

GCE Subject Level Guidance for English Language

May 2014

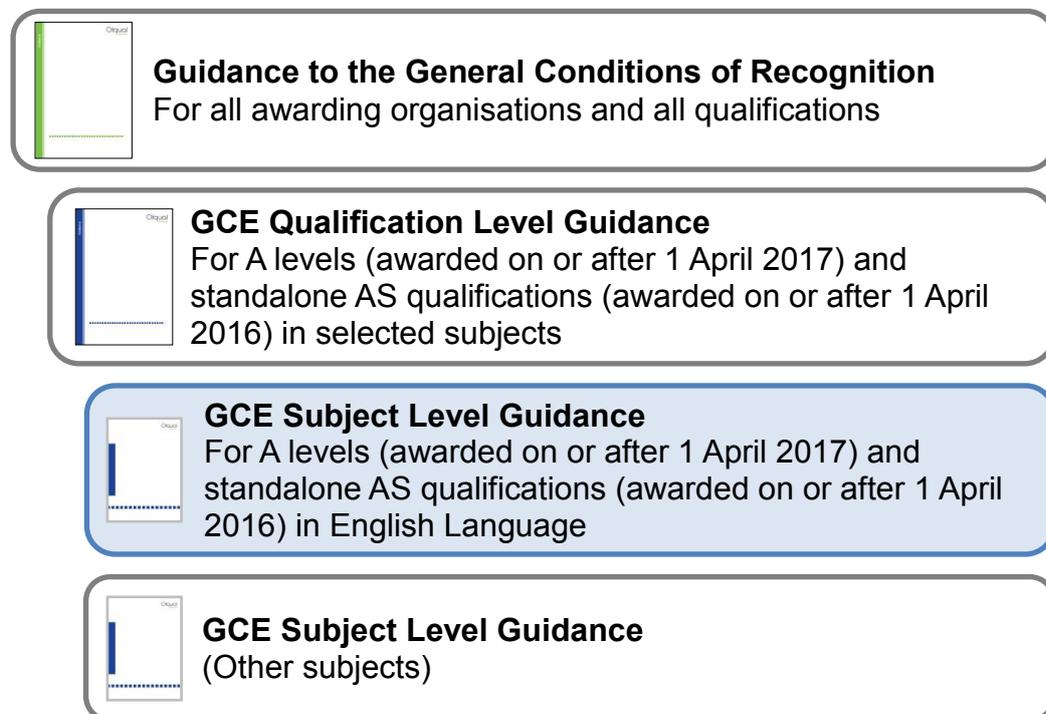
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Introduction

About this document

This document (highlighted in the figure below) is part of a suite of documents which outlines our guidance for awarding organisations offering GCE Qualifications.



This document sets out guidance which applies to the following qualifications:

- all GCE A levels in English Language awarded on or after 1 April 2017; and
- all standalone GCE AS qualifications in English Language awarded on or after 1 April 2016.

This guidance supports the GCE Subject Level Conditions and associated requirements for English Language.

This document constitutes guidance for the purposes of section 153 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (the '2009 Act'), and Conditions GCE(English Language)1.2 and GCE(English Language)2.3.

An awarding organisation has a legal obligation under the 2009 Act to have regard to this guidance in relation to each GCE Qualification in English Language that it makes available or proposes to make available. Conditions GCE(English Language)1.2 and GCE(English Language)2.3 impose the same obligation in respect of the guidance below which is issued under those Conditions.

An awarding organisation should use the guidance to help it understand how to comply with the GCE Subject Level Conditions and associated requirements for English Language.

Guidance set out in this document

This document provides guidance in relation to non-examination assessment for GCE A level qualifications in English Language, and on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in English Language

Guidance in relation to non–examination assessment for GCE A levels in English Language

Under Condition GCE(English Language)2.2(b) an awarding organisation must ensure that 20% of the total marks available for a GCE A level in English Language are made available through non-examination assessments.

In order to promote consistency and comparability between such non-examination assessments, as designed and set by different awarding organisations, we suggest that these assessments should take the form of one or more extended responses, within the meaning of Condition GCE5.4, independently produced by a Learner. We would expect the total length of such an extended response, or extended responses, to be between 2,500 and 3,500 words.

Although we will expect an awarding organisation to set an indicative word limit within these parameters, we would not expect a Learner to be specifically penalised on the basis that the length of his or her extended response(s) differed from that indicative word limit.

Guidance on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in English Language

Condition GCE(English Language)1.2 allows us to specify requirements and guidance relating to assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in English Language.

We published our requirements in relation to assessment objectives in *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for English Language*, and reproduce them in the table below.

