

English Literature

– Student Guide for Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced GCE Specifications

The aims of this course are to enable you to enjoy reading and discussing English Literature, and to increase your understanding of what the study of literature involves. The emphasis is on getting to know a wide range of texts in depth, by close reading; at the same time you will be encouraged to think about the contexts in which these texts were written and about the different ways in which they were read in the past and can be read now.

Before you start this course

You should either have taken GCSE English and achieved Grade C or higher, or you should have studied English to a level equivalent to Key Stage 4 of the National Curriculum. The course emphasises, at AS, progression from GCSE and, at A2, progression towards study in Higher Education.

English is at the centre of the Arts, and English Literature can be complemented by many other subjects. History and Modern Languages are particularly suitable partners. As an Advanced Subsidiary GCE it can also be a valuable contrast to scientific, technological and economics-based subjects, enabling you to demonstrate the breadth of your interests.

A qualification in English Literature provides a very wide range of opportunities for courses in the Arts, Humanities and Communication at degree level. As a subject which emphasises creativity, disciplined thought and communication, plus an ability to synthesise and contextualise ideas, English Literature is also welcomed as a qualification for many careers.

To get a certificate for Advanced Subsidiary GCE, you will need to have studied for and been assessed on your performance in 3 AS units of assessment.

To get a certificate for Advanced GCE, you will need to have studied for and been assessed on your performance in 3 AS units, together with 3 A2 units of assessment.

For AS (Units 2707, 2708 and 2709) you must study at least four texts, including one play by Shakespeare and one other text written before 1900. Your texts must include prose, poetry and drama.

For A2 (Units 2710, 2711 or 2712, and 2713) you will study a further four texts. One at least must have been written pre-1770 and another pre-1900. You must show that you are able to make comparisons between texts and (in the Synoptic Unit 2713) that you can draw together the literary skills and knowledge you have acquired in the course as a whole.

The assessment units for AS are:

Unit 2707: Shakespeare

In this unit you will answer two questions on a Shakespeare play. The first question will be passage-based.

Unit 2708: Poetry and Prose

In this unit you will answer one question on poetry and one on a novel or collection of short stories. At least one of the texts you discuss must have been published before 1900. The other can be by a contemporary writer.

Unit 2709: Complementary Study (Coursework)

In this unit you complete a folder of coursework containing two pieces of writing on a text of your own or your centre's choice. Here you have the opportunity to focus on your own particular interests. Your work will be assessed by your teacher and moderated by OCR.

These 3 units form the Advanced Subsidiary GCE qualification.

The assessment units for A2 are:

Unit 2710: Poetry and Drama (pre-1000)

This unit focuses on classic texts from Chaucer to the Victorian era. You will answer one question on poetry and one on drama. At least one of the texts will have been published before 1770.

Unit 2711: Prose (post-1914) (Coursework)

This unit is an alternative to Unit 2712. For Unit 2711 you must produce a folder of work (max 3,000 words) containing either two items of writing or an extended essay.

Unit 2712: Prose (post-1914) (Written Paper)

This unit is an alternative to Unit 2711. For Unit 2712 you must answer two questions, one passage-based and the other an essay, either on the same or on a different text.

Unit 2713: Comparative and Contextual Study

For this unit you will prepare one topic from a choice of six (Satire, the Gothic Tradition, the Victorian Novel, the Great War in British Literature, Twentieth Century American Literature, Post-Colonial Literature). First you will write a critical appreciation of an unseen passage, relating it to the topic area you have studied. Then you will write an essay comparing a set text from your topic area with at least one other appropriate text of your own choice (this may be a book you have studied earlier in your course).

In each unit you will answer two questions, with an hour for each answer.

These 3 units (together with Units 2707, 2708 and 2709) form the Advanced GCE qualification.

The assessment structure for English Literature is:

Unit 2707: 2 hours 15% Drama: Shakespeare Candidates select one play, and answer two questions: one passage-based and one essay. <i>(Closed text)</i>	+	Unit 2708: 2 hours 20% Poetry and Prose Candidates answer two questions, one on a poetry text, the second on prose. At least one text must be pre-1900. Questions will require close study and critical appreciation of set passages from prepared texts. In their answers candidates must discuss the set passages in relation to the text as a whole. <i>(Open text)</i>	+	Unit 2709: 2 hours 15% Complementary Study Coursework A folder (guideline 1,500-2,000 words) containing two items of writing on a single text chosen by the candidate. <i>(This must be a fourth text, not one of the three previously studied for Unit 2707 or 2708.)</i> One item should focus on the text as a whole; the second should involve a close reading and critical discussion of a single selected passage. (This may take the form of a recreative response with commentary.)	= AS
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Unit 2710: 2 hours 15% Poetry and Drama (pre-1900) Candidates answer two questions, one from each section (A: Poetry; B: Drama). At least one question must be on a text published pre-1770. <i>(Closed text)</i>	+	Unit 2711: 15% Prose (post-1914) (Coursework) OR Unit 2712: Prose (post-1914) (Written Paper) 2 hours Candidates study one or more prose texts not previously used in Units 2708 or 2709. <i>Coursework:</i> a folder (max. 3,000 words) containing either two items of writing or an extended essay. <i>Written Paper:</i> Candidates answer two questions, one passage-based and the other an essay, either on the same or on a different text.	+	Unit 2713: 2 hours(+15mins) 20% Comparative and Contextual Study (Synoptic) Candidates answer two questions on a single topic area (see below), one question from each section. A: close study of an unseen passage or passages related to the set topic areas. B: essay questions involving comparative and contextual study of at least two related texts. <i>Satire; Gothic Tradition; Victorian Novel; the Great War in British Literature; 20th Century American Literature; Post-Colonial Literature.</i> <i>(Closed text)</i> 15 minutes will be allowed for initial reading before the question paper is issued.	= A2
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For more information, please view the OCR website: www.ocr.org.uk

or contact OCR Information Bureau 01223 553998 at OCR Head Office, 1 Hills Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU.