

Why choose OCR GCSE English?

More choice. More flexibility

The GCSE English specification has been designed to be enjoyable and inspiring and to allow you to make the most of your passion for English. It provides good links to further study for your learners.

The English specification comes with a large range of set texts designed to suit a variety of learners. We want to help you bring the wonderful power of English into your learners' lives, and this is reflected in the texts we have chosen.

We have listened to you

We have listened to your feedback and put the units in a logical order, so the specification is easy to understand and straightforward to deliver. It is more flexible too – we have structured it so that you can teach the qualification in linear or modular formats – or even both.

The significant crossover between English and English Language means that your learners can change their paths of study easily. You will find that movement between the three GCSE English specifications is easy, as common texts appear in all three.

In fact, we have had feedback from teachers and key stakeholders in the English teaching community throughout the development process. This has also helped us to make sure we offer you the most practical help we can in the form of new specifications, our support materials and publishers' resources.

Support

We are developing a wide range of resources to ensure there is support for you at every stage of your preparation for the new GCSE English specification. In developing the support, we are talking to teachers and other key stakeholders to make sure we are offering you the best help we can. Below, you will find a brief guide to the support that will be available for you.

- Specimen assessment materials
- Specimen assessment materials (controlled)
- Guide to controlled assessment
- Guide to curriculum planning
- Teachers' handbook
- Sample schemes of work and lesson plans
- Candidate-style answers
- Options evening leaflet/Parent's Guide
- Poetry Anthology
- Controlled assessment consultancy
- Endorsed publisher partner materials
- Active Results
- Past papers
- Interchange
- INSET (free until December 2010)
- Continual Professional Development





Contents

1	Introduction to GCSE English	4
1.1	Overview of OCR GCSE English	4
1.2	Overview of changes	5
1.3	Guided Learning Hours	6
2	Content of GCSE English	7
2.1	Unit A641: <i>Reading Literary Texts</i>	7
2.2	Unit A642: <i>Imaginative Writing</i>	8
2.3	Unit A643: <i>Speaking and Listening</i>	9
2.4	Unit A680: <i>Information and Ideas</i>	10
3	Assessment of GCSE English	11
3.1	Overview of the assessment in GCSE English	11
3.2	Tiers	12
3.3	Assessment Objectives	12
3.4	Grading and awarding grades	13
3.5	Grade descriptions	14
3.6	Quality of written communication	16
4	Controlled Assessment in GCSE English	17
4.1	Controlled assessment tasks	17
4.2	Planning and managing controlled assessment	18
4.3	Marking and moderating controlled assessment	20
4.4	Submitting the moderation samples via the OCR Repository	30
5	Support for GCSE English	31
5.1	Free resources available from the OCR website	31
5.2	Other resources	31
5.3	Training	31
5.4	OCR Support Services	31
6	Access to GCSE English	32
6.1	Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Information relating to GCSE English	32
6.2	Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration	33

Contents

7	Administration of GCSE English	34
7.1	Availability of assessment	34
7.2	Making entries	34
7.3	Terminal rule	35
7.4	Unit and qualification re-sits	35
7.5	Enquiries about results	36
7.6	Shelf-life of units	36
7.7	Prohibited qualifications and classification code	36
8	Other information about GCSE English	37
8.1	Overlap with other qualifications	37
8.2	Progression from this qualification	37
8.3	Avoidance of bias	37
8.4	Code of Practice/Common Criteria Requirements/Subject Criteria	37
8.5	Language	37
8.6	Spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legislative, economic and cultural issues	37
8.7	Sustainable development, health and safety considerations and European developments, consistent with international agreements	37
8.8	Key Skills	38
Appendix:	Guidance for the production of electronic Controlled Assessment	39

This Specification has been updated. The Higher and Foundation papers for Unit A644 and A653 are identical for the GCSE English and the GCSE English Language Specifications. The code number has been changed to A680 for both.

1 Introduction to GCSE English

1.1 Overview of OCR GCSE English

Unit A641

Reading literary texts

Controlled assessment
20% of GCSE English
40 marks

Response to three **texts** from a choice of tasks and texts (see page 6 Overview of texts).

Candidates respond to **one** task on a play by Shakespeare, **one** on prose or literary non-fiction and **one** on poetry. **These latter two tasks must include study of both a text from the English, Welsh or Irish literary heritage, and a text from a different culture or tradition.**

Candidates must show an understanding of texts in their social, cultural and historical contexts.

Plus

Unit A642

Imaginative Writing

Controlled assessment
20% of GCSE English
40 marks

Two linked continuous writing responses from a choice of Text Development or Media.

Plus

Unit A643

Speaking and Listening

Controlled assessment
20% of GCSE English
40 marks

Three activities:

- a drama-focussed activity
- a group activity
- an individual extended contribution.

One of the three activities must be a real-life context in and beyond the class room.

Plus

Unit A680

Information and Ideas

Written exam
40% of GCSE English
80 marks: 40 marks per section

Section A : Non-Fiction and Media

Responses to unseen authentic passages

Section B: Writing Information and Ideas

One continuous writing response: candidates choose **one** task from a choice of two tasks.

1.2.1 Overview of changes

	What stays the same?	What changes?
Structure:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The course can be taught in a modular or linear fashion The examined units are tiered – Higher and Foundation Tier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is now a four mandatory unit qualification Unit weightings have been altered
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study of three texts (Drama, Poetry and Prose) for the coursework equivalent Study of a text from the English, Welsh or Irish literary heritage, a play by Shakespeare and a text from a different culture or tradition Anthology supplied by OCR Responses to authentic unseen Non-fiction and Media texts in the examined paper The opportunity for informative and imaginative writing The three speaking and listening assessment contexts remain the same Speaking and Listening DVD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controlled assessment – range of tasks set by OCR which can be adapted by the Centre Some texts have changed – see text list Writing triplets have been removed One of the speaking and listening assessment contexts must be a real-life context in and beyond the classroom
Assessment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January and June assessments will be available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is only one examined unit Three units are controlled assessment Total examination time is two hours

1.2.2 Overview of texts – Text List

Drama

William Shakespeare:

- Romeo and Juliet (Literary Heritage)
- Julius Caesar (Literary Heritage)

Poetry

Selected Poems:

- Wilfred Owen (Literary Heritage)
- Carol-Ann Duffy (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)
- Benjamin Zephaniah (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)

Prose

- *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen (Literary Heritage)
- *The Withered Arm and other Wessex Tales* by Thomas Hardy (Literary Heritage)
- *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)
- *Tsotsi* by Athol Fugard (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)

Literary Non-Fiction

- *Notes from a Small Island* by Bill Bryson (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)
- *The Kindness of Strangers* by Kate Adie (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)

OCR will publish an anthology which includes a selection of poems by the poets used in the Controlled Assessment Unit.