		<i>A level</i>	AS
AO1	Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression	<i>Each of AO1, AO2 and AO3 can be targeted in the range 20-30%</i>	Each of AO1, AO2 and AO3 can be targeted in the range 20-30%
AO2	Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use		
AO3	Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning		
AO4	Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic concepts and methods	Each of AO4 and AO5 can be targeted in the range 10-15%	Each of AO4 and AO5 can be targeted in the range 10-15%
AO5	Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways Note: This assessment objective must be targeted with at least one of AO2, AO3 or AO4, either in the same task or in two or more linked tasks		

We set out below our guidance for the purposes of Condition GCE(English Language)1.2. This guidance explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret these assessment objectives in terms of:

- the discrete 'elements' within each assessment objective which questions and tasks could target and/or seek to credit – our expectation is that each and every question/task should target or seek to credit at least one of these elements, and may target or seek to credit multiple elements across one or more assessment objectives;

- the coverage expectations, such as in relation to the different elements within each assessment objective and how those elements should be sampled over time; and
- the key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective and the particular meaning for the subject of any key terms and phrases used; defined terms are shown in bold text, followed by their definitions.

In line with the obligations set out in Condition GCE(English Language)1.2, we expect awarding organisations to be able to demonstrate how they have had regard to this guidance. For example, an awarding organisation could map how it has regard to the guidance as it:

- develops its sample assessment materials;
- delivers the qualification;
- develops and applies its approach to sampling the elements into which the assessment objectives are divided; and
- monitors the qualification to make sure it addresses all elements appropriately.

AO1: Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression		20-30% (A level) 20-30% (AS)	
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Agreements and Definitions
n/a	1a – Apply appropriate methods of language analysis 1b – Use associated terminology 1c – Use coherent written expression	Reasonable coverage of each element in each set of assessments (but not every assessment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The methods of language analysis applied must reflect a course of study in this subject and at this level. ■ Coherent means the ability to engage in clear and effective academic discourse, which is well organised and adopts an academic style and register. ■ The emphasis should be on the appropriateness of the concepts used, rather than on a Learner being able to deploy them in an appropriate way; the skill of selection is not targeted directly; it is not necessary to target accuracy here as ‘expertise...in the use of English’ is targeted by AO5.

AO2: Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use			20-30% (A level) 20-30% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Agreements and definitions
n/a	1a – Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts relevant to language use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reasonable coverage of each element in each set of assessments (but not every assessment) ■ The degree to which each element is covered overall will depend on the approach to the subject taken in the specification, as well as the nature of the specific tasks and texts/topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Concepts includes things inherent and recognisable in language use. ■ Issues includes the social implications of language use.
	1b – Demonstrate critical understanding of issues relevant to language use		

AO3: Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning			20-30% (A level) 20-30% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Agreements and definitions
n/a	1a – Analyse how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reasonable coverage of each element in each set of assessments (but not every assessment) ■ The degree to which each element is covered overall will depend on the approach to the subject taken in the specification, as well as the nature of the specific tasks and texts/topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The question of context is a fundamental concern both for this individual subject and for the suite of English subjects as a whole. ■ There is an extremely wide range of considerations that can legitimately be addressed through a treatment of context. ■ In the case of English Language, these considerations would include historical, geographical, social and individual varieties of English, as well as aspects of language and identity. In addition, each text has its own unique context, such as genre, period, social, historical, geographical and regional, as well as whether it takes the form of spoken language, written language or is multi-modal. ■ Each awarding organisation should take particular care to explain its approach to ‘context’ in its assessment strategy for this subject.
	1b – Evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning		

AO4: Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic concepts and methods			10-15% (A level) 10-15% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Agreements and Definitions
n/a	1a – Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic concepts	Reasonable coverage of each element in each set of assessments (but not every assessment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The concepts and methods here should not generally be targeted and credited discretely. ■ The exploration here might range from comparing superficial language features to showing an overview of connections between texts that are explained and categorised in detail.
	1b – Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic methods		

AO5: Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways			10-15% (A level)
Note: This assessment objective must be targeted with at least one of AO2, AO3 or AO4, either in the same task or in two or more linked tasks			10-15% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Agreements and definitions
n/a	1a – Demonstrate expertise in the use of English to communicate in different ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reasonable coverage of each element in each set of assessments (but not every assessment) ■ The degree to which each element is covered overall will depend on the approach to the subject taken in the specification, as well as the nature of the specific tasks and texts/topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expertise relates to accuracy and control of style for audience, form and purpose. ■ Creativity relates to originality and producing engaging writing. ■ Although AO5 must be targeted in conjunction with one or more of AO2, AO3 and AO4, this requirement does not preclude it from also targeting AO1. ■ Where AO5 is targeted in a single task, this might or might not involve the production of a commentary.
	1b – Demonstrate creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways		

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