

# **Review of standards in GCSE English literature 2000 and 2007**



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## Introduction

As the regulator of external qualifications in England, Ofqual is responsible for ensuring the maintenance of GCE and GCSE standards over time and across awarding bodies. One of the ways it does this is through a programme of standards reviews. These reviews investigate examination standards and determine whether any action is needed to safeguard them. They are carried out periodically, covering the major subjects at both GCSE and A level. In order to keep the work manageable, the reviews consider only the highest entry syllabus from each awarding body. This report is about the review of standards in GCSE English literature in 2000 and 2007.

Prior to this review, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) conducted an enquiry into standards over time in GCSE English literature in 2001. The results were published in a report which is available on the Ofqual website, [www.ofqual.gov.uk](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk). The key issues identified by that enquiry were included as part of the work on this review.

Between them, the GCSE syllabuses included in this review attracted over 90 per cent of the approximately 570,000 candidates who took GCSE English literature in 2007.

## Examination demand in GCSE English literature

The most significant changes for GCSE English literature between 2000 and 2007 were:

- the revision of syllabuses for first examination in 2004, in line with the revised national subject criteria for GCSE English literature
- the adoption by all awarding bodies of assessment objective 4 (AO4): 'relate texts to their social, cultural and historical contexts and literary traditions'
- the introduction by Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR) of a modular scheme of assessment
- the banning of annotation in set texts (including anthologies) used in open-book examinations
- the inclusion of literary non-fiction texts in the Edexcel and OCR syllabuses, which extended the range of prose texts.

GCSE English literature syllabuses in 2000 and 2007 conformed to the 1995 and 2002 national subject criteria respectively.

### Key issues identified in previous review of standards in GCSE English literature

The previous review concluded that changes to tiering arrangements between 1995 and 2000 had made both tiers of the examination more demanding.

The review also noted that the wide variety of texts made it difficult to quantify changes in demand concerning choice of texts.

### Materials available

Reviewers considered the syllabus documents, examiners' reports and question papers with associated mark schemes from each of the awarding bodies in 2000 and 2007, with the following exceptions:

- only 2007 materials were available for Northern Ireland Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)
- 1997 Edexcel materials were reviewed rather than those for 2000. The 1997 Edexcel syllabus conformed to the 1991 GCSE English literature criteria.

## Assessment objectives

The two sets of assessment objectives are provided in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1: Assessment objectives in 2000**

	<b>AQA</b>	<b>Edexcel (1997)</b>	<b>OCR</b>	<b>WJEC</b>
<b>AO1</b>	Candidates can: respond to texts critically, sensitively and in detail, selecting suitable ways to convey their response, using textual evidence as appropriate	Candidates can: respond critically, sensitively and in an informed way to what is read, heard and seen, using textual evidence as appropriate	Candidates can: respond to texts critically, sensitively and in detail, selecting appropriate ways to convey their response, using textual evidence as appropriate	Candidates can: respond to texts critically, sensitively and in detail, selecting appropriate ways to convey their response, using textual evidence as appropriate
<b>AO2</b>	Candidates can: explore how language, structure and forms contribute to the meaning of texts, considering different approaches to texts and alternative interpretations	Candidates can: explore how language, structure and forms contribute to the meaning of texts, considering different approaches to texts and alternative interpretations	Candidates can: explore how language, structure and forms contribute to the meaning of texts, considering different approaches to texts and alternative interpretations	Candidates can: explore how language, structure and forms contribute to the meaning of texts, considering different approaches to texts and alternative interpretations
<b>AO3</b>	Candidates can: explore relationships and comparisons within and between texts, selecting and evaluating relevant material	Candidates can: select appropriate ways to convey response	Candidates can: explore relationships and comparisons between texts, selecting and evaluating relevant material	Candidates can: explore relationships and comparisons between texts, selecting and evaluating relevant material
<b>AO4</b>	Candidates can: show their understanding of literary tradition and appreciation of social and historical influences and cultural contexts	Candidates can: explore their individual literary interests and those aspects of literature which give them pleasure in their reading and writing		

<b>AO5</b>		explore, analyse and reflect upon features of the works studied, which should be principally whole texts and which may include their presentation in other media		
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**Table 2: Assessment objectives in 2007**

<b>AO1</b>	Candidates can: respond to texts critically, sensitively and in detail, selecting appropriate ways to convey their response, using textual evidence as appropriate
<b>AO2</b>	Candidates can: explore how language, structure and forms contribute to the meaning of texts, considering different approaches to texts and alternative interpretations
<b>AO3</b>	Candidates can: explore relationships and comparisons between texts, selecting and evaluating relevant material
<b>AO4</b>	Candidates can: relate texts to their social, cultural and historical contexts and literary traditions (CCEA – relate texts to their social, cultural and historical background)

Between 2000 and 2007 there were changes to the assessment objectives in line with the revised national criteria for GCSE English literature. In 2000 the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) and OCR had identical assessment objectives. Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)'s assessment objectives were very similar, though worded slightly differently, and there was a fourth assessment objective relating to contexts and literary traditions that was unique to the AQA syllabus in 2000. The assessment objectives in Edexcel's 1997 syllabus were organised differently and there was no equivalent objective to AO3, which required comparison between texts. This was because the Edexcel syllabus related to the GCSE English literature subject criteria published in 1991.

By 2007 all the awarding bodies had the same assessment objectives, with one minor difference in the CCEA syllabus, where AO4 was worded slightly differently, with no reference to 'literary traditions'. Reviewers judged that this omission made the CCEA syllabus slightly less demanding than the other awarding bodies in this respect.

The main change between 2000 and 2007 concerned the introduction across all awarding bodies of an assessment objective (AO4) relating to contexts and literary traditions. All awarding bodies targeted the assessment of AO4 in one or more of the coursework pieces. OCR also targeted AO4 in the examination alternative to coursework. Reviewers concluded that the introduction of AO4 had led to an increase in demand in 2007 for Edexcel, OCR and WJEC. Reviewers were also concerned that there was a considerable lack of clarity across the awarding bodies on how best to address this assessment objective and that this had led to uncertainty among teachers and candidates. This is discussed further in the Coursework section on page 11.

In 2007, all syllabuses included grids indicating the assessment components in which each assessment objective would be addressed. Reviewers judged, however, that there was a general lack of clarity in the information provided in syllabuses about where and how the assessment objectives would be addressed. AQA was the only awarding body to provide a weighting for the various assessment objectives, in its 2007 syllabus: 65 per cent for AO1 and AO2 combined, 20 per cent for AO3 and 15 per cent for AO4. It was, however, difficult to see how these weightings were carried through to the various mark schemes for both examination and coursework components. Reviewers judged that, in any case, it would be difficult to achieve the precise ratios in practice. OCR's stated intention of addressing AO4 in its examination questions on prose texts was not always readily apparent in the questions themselves. For example, reviewers judged that the question below invited candidates to consider character rather than to discuss context.

What do you find particularly disturbing about Orwell's portrayal of Mr Charrington in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*? (OCR higher tier, 2007)

All awarding bodies in 2007 indicated that the higher order analytical skills of AO2 ('Explore how language, structure and forms contribute to meaning...') would be addressed in examination questions. The exception to this was Edexcel, where AO2 was targeted exclusively in two of the three coursework pieces.

In practice, reviewers found that there was a lack of consistency between stated intentions within the syllabuses and what happened in practice, with coverage of AO2 in examination questions sporadic across all awarding bodies, including Edexcel. This is discussed further in the section on question papers on page 15.

With the exception of WJEC, all awarding bodies targeted AO3 in their question papers as well as in coursework, although for Edexcel this was only in the poetry questions which candidates could opt not to do. WJEC targeted AO3 exclusively in the coursework component, but its weighting was unclear.

## Syllabus content

The range of reading in both 2000 and 2007 was based on the requirements of the subject criteria for GCSE English literature. In 2007 candidates had to respond to three pre-1914 texts and three post-1914 texts, one of each in prose, poetry and drama. In 2000 the number of texts was implicit, but the requirements were very similar. In 2007, there was a new opportunity to extend the range of reading to include literary non-fiction and this was taken up by OCR and particularly by Edexcel in their 2007 examination papers, with the latter offering a separate section with a choice of six non-fiction texts.

The content of the AQA and WJEC syllabuses, in contrast to OCR and Edexcel, remained broadly the same between 2000 and 2007. The 2007 CCEA syllabus had a similar type of content to AQA and WJEC. However, reviewers noted that AQA had a reduced number of prose texts in 2007 and that the only short story selection in 2007 was provided in AQA's anthology of texts (whereas there had been greater choice offered in 2000). Five of the seven AQA 2007 prose texts (by Lee, Steinbeck, Golding, Hines and Hill) had featured in the 2000 syllabus. Reviewers were concerned about certain features of the 2007 AQA syllabus, namely the reduction in textual choice and the relatively narrow range of more accessible and generally late-twentieth-century texts. However, they noted that having a stable set of well-established texts does help to achieve consistency over time.

The previous review of standards in GCSE English literature considered the impact of the choice of texts studied on demand and concluded that 'given that candidates and teachers have a choice of text to study, it is impossible to quantify changes in demand in this respect'. This remained the case in 2007. However, reviewers were of the view that, in general, the texts used in 2007 were appropriately demanding for GCSE.

A particular difficulty encountered by the reviewers was the inadequate level of detail in syllabuses surrounding matters such as what was an appropriate amount and range of reading for short story and poetry selections. Reviewers found variation in demand across the awarding bodies in this respect. For example, in 2007, AQA's short story collection in its anthology included seven stories, whereas OCR's short story anthology contained twelve, although both AQA and OCR questions required reference to two stories.

The amount of reading required was particularly difficult to determine in relation to coursework. For example, Edexcel required reference to five or six poems and CCEA allowed the study of two short stories for its prose coursework, whereas the OCR syllabus offered no guidance about the number of items to be studied in its poetry and prose coursework assignments.



Another issue that affected demand was the amount of reading required within prose and drama coursework pieces. For example, AQA in 2007 (though not in 2000) required reference to the whole text, even when the primary focus was on a particular episode or scene, whereas exemplar tasks in the WJEC syllabus suggested that focus on one episode or scene was acceptable. WJEC's 2007 examiners' report (p6) observed:

'The time demands of teaching KS4 unsurprisingly make the study of a full novel something of a rarity though there are centres where tasks are set which require knowledge of the whole text...When a section is chosen, it is most often the opening chapter of the novel.'

For all awarding bodies the overall demand in the range of reading remained the same in 2007 as it had been 2000. (The exception was Edexcel, which saw an increase in the amount of reading from four texts in 1997 to six in 2007.<sup>1</sup>) Reviewers judged that the need, in 2000 and 2007, to cover six texts might in some cases have resulted in superficial coverage and an over-reliance on short stories and extracts, rather than novels and whole texts. This was certainly confirmed in the comment from the WJEC examiners' report quoted above. Reviewers were concerned that this could lead to a fragmented experience of the subject for the learner and would also be inadequate preparation for the study of English literature at A level.

## **Scheme of assessment**

All awarding bodies had a similar scheme of assessment in both 2000 and 2007, with examination components worth 70 per cent and coursework weighted at 30 per cent. There was, however, variation between the awarding bodies in both years in terms of the detail within the schemes.

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<sup>1</sup>This change almost certainly came about between 1997 and 2000, when GCSE English literature syllabuses were revised to meet revised criteria.

**Table 3: Schemes of assessment in 2000 and 2007**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>AQA</b>	<p><b>Examination – 70%</b>                      2 hours, open book                      Section A: Prose post-1900 (35%)                      Section B: Poetry pre- and post-1900 (35%)</p>	<p><b>Examination – 70%</b>                      1 hour 45 minutes, open book                      Section A: Prose post-1914 (30%)                      Section B: Poetry pre- and post-1914 (40%)</p>
	<p><b>Coursework – 30%</b>                      Drama pre-1900                      Prose pre-1900                      Drama post-1900</p>	<p><b>Coursework – 30%</b>                      Drama pre-1914                      Prose pre-1914                      Drama post-1914</p>
<b>CCEA</b>	Syllabus materials not seen	<p><b>Examination – 70%</b>                      2 hours 30 minutes                      Section A: Drama post-1914 (open book)                      Section B: Prose post-1914 (closed book)                      Section C: Poetry pre-1914 (open book)</p> <p><b>Coursework – 30%</b>                      Poetry post-1914                      A Shakespeare play                      Prose pre-1914</p>