1.3 Guided learning hours

GCSE English requires 120 - 140 guided learning hours in total

2.1 Unit A641: Reading Literary Texts

This controlled assessment Unit is available in both January and June. It consists of responses to **three** texts.

Tasks will be set by OCR and will provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their ability to fulfil the assessment objectives for AO2. The tasks focus the candidate on a specific aspect of the text (e.g. a specific chapter, character or setting) and also encourage the candidate to study and respond to the rest of the text.

Candidates are required to study and respond to **three** tasks from a choice of tasks and texts. Candidates respond to **one** task on a play by Shakespeare and two others: **one** on prose or literary non-fiction and **one** on poetry. **These latter two tasks must include study of both a text from the English, Welsh or Irish literary heritage, and a text from a different culture or tradition** (see 1.2.2). Candidates must show an understanding of texts in their social, cultural and historical contexts.

In this unit

Candidates should be able to:

- understand how meaning is constructed through words, sentences, and whole texts, recognising and responding to the effects of language variation
- evaluate the ways in which texts may be interpreted differently according to the perspective of the reader
- read a rich range of prose, poetry and drama
- understand how texts from the literary heritage have been influential and significant over time
- explore how texts from different cultures and traditions may reflect or influence values and assumptions.

Choice of Texts

- Centres can **either** choose from the prescribed texts listed on page 8 **or** they can choose their own text.
- The prescribed text list will be reviewed by OCR every two years.

Centre choice of Texts

Where Centres choose their own text, they must ensure that the text studied is of comparable length and quality as the set texts in the GCSE suite of English specifications, and suitable for analysis by Key Stage 4 students with regards to:

- Language and Structure
- Different Interpretations
- Culture and Tradition

Centres may refer to the OCR Controlled Assessment Consultancy Service for additional guidance.

In the production of the final piece, candidates will select a task from the Section entitled 'Themed tasks'.

Prescribed Texts

Drama: William Shakespeare

- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *Julius Caesar*

Literary Non-Fiction

- *Notes from a Small Island* by Bill Bryson
- *The Kindness of Strangers* by Kate Adie

Poetry: Selected Poems

- Carol-Ann Duffy
- Benjamin Zephaniah
- Wilfred Owen

Prose

- *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck
- *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen
- *Tsotsi* by Athol Fugard
- *The Withered Arm and other Wessex Tales* by Thomas Hardy

There are 15 poems per poet in the OCR Anthology. Centres choose one poet to study.

2.2 Unit A642: Imaginative Writing

In this unit

In this controlled assessment unit, available in both January and June, candidates respond to imaginative writing tasks.

Tasks will be set by OCR and will provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their ability to fulfil the assessment objectives for AO3.

Candidates are required to respond to **one** exercise, completing **two** linked tasks.

Candidates can choose from the following two areas:

- Media

OR

- Text Development.

Each area contains a core task and a choice of three linked tasks.

Candidates should be able to write accurately and fluently:

- choosing content and adapting style and language to a wide range of forms, media, contexts, audiences and purposes
- adapting form to a range of styles and genres.

2.3 Unit A643: *Speaking and Listening*

In this controlled assessment unit, available in both January and June, candidates are required to submit work in **three** assessment contexts:

- individual extended contribution
- group activity
- drama-focussed activity.

During the course, candidates should engage in speaking and listening activities in a variety of formal and informal contexts. One activity must allow candidates to participate in a real-life context in and beyond the classroom.

OCR will allow Centres to design their own tasks. OCR will also set exemplar tasks which can be adapted by the Centre.

Tasks set will provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their ability to fulfil the assessment objectives for AO1.

In this unit

Candidates should be able to:

- present and listen to information and ideas
- respond appropriately to the questions and views of others
- make a range of effective contributions, using creative approaches to exploring questions, solving problems and developing ideas
- reflect and comment critically on their own and others' uses of language
- participate in a range of real-life contexts in and beyond the classroom, adapting talk appropriately to situation and audience and using Standard English where appropriate
- select and use a range of dramatic techniques and creative approaches to explore ideas, texts and issues in scripted and improvised work.

2.4 Unit A680: Information and Ideas

This is an examined unit, available in both January and June. It consists of two sections:

2.4.1 Section A: Non-Fiction and Media

The tasks will be based on the reading of previously unseen authentic materials. Candidates will be provided with one Non-Fiction and one Media piece. Differentiated materials will be set at Foundation and Higher Tiers. Candidates answer all questions.

The tasks will require candidates to:

- show understanding of how meaning is constructed through words, sentences and whole texts, recognising the effects of language choices and patterns
- evaluate the ways in which texts may be interpreted differently according to the perspective of the reader.

2.4.2 Section B: Writing Information and Ideas

Candidates are required to produce **one** piece of continuous writing from a choice of two tasks on a topic broadly linked to the reading material provided in Section A.

Candidates will be encouraged to develop their own ideas. They may draw on the reading materials in Section A if they wish; however, the task will not require specific reference to the reading materials.

In this unit

Candidates should be able to write accurately and fluently:

- choosing content and adapting style and language to a range of forms, media, contexts, audiences and purposes
- adapting form to a range of styles and genres.

3. Assessment of GCSE English

3

3.1 Overview of the assessment in GCSE English – J350

Unit A641:

Reading Literary Texts

20% of the qualification
About 50 hours
40 marks

Controlled assessment
Candidates choose **three** tasks from tasks provided by OCR.
Candidates respond to **one** task on a play by Shakespeare, **one** on prose or literary non-fiction and **one** on poetry. **These latter two tasks must include study of both a text from the English, Welsh or Irish literary heritage, and a text from a different culture or tradition.**
Candidates must show an understanding of texts in their social, cultural and historical contexts.
This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Unit A642:

Imaginative Writing

20% of the qualification
About 20 hours
40 marks

Controlled assessment
Candidates choose **one** exercise containing **two** linked tasks provided by OCR.
Two continuous linked writing responses from a choice of Text Development and Media.
This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Unit A643:

Speaking and Listening

20% of the qualification
About 20 hours
40 marks

Controlled assessment
Candidates choose **three** tasks from tasks designed by the Centre or provided by OCR.
Three assessment contexts: individual extended contribution, group activity and drama-focussed activity. One activity must be a real-life context in and activity beyond the class room.
This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Unit A680:

Information and Ideas

40% of the qualification
2 hour Written paper
80 marks:
40 marks per section

Examination: externally assessed.
Foundation and Higher Tier
Section A : Non-Fiction and Media
Candidates answer all questions.
Responses to unseen authentic passages.
Section B: Writing Information and Ideas
Candidates choose **one** task from a choice of two tasks.
One continuous writing response.

3.2 Tiers

For controlled assessment units A641, A642 and A643 the assessment is untiered. Candidates achieving less than the minimum mark for Grade G will be ungraded.

For examined unit A680, the assessment is tiered. Foundation tier targets grades G to C and Higher tier targets grades D to A*. An allowed grade E will be awarded on the Higher Tier components.

