interest to accounts, narratives and information, supported by appropriate non-verbal features</td>
<td>make brief, occasional contributions and general statements in discussion</td>
<td>react to situations in predictable but appropriate ways, demonstrating some understanding of relationships and familiar ideas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>use straightforward vocabulary and grammar, showing awareness of some main features of standard English.</td>
<td>follow central ideas and possibilities in what they hear and raise straightforward questions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 0 marks | Nothing worthy of credit | | | |
## GCSE English Unit 3 Part a Understanding creative texts (literary reading)

### Controlled Assessment criteria

**AO2**
- Read and understand texts.
- Develop and sustain interpretations of writers’ ideas and perspectives.
- Explain and evaluate how writers use linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational features to achieve effects and engage and influence the reader.
- Understand texts in their social, cultural and historical contexts.

### Prose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band 5</th>
<th>Candidates demonstrate</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Sophisticated, Impressive”</td>
<td>13–15</td>
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<td>Band 4</td>
<td>Candidates demonstrate</td>
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<td>“Confident, Assured”</td>
<td>10–12</td>
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#### Drama

<table>
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<th>Candidates demonstrate</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sustained sophisticated interpretations of texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sustained and sophisticated engagement with writers’ ideas and attitudes and sophisticated interpretations using imaginatively selected supporting textual detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sophisticated analysis of aspects of language and structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perceptive and mature comment on the significance of the contexts.</td>
</tr>
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#### Poetry

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>perceptive and mature comment on the significance of the contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 3 'Clear, Consistent' 7–9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidates demonstrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- clear evidence of understanding of significant meanings of the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ability to explain writers’ ideas clearly offering relevant and appropriate supporting textual detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ability to display understanding of features of language and structure supported by relevant and appropriate quotation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ability to explore the significance of aspects of the contexts matched to textual details.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GCSE English for certification June 2014 onwards (version 1.3)**

**Prose**

Candidates demonstrate
- clear evidence of understanding of significant meanings of the text
- ability to explain writers’ ideas clearly offering relevant and appropriate supporting textual detail
- ability to display understanding of features of language and structure supported by relevant and appropriate quotation
- ability to explore the significance of aspects of the contexts matched to textual details.

**Drama**

Candidates demonstrate
- clear evidence of understanding of significant meanings of the text
- ability to explain writers’ ideas clearly offering relevant and appropriate supporting textual detail
- ability to display understanding of features of language, structure and dramatic technique supported by relevant and appropriate quotation
- ability to explore the significance of aspects of the contexts matched to textual details.

**Poetry**

Candidates demonstrate
- clear evidence of understanding of significant meanings of the text
- ability to explain writers’ ideas clearly offering relevant and appropriate supporting textual detail
- ability to display understanding of features of language and structure supported by relevant and appropriate quotation
- ability to explore the significance of aspects of the contexts matched to textual details.
## GCSE English Unit 3 Part b Producing creative texts (creative writing)
### Controlled Assessment criteria

**AO3**
- Communicate clearly and imaginatively, using and adapting forms and selecting vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose in ways that engage the reader.
- Organise information and ideas into structured and sequenced sentences, paragraphs and whole texts, using a variety of linguistic and structural features to support cohesion and overall coherence.
- Use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AO3 i and ii Mark/Band</th>
<th>Communicating clearly/using forms</th>
<th>Organising information and ideas</th>
<th>AO3 iii Mark/Band</th>
<th>Using sentence structures/writing accurately</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band 5 'Sophisticated, Impressive' 13–15</td>
<td>sophistication and subtlety prevail; distinct reasons for readers wanting to read this: 'delightful', 'flair'; 'originality'</td>
<td>high levels of whole text coherence; a strong sense of the text's wholeness; paragraphs/other structural and organisational devices complement and fully support the purpose and thrust of the piece</td>
<td>Band 5 'Sophisticated, Impressive' 13–15</td>
<td>varied and sophisticated sentence structures used to impressive effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>subject matter/ideas presented in completely measured and effectively judged depth/detail</td>
<td>cohesive features embedded throughout; sophisticated and impressively used.</td>
<td></td>
<td>uses a range of punctuation highly purposefully and effectively; punctuation is another means to heighten impact of writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>artful and self-conscious use of language, with consistent crafting for impact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>spelling is almost always accurate; accurate spelling of specialist or less commonplace vocabulary; impressive control over even highly irregular spellings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>impressive exploitation of form for purpose and audience, with impressive sense of immersion in the chosen genre.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 4 'Confident, Assured' 10–12</td>
<td>writing is shaped by an assured awareness of purpose and audience throughout</td>
<td>well-constructed and assured whole text shaping</td>
<td>Band 4 'Confident, Assured' 10–12</td>
<td>phrase and sentence constructions self-consciously crafted for effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>subject matter/ideas presented in appropriately sustained way; assured judgements made about the impact of depth/detail on readers’ engagement</td>
<td>uses structural/organisational devices to clarify and support purpose, and to navigate readers through the writing</td>
<td></td>
<td>full range of punctuation marks used assuredly and accurately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>assured and confident control and crafting of language, with words’ effects deliberately worked for</td>
<td>wider range of discourse markers and cohesive ties to heighten fluency.</td>
<td></td>
<td>few spelling lapses; near misses with some unfamiliar words, but only very occasionally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AO3 i and ii</td>
<td>Communicating clearly/</td>
<td>Organising information and ideas</td>
<td>Using sentence structures/</td>
<td>Mark/Band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 3</td>
<td>‘Clear, Consistent’</td>
<td>clear sense of whole text coherence</td>
<td>clear variety and range of sentence structures – simple and compound sentences;</td>
<td>7–9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 2</td>
<td>‘Some’</td>
<td>clear sense of whole text coherence</td>
<td>uses greater range of sentence structures – simple and compound sentences;</td>
<td>4–6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 1</td>
<td>‘Limited’</td>
<td>some sense of whole text coherence</td>
<td>uses greater range of sentence structures – simple and compound sentences;</td>
<td>1–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 marks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>uses greater range of sentence structures – simple and compound sentences;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GCSE English Teaching from September 2012 onwards

**Qualification Accreditation Number:** 601/3159/7

Every specification is assigned a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. The classification code for this specification is 5010.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCSE qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables. In the case of a candidate taking two qualifications with the same classification code that are of the same size and level, eg two full course GCSEs, the higher grade will count.

Centres may wish to advise candidates that, if they take two specifications with the same classification code, schools and colleges are very likely to take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCSEs. The same view may be taken if candidates take two GCSE specifications that have different classification codes but have significant overlap of content. Candidates who have any doubts about their subject combinations should check with the institution to which they wish to progress before embarking on their programmes.

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