<b>Edexcel (1997)</b>	<p><b>Examinations – 70%</b>  1 hour 15 minutes, 20%  Poetry, unseen paper  AND  2 hours, 50%, open book  EITHER: Writers and their cultures  OR: Thematic study  Two questions: one on a specified text and one on reading related to that text or two questions on centre's own choice of texts</p>	<p><b>Examination – 70%</b>  2 hours 15 minutes, open book  Three questions from:  Section A: Poetry post-1914  Section B: Prose post-1914  Section C: Drama post-1914  Section D: Literary non-fiction</p>
	<p><b>Coursework – 30%</b>  The Open Study: on two whole texts from any of the three main genres  The Shakespeare Unit</p>	<p><b>Coursework – 30%</b>  Drama pre-1914  Prose pre-1914  Poetry pre-1914</p>
<b>OCR</b>	<p><b>Examination – 70%</b>  2 hours 30 minutes, open book  Select texts from one of two lists  Section A: Shakespeare <b>or</b> drama post-1900  Section B: Prose pre- <b>or</b> post-1900  Section C: Poetry post-1900</p>	<p><b>Core examination units* – 70%</b>  45 minutes, 20%, open book  Drama pre- <b>or</b> post-1914  One question  AND  90 minutes, 50%, open book  Poetry and prose pre- <b>or</b> post-1914  Section A: Poetry (25%)  Section B: Prose (25%)</p>

	<b>Coursework – 30%</b> Drama pre- <b>or</b> –post-1900 Prose pre- <b>or</b> post-1900 Poetry pre-1900	<b>Coursework – 30%</b> Drama pre- <b>or</b> post-1914 Poetry pre- <b>or</b> post-1914 Prose pre- <b>or</b> post-1914	<b>Examination alternative to coursework – 30%</b> 90 minutes, open book Drama pre- <b>or</b> post-1914 Poetry pre- <b>or</b> post-1914 Prose pre- <b>or</b> post-1914
<b>WJEC</b>	<b>Examination – 70%</b> 2 hours 30 minutes Section A: Prose (30%, open book) Section B: Drama (30%, open book) Section C: Poetry (10%, unseen)	<b>Examination – 70%</b> 2 hours 30 minutes Section A: Prose (30%, closed book) Section B: Drama (30%, closed book) Section C: Poetry (10%, unseen)	
	<b>Coursework – 30%</b> Poetry: Two pieces, pre- and post-1900 (15%) Prose pre- or post-1900 Drama pre- or post-1900 **Pre-/post-1900 balance to be maintained across examination and coursework components	<b>Coursework – 30%</b> Poetry: Two pieces, pre- and post-1914 (15%) Prose pre- or post-1914 Drama pre- or post-1914 **Pre-/post-1914 balance to be maintained across examination and coursework components	

\*In the 2007 OCR syllabus units were grouped into schemes, allowing emphasis to be given in the external core examinations (weighted at 70 per cent) either to post-1914 texts (scheme A) or to pre-1914 texts (scheme B). The pre-/post-1914 balance was maintained in the remaining 30 per cent coursework or examination alternative to coursework by scheme A's focus on pre-1914 texts and scheme B's focus on post-1914 texts. The design of the syllabus ensured an appropriate balance between pre- and post-1914 texts.

\*\*It was unclear how WJEC monitored the balance of pre- and post-1900 or 1914 texts across the examination and coursework components, given the options within the scheme of assessment.

The most significant change was OCR's introduction of a modular scheme of assessment, which allowed candidates to re-take units once only, with the better mark counting, subject to the terminal rule that at least 50 per cent of the qualification be taken as terminal external assessment prior to aggregation. Candidates could also take both the coursework unit and its examination alternative with the better mark counting.

Reviews considered that the flexibility inherent in the scheme made it difficult to judge overall demand when compared with other awarding bodies, although reviewers noted that candidates who completed both the coursework unit and its examination alternative would have to work harder for the final result.

There was very little change in the AQA and WJEC schemes of assessment and question papers between 2000 and 2007. Edexcel moved from two question papers in 1997 to one in 2007, with a reduced number of question types. Reviewers judged these factors to have a largely neutral effect on demand.

By 2007 Edexcel had introduced the option of literary non-fiction on their examination paper. Candidates had to answer three questions from sections A, B, C and D. There was no restriction on candidates choosing to answer section B prose post-1914 and section D literary non-fiction, thereby avoiding either post-1914 drama or post-1914 poetry. Reviewers judged this to be a potential infringement of the spirit of the subject criteria which could lead to a reduction in demand. Furthermore, if candidates opted for sections B and D, their coverage of the genres would be unbalanced, with 56.6 per cent of the overall marks going to prose and either poetry or drama getting as little as 10 per cent overall, being covered only in the coursework component.

Table 4 shows the weighting of each genre within the syllabuses.

**Table 4: Weightings of genres within each syllabus**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>AQA</b>	Poetry – 35% exam only Prose – 45% Drama – 20% coursework only	Poetry – 40% exam only Prose - 40% Drama – 20% coursework only
<b>CCEA</b>	Syllabus materials not seen	Poetry – 33.3% Prose – 33.3% Drama – 33.3%
<b>Edexcel (1997)</b>	Weightings would vary according to options candidates chose	Poetry –33.3%* Prose – 33.3% Drama – 33.3%
<b>OCR</b>	Poetry – 33.3% Prose – 33.3% Drama – 33.3%	Poetry – 35% Prose – 35% Drama – 30%
<b>WJEC</b>	Poetry – 25% Prose – 37.5% Drama – 37.5%	Poetry – 25% Prose – 37.5% Drama – 37.5%

\*Exact weightings would depend on the questions chosen as described above.

In both 2000 and 2007, all awarding bodies, with the exception of AQA, included sections in their examination papers dealing with poetry, drama and prose. The AQA syllabus was different in this respect, as the examination required answers to prose and poetry only. Drama was allocated to the coursework, alongside pre-1900 and pre-1914 prose (in 2000 and 2007, respectively). The unique design of this syllabus, the same in both 2000 and 2007, was such that it required candidates to answer just two questions (one prose and one poetry) on its examination paper. By comparison, all other awarding bodies required at least three questions to be attempted in their examination papers, in both years.

There was also a significant contrast in the weightings of various AQA components, compared to the other awarding bodies. The poetry question, with a time allocation of

1 hour in both years, was weighted at 35 per cent in 2000 and increased to 40 per cent in 2007, compared with the two drama pieces in the coursework component weighted at a total of only 20 per cent. Reviewers considered that the 20 per cent weighting of drama in the syllabus gave insufficient recognition to a discrete genre. By contrast the WJEC syllabus gave a much higher weighting to drama (37.5 per cent), while poetry was weighted at 25 per cent.

The AQA poetry question carried 40 per cent of the overall marks and all of the marks available for poetry. Reviewers were concerned about the impact of placing so much weight on candidates' performance in a single question. They were also concerned that the requirement in 2007 to compare four poems within one question could lead to a more superficial approach. This is discussed further in the section on 'Question demand', below on page 17.

Most examination papers in both years were open book, although questions did not always exploit the availability of text to candidates by setting, for example questions requiring close textual analysis. Two of the WJEC questions (on prose and drama texts) were open book in 2000, but closed book in 2007. This was not judged to represent any significant increase in demand since the general essay questions seldom required close textual analysis, and the shorter close-reading questions on the paper included a printed extract anyway (in both years).

Reviewers considered that the ban on the annotation of set texts in open-book exams in 2007 was likely to increase demand for candidates at the same time as producing a beneficial effect on personal response, as candidates would no longer be able to regurgitate notes that had little or no relevance to the question. Unfortunately, evidence from script review did not bear this out. The banning of annotation appeared to have no discernible effect on the kinds of performance that candidates were producing.

## **Options**

OCR's unitised scheme of assessment in 2007 gave centres and candidates the choice of a 100 per cent examination route and also a mixed examination/coursework route (the latter having the 70:30 per cent ratio common to all awarding bodies). Candidates could take either option or both options, with the better mark counting towards the final grade.