3.3 Assessment Objectives

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the following in the context of the content described:

AO1	Speaking and listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 and perspectives, and how they construct and express meanings. • Interact with others, shaping meanings through suggestions, comments and questions and drawing ideas together. • Create and sustain different roles.
AO2	Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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.
AO3	Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write to communicate 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. <p>(At least one third of available credit for AO3 should be awarded to the use of a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling.)</p>

Assessment Objectives (AO) weightings – GCSE English

The relationship between the units and the assessment objectives of the scheme of assessment is shown in the following grid:

Unit	% of GCSE			Total
	AO1	AO2	AO3	
Unit A641: <i>Reading Literary Texts</i>	–	20	–	20
Unit A642: <i>Imaginative Writing</i>	–	–	20	20
Unit A643: <i>Speaking and Listening</i>	20	–	–	20
Unit A680: <i>Information and ideas</i>	–	20	20	40
Total	20	40	40	100

3.4 Grading and awarding grades

GCSE results are awarded on the scale A* to G. Units are awarded a* to g. Grades are indicated on certificates. However, results for candidates who fail to achieve the minimum grade (G or g) will be recorded as *unclassified* (U or u) and this is **not** certificated.

GCSE qualifications are unitised schemes. Candidates can take units across several different series provided the terminal rules are satisfied. They can also re-sit units. When working out candidates' overall grades, OCR needs to be able to compare performance on the same unit in different series when different grade boundaries have been set, and between different units. OCR uses a Uniform Mark Scale to enable this to be done.

A candidate's uniform mark for each unit is calculated from the candidate's raw marks on that unit. The raw mark boundary marks are converted to the equivalent uniform mark boundary. Marks between grade boundaries are converted on a pro rata basis.

When unit results are issued, the candidate's unit grade and uniform mark are given. The uniform mark is shown out of the maximum uniform mark for the unit, e.g. 40/50.

The specification is graded on a Uniform Mark Scale. The uniform mark thresholds for each of the assessments are shown below:

GCSE Unit	Unit Weighting	Maximum unit uniform mark	Unit Grade								
			a*	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	u
A641/A642/A643	20%	60	54	48	42	36	30	24	18	12	0
A680 Higher	40%	120	108	96	84	72	60	54	–	–	0
A680 Foundation	40%	83	–	–	–	72	60	48	36	24	0

Candidates' uniform marks for each unit are aggregated and grades for the specification are generated on the following scale:

Qualification	Maximum uniform mark	Qualification Grade								
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
GCSE	300	270	240	210	180	150	120	90	60	0

The Examined units will have a total weighting of 40% and controlled assessment units have a weighting of 60%.

A candidate's uniform mark for the examined Unit will be combined with the uniform mark for the controlled assessment to give a total uniform mark for the specification. The candidate's grade will be determined by the total uniform mark.

3.5 Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the assessment may be balanced by better performance in others.

The grade descriptors have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

Grade F

Candidates talk confidently in familiar situations, showing some awareness of purpose and of listeners' needs. They convey information, develop ideas and describe feelings clearly, using the main features of standard English as appropriate. They listen with concentration and make relevant responses to others' ideas and opinions. They show some awareness of how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. In formal and creative activities, they attempt to meet the demands of different roles.

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.

Grade C

Candidates adapt their talk to the demands of different situations and contexts. They recognise when standard English is required and use it confidently. They use different sentence structures and select vocabulary so that information, ideas and feelings are communicated clearly and the listener's interest is engaged. They explain and evaluate how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. Through careful listening and by developing their own and others' ideas, they make significant contributions to discussion and participate effectively in creative activities.

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.

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; punctuation and spelling are accurate and sometimes bold.

Grade A

Candidates select suitable styles and registers of spoken English for a range of situations and contexts, showing assured use of standard English where appropriate. They confidently vary sentence structures and choose from a broad repertoire of vocabulary to express information, ideas and feelings in an engaging manner. They initiate conversations and demonstrate sensitive listening through contributions that sustain and develop discussion. They recognise and fulfil the demands of different roles, whether in formal settings or creative activities.

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.

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.

3.6 Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is assessed in units A642 and A680. Tasks in these units require answers in continuous prose and therefore include the assessment of written communication. The writing tasks in each of these units include the assessment of written communication, which is assessed via the marking criteria for writing.

Candidates are expected to:

- present relevant information in a form that suits its purpose
- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear
- where appropriate, use a suitable structure and style of writing.

4. Controlled Assessment in GCSE English

4

This section provides general guidance on controlled assessment: what controlled assessment tasks are, when and how they are available; how to plan and manage control assessment and what controls must be applied throughout the process. Detailed guidance relating to controlled assessment is given in JCQ document 'Instructions for conducting controlled assessments'. More specific guidance and support is provided in the Guide to controlled assessment in GCSE English available on the OCR website.

4.1 Controlled assessment tasks

Controlled assessment tasks will be available from Interchange from 1 June and will be replaced or reviewed as detailed below. Guidance on how to access controlled assessment tasks from Interchange is available on the OCR website: www.ocr.org.uk.

Centres must ensure that candidates undertake a task applicable to the correct year by checking carefully the dates of the tasks on Interchange.

All tasks can be contextualised by the Centre.

4.1.1 Unit A641 *Reading Literary Texts*

Tasks set by OCR are replaced each year.

Candidates are required to study and respond to **three** tasks from a choice of tasks and texts.

Candidates respond to **one** task on a play by Shakespeare and two others: **one** on prose or literary non-fiction and **one** on poetry. These latter two tasks must include study of both a text from the English, Welsh or Irish literary heritage, and a text from a different culture or tradition (see 1.2.2).

Candidates must show an understanding of texts in their social, cultural and historical contexts.

4.1.2 Unit A642 *Imaginative Writing*

Tasks set by OCR are replaced each year.

Candidates are required to respond to **one** exercise, completing **two** linked tasks. Candidates choose from two exercises. Each exercise contains a core task and a choice of three linked tasks.

4.1.3 Unit A643 *Speaking and Listening*

OCR will allow Centres to design their own tasks according to defined parameters set by OCR.

Candidates are required to submit work in **three** assessment contexts. All centres will receive a visit from an external moderator about once every three years.

4.2 Planning and managing controlled assessment

Controlled assessment tasks are available at an early stage to allow planning time. Candidates should be allowed sufficient time to complete the tasks.

Suggested steps and timings are included below with guidance on regulatory controls at each step of the process. Teachers must ensure that control requirements indicated below are met throughout the process.

4.2.1 Preparation and research time

- Introduction to the task (teacher led) **1 to 1.5 hours**

Includes choice of tasks, possible approaches and sources of evidence, time allocations, programmes of work and deadlines, methods of working, control requirements.

- Preparation/research/collection of evidence

Unit	Preparation and Research time
A641	About 40 hours
A642	About 20 hours
A643	About 15 hours

In the preparation/research/collection of evidence stage, a low level of control is required, which means that candidates can undertake this part of the process without direct teacher supervision and outside the centre as required. Candidates are also able to work in collaboration during this stage. However, when producing their final piece of work, candidates must complete and/or evidence all work individually.

During the research phase candidates can be given support and guidance. Teachers can explain the task, advise on how the task could be approached, advise on resources and alert the candidate to key things that must be included in their final piece of work.

Research material can include fieldwork, internet or paper-based research, questionnaires, audio and video files. Candidates must be guided on the use of information from other sources to ensure that confidentiality and intellectual property rights are maintained at all times. It is essential that any material directly used from a source is appropriately and rigorously referenced.

4.2.2 Producing the final piece of work

Unit	Production time	Final piece	Recommended word length
A641	Up to 6 hours	Three responses to a range of text types	Up to 3000 words
A642	Up to 4 hours	Two linked writing activities	Up to 1200 words
A643	Between 15 minutes to 1 hour	Three assessment contexts	N/a

During the production of the final piece of work, candidates are not allowed access to dictionaries and thesauri and to grammar and spell check programs. For A641, candidates can use clean copies of texts.

The final piece of work is produced in the centre under controlled conditions, which means under direct teacher supervision: teachers must be able to authenticate the work and there must be acknowledgement and referencing of any sources used. If the final piece is carried out over several sessions, work must be collected in between sessions.

When supervising tasks, teachers are expected to:

- exercise continuing supervision of work in order to monitor progress and to prevent plagiarism;
- ensure that the work is completed in accordance with the specification requirements and can be assessed in accordance with the specified marking criteria and procedures.

Teachers must not provide templates, model answers or feedback on drafts. Candidates must work independently to produce their own final piece of work.

4.2.3 Presentation of the final piece of work

Candidates must observe certain procedures in the production of controlled assessment tasks.

- Tables, graphs and spreadsheets may be produced using appropriate ICT. These should be inserted into the document at the appropriate place.
- Any copied material must be suitably acknowledged.
- Quotations must be clearly marked and a reference provided wherever possible.
- Work submitted for moderation or marking must be marked with the:
 - Centre number
 - Centre name
 - Candidate number
 - Candidate name
 - Unit code and title
 - Assignment title.

Work submitted on paper for moderation or marking must be secured by treasury tags. Work submitted in digital format (CD or online) must be in a suitable file structure as detailed in the Appendix.

4.3 Marking and moderating controlled assessment

All controlled assessment units are marked by the centre assessor(s) using OCR marking criteria and guidance and are moderated by the OCR-appointed moderator. External moderation is either postal moderation or e-moderation where evidence in a digital format is supplied.

4.3.1 Applying the assessment criteria

The starting point for marking the tasks is the following marking criteria (available on Interchange). These contain levels of criteria for the skills, knowledge and understanding that the candidate is required to demonstrate. Before the start of the course, and for use at INSET training events, OCR will provide exemplification through real or simulated candidate work which will help to clarify the level of achievement the assessors should be looking for when awarding marks.

4.3.2 Use of 'best fit' approach to marking criteria

The assessment task(s) for each unit should be marked by teachers according to the given marking criteria within the relevant unit using a 'best fit' approach. For each of the assessment objectives/criteria, teachers select one of the band descriptors provided in the marking grid that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked.

Marking should be positive, rewarding achievement rather than penalising failure or omissions. The award of marks **must be** directly related to the marking criteria.

Teachers use their professional judgement in selecting the band descriptor that best describes the work of the candidate.

To select the most appropriate mark within the band descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

- where the candidate's work *convincingly* meets the statement, the highest mark should be awarded;
- where the candidate's work *adequately* meets the statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded;
- where the candidate's work *just* meets the statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

Teachers should use the full range of marks available to them and award full marks in any band for work which fully meets that descriptor. This is work which is 'the best one could expect from candidates working at that level'. Where there are only two marks within a band the choice will be between work which, in most respects, meets the statement and work which just meets the statement. For wider mark bands the marks on either side of the middle mark(s) for 'adequately met' should be used where the standard is lower or higher than 'adequate' but **not** the highest or lowest mark in the band.

Only one mark per assessment objective/criteria will be entered. For each of the controlled assessment units, the overall mark is **40**. The overall mark is generated by marking each task out of 40 and averaging the marks for the unit.

A641 Reading Literary Texts Marking Criteria

Candidates submit three tasks for assessment. Each task is marked out of 40, using the marking criteria below, giving a total of 120 marks. Divide the total by 3 to provide the overall mark out of 40 for this section.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO2
1	40 39 38 37 36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cogent and explicitly relevant response • Explores and evaluates a range of interpretations of language and structure as appropriate • Analyses in detail the writer's perspective • Precise quotations/comparisons enhance analysis of writer's intentions • Understanding of social, cultural and historical context woven into presentation of ideas
2	35 34 33 32 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A personal and persuasive response • Develops interpretations and evaluates language and structure as appropriate • Identifies and discusses writer's perspective • Apt quotations/comparisons are used to illuminate meaning • Impact of social, cultural, historical context clearly demonstrated
3	30 29 28 27 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A personal, well developed and secure critical response • A clear understanding of how meaning is conveyed, evaluating language and structure as appropriate • Well selected quotations/comparisons enhance analysis • Significance of social, cultural, historical context clearly demonstrated
4	25 24 23 22 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A personal and mainly relevant response • Understands and demonstrates how meaning is conveyed • Quotations/comparisons used to justify views • Comments on how social, cultural, historical context affects reader
5	20 19 18 17 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to develop a personal and relevant response • Understands some of the ways meaning is conveyed • Uses quotations/simple comparisons to support views • Comments on the social, cultural, historical features of the text
6	15 14 13 12 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes some comments relevant to task • Some attempt to show how meaning is conveyed • Quotations/comparisons used to make simple points • Aware that text features relate to social, cultural, historical context
7	10 9 8 7 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes some of the main features of a text in attempting to address task • Some awareness of how the writer achieves effects through simple comparisons/quotations • Some awareness that text features relate to social, cultural, historical context
8	5 4 3 2 1 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some comments on text with very little or no relevance to task • Struggles to develop a response • Very little or no understanding of social, cultural, historical context

