## GCSE ENGLISH, ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

- the move to linear specifications

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From September 2012, students in England starting two-year GCSE courses will follow linear specifications in the majority of subjects. This move to linear specifications is being implemented in response to a decision made by the Secretary of State for Education. Of qual has confirmed that the move to linear specifications, and the reinforced assessment of spelling, punctuation and grammar in some subjects, will be the only major alterations to specifications. There will be no other changes to the content of specifications at this stage.

This change does not affect candidates who started a two-year course in September 2011, or those starting a one-year course in September 2012. However, Year 9 students who started a three-year course in September 2011 will be affected. (See separate document attached - 'GCSE reforms affecting Year 9 candidates'.)

From September 2012, all GCSE English, English Language and English Literature examination units must be taken at the end of the course, in the June 2014 series, unless the course is completed in one year. Controlled assessment units will also be entered at the end of the course, but the tasks can be completed at any point during the course. Tasks must be correct for the year of submission, even if the tasks are completed in advance. The terminal rule is therefore 100% in all English GCSE specifications from September 2012, unlike the current 40% terminal rule.

For GCSE English and English Language there will be additional examination series in November, from 2013 onwards. This re-sit opportunity in November will not be available for GCSE English Literature. Re-sit candidates entered for English and English Language in the November examination series will be permitted to carry forward marks from controlled assessment units, provided they have certificated the qualification already (i.e. marks from units that were not used for a previous certification cannot be carried forward.)

### A SUMMARY OF THE CHANGES FROM 2012:

#### **GCSE English and English Language**

- The examination unit, A680, must be taken in the terminal series (e.g. Year 10 students starting a two-year course in September 2012 will take the examination in June 2014).
- The controlled assessment units, (English: A641, A642, A643 and English Language: A651 and A652) can be completed at any point, but must be entered at the end of the course.
- Reminder: Controlled assessment tasks must be appropriate for the year of submission.
- There will be an additional examination series in November, and controlled assessment units can be carried forward, provided they have been used for certification already.
- It is permissible to complete a GCSE course in one year, as long as the terminal rule is met (40% in 2013; 100% in 2014.)

#### **GCSE English Literature**

- The three examination units, A662, A663 and A664, must be taken in the terminal series.
- A662 (Modern Drama) and A663 (Prose from Different Cultures) will continue to be taken in one examination session, with a short break between each unit.
- A664 Literary Heritage Prose and Contemporary Poetry will be unchanged.
- A661, the controlled assessment unit, can be completed at any point, but must be entered at the end of the course.
- · Reminder: Controlled assessment tasks must be appropriate for the year of submission.
- Centres will still be entitled to mix candidates' entries across Higher and Foundation tiers.
- It is permissible to complete a GCSE course in one year, as long as the terminal rule is met (40% in 2013; 100% in 2014.)



### Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) in GCSE **English Literature**

An additional change to GCSE English Literature is to be implemented from January 2013 onwards. Ofqual has confirmed that additional marks are to be rewarded in English Literature for spelling, punctuation and grammar. Therefore 5% of the marks for English Literature will be for SPaG; this will be assessed in Unit A662 Modern Drama only. The English and English Language specifications will continue to include assessment of SPaG

### Timeline for the changes to GCSE English, English Language and English Literature specifications

**September 2012** First teaching of new two-year linear GCSE

English specifications.

January 2013 All GCSE English units available, as in

January 2012, but entry restricted to candidates certificating no later than

November 2013.

English Literature Unit A662 (Modern Drama) will include additional marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

June 2013 All GCSE English units available, but entry

restricted to candidates certificating no

later than November 2013.

English Literature, unit A662, will include additional marks for spelling, punctuation

and grammar.

**November 2013** GCSE units available in English and

English Language, but only to candidates certificating in this series. The 40% terminal

rule still applies.

January 2014 Series is no longer used for GCSE

examinations.

June 2014 First linear series All GCSE English units

offered.

English Literature A662 (Modern Drama) and A663 (Prose from Different Cultures) will continue to be taken in one examination session, with a short break between each unit.

Unit

English Literature A662 (Modern Drama) will include additional marks for spelling, punctuation

and grammar.