Reviewers judged that the requirements of the coursework unit were broadly in line with other awarding bodies, namely three pieces, one each on drama, poetry and prose, with reference to AO3 and AO4. The examination alternative to coursework was demanding in some respects, such as the number of texts and ungenerous timings (30 minutes per question), but less demanding in other respects, such as an

emphasis on relatively short extract questions, empathic responses to texts and little emphasis on AO4. However, for the examination alternative, all angles (or poems in a particular selection) would need to be studied, whereas for a coursework unit, the study of a text might be restricted to those aspects or parts of the text relevant to the task set. With so many variables, reviewers found it difficult to reach clear judgements about the comparability of demand across the alternative routes within OCR's 2007 syllabus structure. They were also concerned that, given the uncertain treatment of AO4 in the examination option, the assessment objectives would not be tested equally effectively across the two routes.

In both 2000 and 2007, AQA, Edexcel (1997) and WJEC offered another option, namely the possibility of producing one of the coursework pieces orally rather than in writing. In principle, the need to master a set of separate skills for oral assessment could have the effect of increasing demand. However, in practice, the general paucity of details within syllabuses about the conduct, recording and monitoring of such oral assessments made it difficult to gauge the extent of any potential demand issue.

Few examples of oral assessment were encountered at the script review. However, what evidence was seen gave little reassurance as to the quality assurance of the assessment. For example, a candidate endorsement form on a candidate's response to *Great Expectations* included this comment in the candidate's own writing: '*I can confirm that I was interviewed by my teacher Mrs \_\_\_\_\_ about this novel. I discussed how Dickens made the opening effective. I considered character, setting, language and structure.*' There was no precise matching by the teacher of the candidate's performance to the relevant assessment criteria. Indeed, reviewers found that there was a general lack of transparency surrounding oral assessment of literature coursework and recommended further investigation into this area.

## Question papers

### Question types

Reviewers found four types of question in the question papers in 2000 and 2007.

**Extract-based questions** (for AQA, OCR and WJEC in both years and CCEA in 2007) tended to be centred clearly on an exploration of writers' use of language, structure and form (AO2):

How does Hines present Mrs Casper here and in the rest of the novel? (*A Kestrel for a Knave*, AQA, higher tier, 2007)

In what ways does Priestley make this extract, which ends the play, dramatic and exciting for an audience? (*An Inspector Calls*, OCR, higher tier, 2000).



Some of WJEC's extract-based questions did not focus explicitly on AO2. For example:

Look closely at how Shelter speaks and behaves [in this extract]. What does it reveal of his state of mind? (*Stone Cold*, higher tier, 2007)

A particular form of extract-based question was the unseen poetry question. With the exception of Edexcel in 1997, the only awarding body which offered unseen poetry questions was WJEC. In both 2000 and 2007, suitably differentiated poems were set according to tier, although the question stem and detailed scaffolding were common to both foundation and higher tiers. Single poems were set in each question, affording opportunities to address AO1 and AO2, although not AO3, which was addressed only in the coursework component of the WJEC syllabus (see page 3 above, in the section on 'Materials available').

**Discursive questions** (for all awarding bodies) tended to invite critical responses and required the use of textual evidence (AO1). Often, but not always, they additionally addressed AO2. The following two examples addressed both AO1 and AO2:

With reference to the ways Golding presents Simon, show that Simon is different from the other boys. (Question stem on *Lord of the Flies*, CCEA foundation tier, 2007)

How does Salinger present Holden as being both a strong and a weak character in *The Catcher in the Rye* (AQA, higher tier, 2007).

However, a large number of questions, particularly at higher tier, did not explicitly invite consideration of AO2 and as a consequence had a somewhat reduced demand, particularly for more able candidates:

How far do you agree that the soldiers display bravery and self-control throughout the play? (*Journey's End*, Edexcel, higher tier, 2007)

To what extent can Eddie be blamed for his own death? (*A View from the Bridge*, WJEC, higher tier, 2007)

The validity of the second type of question was called into question in the coursework section of WJEC's 2007 examiners' report in connection with a popular coursework task: 'Who is responsible for the deaths of Romeo and Juliet?' The observation made in the examiners' report acknowledges the limitations of such questions in addressing higher order skills:

'...many students can demonstrate knowledge of the text very well in this type of task. However, I think it is more difficult for them to demonstrate the high level skills of close

textual analysis...it is important to match the task to the ability of the student and while the 'responsibility' question will allow access to the middle grades, it can make reaching the higher grades quite difficult.' (p2).