A642 Imaginative Writing Marking Criteria

Candidates submit **one** task containing **two** parts for assessment. Each part is marked out of **40** (out of 26 marks for AO3i & AO3ii and out of 14 marks for AO3iii), using the marking criteria below, giving a total of **80** marks. Divide the total by 2 to provide the overall mark out of **40** for this section.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO3i & AO3ii	Marks	Descriptors AO3iii
1	26	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows sophisticated control of the material and makes effective use of linguistic devices. demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the task, addressing it with complete relevance and adapting form and style with flair to suit audience and purpose. uses precise vocabulary which is fully suited to the purpose of the writing, conveying subtlety of thought and shades of meaning, and where appropriate is imaginative and ambitious in scope. uses structure to produce deliberate effects, developing the writing coherently and skilfully from a confident opening which engages the reader to a very convincing and deliberate ending. is organised into coherent paragraphs which are clearly varied for effect and used confidently to enhance the ideas and meaning. 	14	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of sentence structures to ensure clarity and to achieve specific effects relevant to the task. uses ambitious vocabulary with very few spelling errors. uses punctuation consciously and securely to shape meaning, with very few errors.
	25 24		<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows full control of the material and makes some effective use of linguistic devices. demonstrates a confident understanding of the task, addressing it with consistent relevance and adapting form and style with assurance to suit audience and purpose. uses imaginative vocabulary which is appropriate to the purpose of the writing, conveying some subtlety of thought and shades of meaning, and where appropriate may show some ambition in scope uses structure consciously for effect, developing the writing coherently from an opening which engages the reader to a convincing and deliberate ending. is organised into paragraphs which have unity, are varied for effect and are used to control the content and achieve overall coherence. 	13 12
2	23 22 21			

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO3i & AO3ii	Marks	Descriptors AO3iii
3	20 19 18	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows generally competent control of the material but may not always convey meaning clearly when using more ambitious linguistic devices and structures. demonstrates a secure understanding of the task, addressing it in a relevant way and adapting form and style with confidence to suit audience and purpose. uses varied vocabulary to create different effects which are mainly appropriate to the purpose of the writing, conveying thought and meaning clearly. uses structure deliberately and with direction a focused and interesting opening, events and ideas developed clearly and in some detail, an appropriate ending. uses paragraphs of varying length and structure for effect, which effectively organise and link ideas and create an overall sense of coherence. 	11 10	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses generally well controlled sentence structures which are varied in length and type and show evidence of being used deliberately to create specific effects appropriate to the task. shows secure spelling of complex regular words and generally secure spelling of irregular or more complex vocabulary. uses punctuation to enhance or clarify meaning is accurate both within and between sentences, but may make some errors in complex sentence structures.
4	17 16 15	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows general control of the material; the response may be straightforward and controlled but linguistically unambitious or may lose some control in attempting something ambitious. demonstrates an understanding of the task, addressing it in a mainly relevant way with some evidence of adapting form and style to suit different audiences and purposes. uses some variety of vocabulary to create different effects and to suit the purpose of the writing, but which may be imprecise or fail to convey shades of meaning. uses structure with a sense of direction a clear and focused opening, straightforward development of ideas, an attempt to achieve an appropriate ending. is organised into paragraphs which may be varied for effect and which are carefully linked together to make the sequence of events or development of ideas clear to the reader. 	9 8	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses sentence structures which show some variety. May tend to repeat sentence types, lose control of more ambitious structures, or make some syntactical errors. usually spells complex regular words securely; may make errors with irregular or more complex vocabulary. uses punctuation in an attempt to create some specific effects; is usually accurate for sentence separation and sometimes within sentences, but may make less secure use of speech marks, colons and semi colons.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO3i & AO3ii	Marks	Descriptors AO3iii
5	14 13 12	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may not always show control of the material; the response may be simple and controlled but linguistically unambitious, or may attempt something ambitious but tend to lose control. demonstrates some understanding of the task, addressing it in a sometimes relevant way and with some attempt to adapt form and style to suit audience and purpose. uses vocabulary to create some limited effects, which may however be too simple to convey shades of meaning, not fully understood or not appropriate and may contain some idiomatic errors. uses structure with some sense of direction – a generally clear and focussed opening, some development of ideas, a limited attempt to achieve an appropriate ending. uses paragraphs which may occasionally be varied for effect and/or are linked together to make the sequence of events or development of ideas fairly clear to the reader. 	7 6	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses sentence structures which show a little variety; may tend repeat sentence types, lose control of more ambitious structures, and/or include syntactical errors. usually spells simple regular vocabulary securely but may make errors with complex regular vocabulary. uses punctuation which sometimes helps clarify meaning, usually accurately for sentence separation and sometimes successfully within sentences.
6	11 10 9	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not always show control of the material; the response may have a level of linguistic error that distracts the reader from the merits of the content. demonstrates a limited understanding of the task and addresses it with some relevance, making a limited attempt to adapt form and style to suit audience and purpose. uses vocabulary which is sometimes chosen for variety and interest but likely to be limited in range, sometimes inappropriate and may contain some idiomatic errors. structures writing with some sense of direction which may not be sustained; a fairly clear opening, some limited development of ideas, some sense of an ending. uses paragraphs which create some sense of sequence for the events or the development of ideas but which may lack unity or have little or no evidence of links between them. 	5 4	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses repetitive sentence structures, which are mainly simple or compound, or lengthy with some sense of control. usually spells simple regular vocabulary accurately but may make a number of typical errors. sometimes uses punctuation accurately for sentence separation but has limited success with attempts to use it within sentences to clarify meaning.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO3i & AO3ii	Marks	Descriptors AO3iii
7	8 7 6	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows limited control of the material; the level of linguistic error may require the reader to re-read some sentences before the meaning is clear. demonstrates a very limited understanding of the task, addressing it with occasional focus and making limited attempts to adapt form and style to suit audience and purpose. uses vocabulary to create occasional variety and interest but which is likely to be very limited in range and often inappropriate with some idiomatic errors. shows some signs of organisation and some sense of direction – a limited attempt to create an opening, very simple or rambling development of ideas, may come to a stop rather than achieving a deliberate ending. uses paragraphs which may signal only obvious development of events or ideas, or which may be haphazard and lack clear links or overall unity. 	3 2	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses simple repetitive sentence structures with little control of more complex ones and frequent syntactical faults. spells some simple regular vocabulary accurately but makes random errors. uses some basic punctuation with some success between sentences but, within sentences, usually misuses or omits it.
8	5 4 3	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offers occasional relevant and comprehensible content, but density of linguistic error may require the reader to re-read and re-organise the text before meaning is clear. demonstrates a little awareness of the task, addressing it with intermittent focus; form and style may occasionally be appropriate to audience and/or purpose, but this is unlikely to be deliberate. uses vocabulary which is very occasionally chosen for variety and/or interest but which is very limited in range and often inappropriate, with obvious idiomatic errors. shows occasional signs of organisation and a very limited – if any – sense of direction. uses paragraphs occasionally to signal very obvious changes in the direction of events or ideas, but which may need to be re-read or re-organised before the meaning is clear. 	1	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses recognisable sentence structures, with some accuracy in the use of more simple ones. uses erratic spelling which may be recognisable for most words but is accurate for only a limited number. uses punctuation which is occasionally successful but is inconsistent and likely to be inaccurate.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO3i & AO3ii	Marks	Descriptors AO3iii
Below band 8	<p>2</p> <p>1</p> <p>0</p>	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is very short or communicates very little, with some sections making no sense at all; may gain some marks where there is occasional clarity. • shows almost no awareness of task, audience or purpose. • uses vocabulary which is seriously limited. • shows almost no signs of organisation or sense of direction. • uses paragraphs – if at all – in a haphazard way such that, in spite of re-reading and re-organising, very little sense emerges. 	0	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses spelling and punctuation so imprecisely that very little meaning is communicated.