November 2014 Re-sit opportunity in GCSE English and

> English Language. All units must be retaken, except for controlled assessment units that have been used previously for

certification.

June 2015 GCSEs continue as linear qualifications.

#### Curriculum planning for English GCSEs from 2012

### GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature two-year courses

There will be four examined units, taken in three examination sessions at the end of the course, for candidates taking the combined course over two years.

- 1. English Language A680, Information and Ideas
- 2. English Literature A662, Modern Drama
- 3. English Literature A663, Prose from Different Cultures (Taken together in one examination session)
- 4. English Literature A664, Literary Heritage Prose and Contemporary Poetry

There is a Curriculum Planner at the end of this document for delivering this combined course over two years, with all four examined units taken at the end of the course.

GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature – one-year courses

Centres can enter candidates for GCSE English Language in one year, and English Literature in the following year (or vice versa). This approach would also need to meet the terminal rule (40% in June 2013; 100% in June 2014.)

d how meaning is constructed through words. **ろし ル**し and directions altimodal texts and at least one extended text, recog and sustain different roles. Understand variations in staken lan Inges in relation to contexts. **EVAIUATE** the langue of svaluate the wa

Peak to communicate Clear Participate in a range of real-life contexts depting it to different situations and audiences; use Standard Eng as appropriate. Listen and respond to speakers' ideas and perspect 3. Speak to communicate structure and sustain talk, adapting it to differen priety of linguistic and structural features to suppuse Standard English and a variety of techniques as appropriate. List



#### GCSE English - two-year course

There will be one examined unit at the end of the course, for candidates taking GCSE English only.

1. English – A680, Information and Ideas

There is a Curriculum Planner at the end of this document for delivering this course over two years, with the examination taken at the end of the course.

### GCSE English and Living Texts (Levels 1 and 2) – two-year course

There will be one examined unit at the end of the course, for candidates taking GCSE English and Living Texts.

1. English – A680, Information and Ideas

There is a Curriculum Planner at the end of this document for delivering this course over two years, with the examination taken at the end of the course.

#### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Can Year 10 students, beginning the course in September 2012, take English Language GCSE in June 2013?

Yes. As long as the 40% terminal rule is met, this is permitted (the 100% terminal rule applies from June 2014). All units for English Language GCSE can be entered at the end of a one-year course, for certification in that series.

Candidates can therefore take English Language as a one-year course, and English Literature the following year, or vice versa.

# Can I enter Year 10 students starting the course in September 2012 for the January series in 2013, and re-enter in June 2013 if necessary?

Yes, the unitised structure is available until November 2013. Therefore Year 10 students could take an examination (A680, A662 and A663, or A664) in January 2013 and re-sit in June 2013 if necessary. This entry must be for certification by November 2013, and the 40% terminal rule will apply.

Candidates could then continue the course in a linear way, with no examination series available in January 2014. All examination units would need to be retaken in June 2014, although a UMS mark from a controlled assessment unit previously used for certification can be carried forward.

### Can students who take the examinations in June then re-sit in November if necessary?

For English and English Language only there will be a November re-sit series. So a student entering for certification in English or English Language in June 2013 can re-sit A680 in November 2013, although the 40% terminal rule still applies if they wish to certificate in the November 2013 series. This arrangement will continue from 2014 onwards, but the terminal rule will be 100%.

Note: there will be **no re-sit for English Literature** in November.

### Can we carry forward controlled assessment units from June to November?

Yes, candidates re-sitting English or English Language in November can re-submit their controlled assessment units from the June series, provided they have been used previously for certification.

### Why have the English literature units, A662 and A663, not been combined into one unit?

Candidates will always take the A662 and A663 units in one examination session (two 45-minute units in one hour and a half, with a short break in the middle). This structure is being continued, rather than creating a single examination, to allow for marking panels with particular expertise in each unit to be maintained.

### For how long will the current GCSE English specifications remain unchanged?

The National Curriculum Review is currently making its recommendations to Government, and GCSE criteria form part of the review. It is anticipated that English GCSEs will be updated to meet the revised criteria, with new specifications available for first teaching in 2015, although this is yet to be confirmed.

#### **GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Telephone 01223 553998 Facsimile 01223 552627

english@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk/english