**Empathic questions** were set by OCR and WJEC in both years. Such questions invited candidates to capture an authentic voice for a character at a specified moment in the text.

Reviewers recognised that the issue arising from the use of empathic questions does not relate straightforwardly to demand. Indeed, asking foundation tier candidates to capture the voice of Lord Goring in Wilde's *An Ideal Husband* is a demanding task. The issue is one of appropriateness, for it is difficult to relate empathic questions directly to the syllabus assessment objectives, and in particular the explicit requirement for a critical response in AO1 and an exploration of language, structure and form in AO2. Reviewers judged that the mark schemes for empathic questions did not map with sufficient clarity or detail how indicative content and skills related to the assessment objectives.

There was also considered to be a difference between foreseeable and unforeseeable demand in the WJEC and OCR empathic questions respectively, relating to the moment prescribed for the voice. All WJEC questions took the end of the text as the moment specified for the voice, whereas OCR empathic questions usually specified a particular moment other than the end of texts. For example:

You are Tom, Louisa's brother. At the end of the story you think back over what has happened. Write down your thoughts and feelings. (*Hard Times*, WJEC, foundation tier, 2007)

You are Jagers, just after Magwitch has instructed you regarding Pip's expectations. Write your thoughts about how you will perform your duties. (*Great Expectations*, OCR higher tier, 2000).

**'Advice to the actor' questions** were a feature of some WJEC questions on drama texts in 2007 but not 2000, for example:

Give advice to the actor playing Antonio on how he should present the character to an audience.

As with empathic questions, it was unclear which parts of the assessment objectives were being addressed. Reviewers were concerned that, like empathic tasks, these questions did not enable candidates to demonstrate *explicitly* the higher-order critical skills in AO1 and AO2, which the syllabus indicated that the question papers would be assessing.

## Question demand

The AQA papers followed much the same pattern in 2007 as in 2000. The reduction of time for the prose question (from 60 to 45 minutes) was considered to have a neutral effect on demand and brought the timing in line with other awarding bodies. The poetry question requiring comparison of four poems was slightly more demanding in 2007, as candidates' choice of poems had been reduced, although not removed. The compression created by weighting the poetry question at 40 per cent of the overall marks in 2007 (an increase from 35 per cent in 2000) was a feature unique to the AQA syllabus. As mentioned in the section above on 'Schemes of assessment' (page 8), reviewers expressed concern that the requirement to compare four poems in one hour might lead to a superficial approach, and there was clear evidence at the script review to support this. As might be expected, this was particularly noticeable at grade C. Script reviewers commented that AQA candidates' responses were less focused and detailed, with less sustained or sophisticated analysis.

In respect of CCEA, reviewers saw only material from 2007 and considered that the layout of CCEA questions had the possible effect of limiting demand at higher tier because of the excessive direction provided to candidates. Questions began with an emboldened statement of what the question was about and were characterised by their length, repetitive wording and provision of bullets. This had the cumulative effect of discouraging candidates from developing their own strategy to answer the question. Even in questions that directed candidates to 'elsewhere' in the text, excessive direction was given. The extract below is taken from the CCEA 2007 higher tier paper 1:

Answer **either (a) or (b)**

Use the Green (Drama) Answer Booklet for this question.

**(a) This question is about Emily.**

Look again at the extract beginning on page 36 with the stage direction *Shrill girls' voices are heard, off left* and ending on page 38 with Emily's words, "I figure that it's just the way a person's born."

With reference to the ways Wilder **presents** Emily in the extract and elsewhere in the play, show how far you would agree that Emily is **very sure of herself**.

In your answer you should consider:

- what Emily says and does in the extract;
- Wilder's use of stage directions in the extract;
- Emily's relationship with George elsewhere in the play;
- and anything else you think is relevant.