A643 Speaking and Listening Marking Criteria

Candidates submit **three** tasks for assessment. Each task is marked out of **40** marks using the marking criteria below, giving a total out of 120 marks. Divide the total mark by 3 to provide the overall mark out of 40 for this section.

Band/ Marks	Communicating and adapting language (Individual Extended Contribution)	Interacting and responding (Group activity)	Creating and sustaining roles (Drama-focussed activity)
Band 1 40-32	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> highlight priorities and essential detail when communicating complex and demanding subject matter use a sophisticated repertoire of strategies to meet challenging contexts and purposes show an assured choice and flexible use of standard English vocabulary and grammar in appropriate situations 	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sustain concentrated listening, showing understanding of complex ideas through interrogating what is said shape direction and content of talk, responding with flexibility to develop ideas and challenge assumptions initiate, develop and sustain discussion through encouraging participation and interaction, resolving differences and achieving positive outcomes 	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> create complex characters and fulfil the demands of challenging roles through insightful choice of dramatic approaches explore and respond to complex ideas issues and relationships in varied formal and informal scenarios
Band 2 24-31	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> confidently convey and interpret information, ideas and feelings, emphasising significant points and issues adapt and shape talk and non-verbal features to meet the demands of different situations, contexts and purposes make appropriate, controlled, effective use of standard English vocabulary and grammar 	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> challenge, develop and respond to what they hear in thoughtful and considerate ways, seeking clarification through apt questions analyse and reflect on others ideas to clarify issues and assumptions and develop the discussion identify useful outcomes and help structure discussion through purposeful contributions 	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> create convincing characters and roles using a range of carefully selected verbal and non-verbal techniques respond skilfully and sensitively in different situations and scenarios, to explore ideas and issues and relationships

Band/ Marks	Communicating and adapting language (Individual Extended Contribution)	Interacting and responding (Group activity)	Creating and sustaining roles (Drama-focussed activity)
Band 3 16-23	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectively communicate information, ideas and feelings, promote issues and points of view adapt talk to a variety of situations and audiences, using non-verbal features to add to impact use a range of well-judged vocabulary and sentence structures to achieve different purposes, including competent and appropriate use of standard English 	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen closely and attentively, engaging with what is heard through perceptive responses make significant contributions that move discussions forward engage with others' ideas and feelings, recognising obvious bias or prejudice and referring to precise detail 	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop and sustain roles and characters through appropriate language and effective gesture and movement make contributions to the development of situations and ideas, showing understanding and insight into relationships and significant issues
Band 4 8-15	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> convey straightforward information and ideas, coherent accounts and narratives in extended turns begin to adapt talk and non-verbal features to meet the needs of different audiences use a variety of vocabulary and structures for different purposes, including appropriate features of standard English with reasonable accuracy 	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> respond positively to what they hear, including helpful requests for explanation and further detail make specific, relevant contributions to discussion allow others to express ideas or points of view that may differ from their own and respond appropriately 	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> show understanding of characters by creating straightforward roles using speech, gesture and movement engage with situations and ideas, showing understanding of issues and relationships
Band 5 0-7	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> briefly express points of view, ideas and feelings sometimes develop detail to add interest to accounts, narratives and information, supported by appropriate non-verbal features use straightforward vocabulary and grammar, showing awareness of some main features of standard English 	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> respond to what they hear, showing some interest, including non-verbal reactions make brief, occasional contributions and general statements in discussion follow central ideas and possibilities in what they hear and raise straightforward questions 	<p>Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> draw on obvious and sometimes stereotypical ideas to create simple characters react to situations in predictable but appropriate ways, demonstrating some understanding of relationships and familiar ideas

4.3.3 Authentication of work

Teachers must be confident that the work they mark is the candidate's own. This does not mean that a candidate must be supervised throughout the completion of all work but the teacher must exercise sufficient supervision, or introduce sufficient checks, to be in a position to judge the authenticity of the candidate's work.

Candidates must not plagiarise. Plagiarism is the submission of another's work as one's own and/or failure to acknowledge the source correctly. Plagiarism is considered to be malpractice and could lead to the candidate being disqualified. Plagiarism sometimes occurs innocently when candidates are unaware of the need to reference or acknowledge their sources. It is therefore important that centres ensure that candidates understand that the work they submit must be their own and that they understand the meaning of plagiarism and what penalties may be applied. Candidates may refer to research, quotations or evidence but they must list their sources. The rewards from acknowledging sources, and the credit they will gain from doing so, should be emphasised to candidates as well as the potential risks of failing to acknowledge such material. Candidates may be asked to sign a declaration to this effect. Centres should reinforce this message to ensure candidates understand what is expected of them.

Please note: Centres must confirm to OCR that the evidence produced by candidates is authentic. The Centre Authentication Form includes a declaration for teachers to sign and is available from the OCR website www.ocr.org.uk and Interchange <https://interchange.ocr.org.uk>.

4.3.4 Internal standardisation

It is important that all internal assessors, working in the same subject area, work to common standards. Centres must ensure that the internal standardisation of marks across assessors and teaching groups takes place using an appropriate procedure.

This can be done in a number of ways. In the first year, reference material and OCR training meetings will provide a basis for centres' own standardisation. In subsequent years, this, or centres' own archive material, may be used. Centres are advised to hold preliminary meetings of staff involved to compare standards through cross-marking a small sample of work. After most marking has been completed, a further meeting at which work is exchanged and discussed will enable final adjustments to be made.

There should be clear evidence that work has been attempted and some work produced. If a candidate submits no work for an internally assessed component, then the candidate should be indicated as being absent from that component on the mark sheets submitted to OCR. If a candidate completes any work at all for an internally assessed component, then the work should be assessed according to the internal assessment objectives and marking instructions and the appropriate mark should be awarded, which may be zero.

4.3.5 Moderation

All work for controlled assessment is marked by the teacher and internally standardised by the centre. Marks are then submitted to OCR, after which moderation takes place in accordance with OCR procedures: refer to the OCR website for submission dates of the marks to OCR. The purpose of moderation is to ensure that the standard of the award of marks for work is the same for each centre and that each teacher has applied the standards appropriately across the range of candidates within the centre.

The sample of work which is presented to the Moderator for moderation must show how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria defined in the live mark schemes (available on Interchange).

Each candidate's work should have a cover sheet attached to it with a summary of the marks awarded for the task. If the work is to be submitted in digital format, this cover sheet should also be submitted electronically within each candidate's files.

4.4 Submitting the moderation samples via the OCR Repository

The OCR Repository allows centres to submit moderation samples in electronic format.

The OCR GCSE English units A641, A642 and A643 can be submitted electronically to the OCR Repository via Interchange: please check Section 7.2.1 for unit entry codes for the OCR Repository.

Instructions for how to upload files to OCR using the OCR Repository can be found on OCR Interchange and in the Controlled Assessment Guide for GCSE English available from the OCR website www.ocr.org.uk.

There should be clear evidence that work has been attempted and some work produced. If a candidate submits no work for an internally assessed component, then the candidate should be indicated as being absent from that component on the mark sheets submitted to OCR. If a candidate completes any work at all for an internally assessed component, then the work should be assessed according to the internal assessment objectives and marking instructions. Then the appropriate mark should be awarded, which may be zero.

5. Support for GCSE English

5

5.1 Free resources available from OCR

The following materials will be available on www.ocr.org.uk :

- GCSE English Specification
- Specimen assessment materials for each unit
- Planning for the English GCSEs
- Guide to Controlled Assessment
- Teachers' Handbook
- Sample Schemes of Work and Lesson Plans for each unit.

Other resources:

- A copy of OCR's Poetry Anthology, *Reflections*, for every candidate
- A CD-ROM of OCR's Poetry Anthology, *Reflections*, for every Centre.
- DVD to accompany *Reflections* Poetry Anthology
- Speaking and Listening Guidance Notes and DVD.

5.2 Other resources

OCR offers centres a wealth of quality published support with a fantastic choice of 'Official Publisher Partner' and 'Approved Publication' resources, all endorsed by OCR for use with OCR specifications. OCR works in close collaboration with three Publisher Partners; Hodder Education, Heinemann and Oxford University Press (OUP) to ensure centres have access to:

- better published support, available when you need it, tailored to OCR specifications;
- quality resources produced in consultation with OCR subject teams, which are linked to OCR's teacher support materials;
- more resources for specifications with lower candidate entries;
- materials which are subject to a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement.

Oxford University Press (OUP) is the publisher partner for OCR GCSE English.

OCR still endorses other publisher materials, which undergo a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. By offering a choice of endorsed materials, centres can be assured of quality support for all OCR qualifications.

5.3 Training

- Get Ahead events will run from February 2011
- For more information go to <http://www.ocr.org.uk/training/>

5.4 OCR Support Services

5.4.1 OCR Interchange

OCR Interchange has been developed to help you to carry out day to day administration functions online, quickly and easily. The site allows you to register and enter candidates online. In addition, you can gain immediate free access to candidate information at your convenience. Sign up at <https://interchange.ocr.org.uk>

6.1 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Information relating to GCSE English

GCSEs often require assessment of a broad range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

The revised GCSE qualifications and subject criteria were reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any disabled candidates. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to ensure that such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with disability groups and with disabled people.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments and to demonstrate what they know and can do. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to the assessment. Information on reasonable adjustments is found in *Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examinations* produced by the Joint Council (www.jcq.org.uk).

Candidates who are unable to access part of the assessment, even after exploring all possibilities through reasonable adjustments, may still be able to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

The access arrangements permissible for use in this specification are in line with QCA's GCSE subject criteria equalities review and are as follows:

	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Readers	Yes	AO1, AO3
	No	AO2 - Permitted for the prepared components of reading assessment. AO2 - Not permitted for unseen components of reading assessment where the independent scanning and decoding of texts is required.
Scribes	Yes	
Practical Assistants	Yes	For written examinations only (eg to open and turn pages).
Word Processors	Yes	
Transcripts	Yes	
Oral Language Modifiers	Yes	For communication of instructions and questions only.
	No	Texts/source material or literary extracts must not be modified.
BSL interpreters	Yes	For communication of instructions and questions only.
	No	Texts/source material or literary extracts must not be signed.
Modified Question papers	Yes	
Extra Time	Yes	

6.2 Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

Candidates who are not disabled under the terms of the DDA may be eligible for access arrangements to enable them to demonstrate what they know and can do. Candidates who have been fully prepared for the assessment but who are ill at the time of the examination, or are too ill to take part in the assessment, may be eligible for special consideration. Centres should consult the *Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examinations* produced by the Joint Council (www.jcq.org.uk).

7 Administration of GCSE English

7.1 Availability of assessment

There are two examination series each year: January and June. GCSE units will be assessed from 2011.

Assessment availability can be summarised as follows:

	Unit A641	Unit A642	Unit A643	Unit A680	Certification availability
January 2011	✓	✓	✓	✓	–
June 2011	✓	✓	✓	✓	–
January 2012	✓	✓	✓	✓	–
June 2012	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
January 2013	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
June 2013	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

GCSE certification is available for the first time in June 2012, and each January and June thereafter.

7.2 Making entries

7.2.1 Making unit entries

Centres must be registered with OCR in order to make any entries, including estimated entries. It is recommended that centres apply to OCR to become a registered centre well in advance of making their first entries. Centres must have made an entry for a unit in order for OCR to supply the appropriate forms and/or moderator details for controlled assessment.

It is **essential** that unit entry codes are quoted in all correspondence with OCR

For controlled assessment units A641, A642 and A643 candidates must be entered for either component 01 or 02. Centres must enter all of their candidates for ONE of the components. It is not possible for centres to offer both components within the same series. For the examined unit Candidates must be entered for A680.

Unit entry code	Component code	Assessment method	Unit titles
A641A	01	Moderated via OCR Repository	<i>Reading Literary Texts</i>
A641B	02	Moderated via Postal moderation	
A642A	01	Moderated via OCR Repository	<i>Imaginative Writing</i>
A642B	02	Moderated via Postal moderation	
A643A	01	Moderated via OCR Repository	<i>Speaking and listening</i>
A643B	02	Moderated via Postal moderation	
A680F	01	Foundation Tier Written Paper	<i>Information and Ideas</i>
A680H	02	Higher Tier Written Paper	

7.2.2 Qualification entries

In order to meet the statutory requirement of the Key Stage 4 Programme of Study for English, pre-16 candidates must be entered for GCSE English. Alternatively candidates can be entered for GCSE English Language **and** GCSE English Literature combined.

Candidates must enter for qualification certification separately from unit assessment(s). If a certification entry is **not** made, no overall grade can be awarded.

Candidates may enter for:

GCSE certification (entry code J350).

A candidate who has completed all the units required for the qualification must enter for certification in the same examination series in which the terminal rules are satisfied.

GCSE certification is available from June 2012.

7.3 Terminal rule

Candidates must take at least 40% of the overall assessment in the same series they enter for the qualification certification.

7.4 Unit and qualification re-sits

Candidates may re-sit each unit once before entering for certification for a GCSE.

Candidates may enter for the qualification an unlimited number of times.

7.5 Enquiries about results

Under certain circumstances, a centre may wish to query the result issued to one or more candidates. Enquiries about Results for GCSE units must be made immediately following the series in which the relevant unit was taken (by the Enquiries about Results deadline).

Please refer to the *JCQ Post-Results Services* booklet and the *OCR Admin Guide* for further guidance about action on the release of results. Copies of the latest versions of these documents can be obtained from the OCR website.

7.6 Shelf-Life of units

Individual unit results, prior to certification of the qualification, have a shelf-life limited only by that of the qualification.

7.7 Prohibited qualifications and classification code

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

In order to meet the statutory requirement of the Key Stage 4 Programme of Study for English, pre-16 candidates must be entered for GCSE English. Alternatively candidates can be entered for GCSE English Language **and** GCSE English Literature combined.

Either GCSE English or GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature combined will be counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables as part of the 5 A*-C performance indicators, including English and mathematics.

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.

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 seek advice, for example from their centre or the institution to which they wish to progress.

8. Other information about GCSE English

8

8.1 Overlap with other qualifications

There is significant overlap between the content of this specification and OCR's GCSE English Language Specification (J355) and overlap with OCR's GCSE English Literature specification (J360). Additionally, there is a significant overlap with OCR's Functional Skills for English.

8.2 Progression from this qualification

GCSE qualifications are general qualifications which enable candidates to progress either directly to employment, or to proceed to further qualifications.

Progression to further study from GCSE will depend upon the number and nature of the grades achieved. Broadly, candidates who are awarded mainly Grades D to G at GCSE could either strengthen their base through further study of qualifications at Level 1 within the National Qualifications Framework or could proceed to Level 2. Candidates who are awarded mainly Grades A* to C at GCSE would be well prepared for study at Level 3 within the National Qualifications Framework.

8.3 Avoidance of bias

OCR has taken great care in preparation of this specification and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind.

8.4 Code of Practice/Common Criteria Requirements /Subject Criteria

This specification complies in all respects with the current *GCSE, GCE and AEA Code of Practice* as available on the QCDA website, *The Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications 2004*, and the subject criteria for GCSE English.

8.5 Language

This specification and associated assessment materials are in English only.

8.6 Spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legislative, economic and cultural issues

This specification offers opportunities for spoken and written activities which contribute to the development of candidates' understanding of spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legislative, economic and cultural issues, for example through the study of a range of literary and non-literary texts.

8.7 Sustainable development, health and safety considerations and European developments, consistent with international agreements

This specification supports these issues, consistent with current EU agreements.

8.8 Key Skills

This specification provides opportunities for the development of the Key Skills of *Communication, Information Technology, Working with Others, Improving Own Learning and Performance and Problem Solving* at Levels 1 and/or 2. However, the extent to which this evidence fulfils the Key Skills criteria at these levels will be totally dependent on the style of teaching and learning adopted for each unit.

The following table indicates where opportunities may exist for at least some coverage of the various Key Skills criteria at Levels 1 and/or 2 for each unit.

Unit	C		AoN		IT		WwO		IoLP		PS	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
A641/A642	✓	✓	–	–	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A643/A680	✓	✓	–	–	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Detailed opportunities for generating Key Skills evidence through this specification are posted on the OCR website (www.ocr.org.uk). A summary document for Key Skills Coordinators showing ways in which opportunities for Key Skills arise within GCSE courses has been published.

Appendix: Guidance for the production of electronic controlled assessment

A

Structure for evidence

A controlled assessment portfolio is a collection of folders and files containing the candidate's evidence. Folders should be organised in a structured way so that the evidence can be accessed easily by a teacher or moderator. This structure is commonly known as a folder tree. It would be helpful if the location of particular evidence is made clear by naming each file and folder appropriately and by use of an index called 'Home Page'.

There should be a top level folder detailing the candidate's centre number, candidate number, surname and forename, together with the unit code (See 7.2.1), so that the portfolio is clearly identified as the work of one candidate.

Each candidate produces an assignment for controlled assessment. The evidence should be contained within a separate folder within the portfolio. This folder may contain separate files.

Each candidate's controlled assessment portfolio should be stored in a secure area on the Centre's network. Prior to submitting the controlled assessment portfolio to OCR, the centre should add a folder to the folder tree containing controlled assessment and summary forms.

Data formats for evidence

In order to minimise software and hardware compatibility issues, it will be necessary to save candidates' work using an appropriate file format.

Candidates must use formats appropriate to the evidence that they are providing and appropriate to viewing for assessment and moderation. Open file formats or proprietary formats for which a downloadable reader or player is available are acceptable. Where this is not available, the file format is not acceptable.

Electronic controlled assessment is designed to give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do using current technology. Candidates do not gain marks for using more sophisticated formats or for using a range of formats. A candidate who chooses to use only word documents will not be disadvantaged by that choice.

Evidence submitted is likely to be in the form of word processed documents, PowerPoint presentations, digital photos and digital video.

To ensure compatibility, all files submitted must be in the formats listed below. Where new formats become available that might be acceptable, OCR will provide further guidance. OCR advises against changing the file format that the document was originally created in. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the electronic portfolios submitted for moderation are accessible to the moderator and fully represent the evidence available for each candidate.

Movie formats for digital video evidence

MPEG (*.mpg)

QuickTime movie (*.mov)

Macromedia Shockwave (*.aam)

Macromedia Shockwave (*.dcr)

Flash (*.swf)

Windows Media File (*.wmf)

MPEG Video Layer 4 (*.mp4)

Audio or sound formats

MPEG Audio Layer 3 (*.mp3)

Graphics formats including photographic evidence

JPEG (*.jpg)

Graphics file (*.pcx)

MS bitmap (*.bmp)

GIF images (*.gif)

Animation formats

Macromedia Flash (*.fla)

Structured markup formats

XML (*.xml)

Text formats

Comma Separated Values (.csv)

PDF (.pdf)

Rich text format (.rtf)

Text document (.txt)

Microsoft Office suite

PowerPoint (.ppt)

Word (.doc)

Excel (.xls)

Visio (.vsd)

Project (.mpp)



Need more help?

Our aim is to assist you however we can.

As well as giving you a toolkit of support services and resources to pick and choose from, we are also here to help you with specialist advice, guidance and support for those times when you simply need a more individual service.

Here's how to contact us for specialist advice:

By phone: 0300 500 1564

By email: english@ocr.org.uk

By fax: 024 76 851633

By post: Customer Contact Centre, OCR, Progress House, Westwood Business Park, Coventry CV4 8JQ



2

G

i

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Please note this specification and the information contained in it was correct at the time of going to print.

The latest version will always be available on www.ocr.org.uk/english/gcse2010

J350/S/10

www.ocr.org.uk

OCR customer contact centre

GCSE English

Dedicated English Support Line 0300 500 1564

Facsimile 024 76 851633

Email english@ocr.org.uk

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored.
© OCR 2011 Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England.
Registered office 1 Hills Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU. Registered company number 3484466. OCR is an exempt charity.



FS 27093