(You should spend no more than 50 minutes on this question.)

Remember to write your answer in the Green (Drama) Answer Booklet.

**(b) This question is about routine.**

Look again at the extract in Act Two beginning on page 50 with the stage direction *The tables and chairs of the two kitchens are still on the stage* and ending at the bottom of page 51 with the Stage Manager's words, "And there's Si Crowell delivering the papers like his brother before him."

With reference to the ways Wilder **presents** routine in the extract and elsewhere in Act One and Act Two, show how far you would agree that **things don't change much**.

In your answer you should consider:

- what the Stage Manager says in the extract;
- Wilder's use of stage directions in the extract;
- life in Grover's Corners in Act One and Act Two.

(You should spend no more than 50 minutes on this question.)

Remember to write your answer in the Green (Drama) Answer Booklet.

The Edexcel 1997 unseen poetry paper offering no choice was judged to be appropriately demanding and suitably differentiated across tiers. Similarly demanding was Edexcel's wider reading requirement, and reviewers judged that the 1997 Edexcel syllabus offered a good balance of wider and closer reading, which encouraged fresh, personal responses. The wider reading and close textual analysis required in 1997's two papers gave way in 2007 to one paper with a more homogenous type of question, where all discursive questions addressed AO1 and poetry questions additionally targeted AO3. The assessment grid in the 2007 syllabus indicated that AO2 was not targeted in the question paper, weighted at 70 per cent, but was instead targeted in two of the three coursework pieces. This would mean that AO2 was significantly under-weighted in the syllabus. However, reviewers judged that some questions did address AO2 in spite of what the assessment grid indicated. For example, the following questions could reasonably be expected to require consideration of form, structure and language:

How far do you consider the conclusion to be a suitable ending to the book [*Lord of the Flies*]?

Compare how effectively the writers recreate these memories in the two poems ['Brendon Gallacher' and 'The House'].

Coverage of AO2 was inconsistent across questions and there was a discrepancy between what the syllabus indicated in theory and what the questions required in practice.

Although the OCR syllabus underwent the most radical change, the question styles were not greatly changed in 2007. The empathic questions were restricted in 2007 to drama questions, whereas in 2000 they had also been a feature of prose questions. At higher tier, most extract and discursive questions addressed the exploration of language, structure and form (AO2), although this demand was to some extent offset by the fact that some extract questions (mainly in the prose section) did not require reference to the wider text.

WJEC's papers were little changed in format or level of demand between 2000 and 2007. Reviewers considered that the move from open- to closed-book questions in the prose and drama sections of the paper had not increased demand in any significant way, since few of the discursive questions from either year required the kind of close textual analysis where text availability would be an advantage.

The lack of clear targeting of the assessment objectives within the WJEC discursive tasks led, in both years, to a number of questions that did not provide sufficient challenge, particularly for the most able candidates. Empathic questions focused on the ends of texts, 'advice to the actor' questions and relatively vague stems such as 'Write about...' could not readily be traced back to specific assessment objectives. In addition, questions that encouraged candidates to treat characters as real-life people rather than fictional and dramatic constructs made it difficult for candidates to address AO2 sufficiently. For example:

Show how the arrival of Eppie changes Silas's life (*Silas Marner*, WJEC higher tier, 2007)

Why do you think Othello's relationship with Desdemona broke down? (*Othello*, WJEC, higher tier, 2007)

This was to some extent offset by the unseen poetry questions in Section C and by some of the extract-based (a) questions which focused on AO2, but this was inconsistent across questions. Coverage of AO2 in the WJEC question papers overall was inconsistent and depended on the texts studied and questions chosen.

Overall, reviewers judged that the demand of foundation and higher tier papers remained largely unchanged between 2000 and 2007. However, reviewers found that there was variation in the demand of questions within the papers of all awarding bodies in both 2000 and 2007. Reviewers judged that this variability was, if anything, slightly more pronounced in 2007. The following questions are taken from 2007 higher tier papers and are unlikely to elicit answers that demonstrate higher order skills.

Is it possible to see Hooper as anything but evil? (*I'm the King of the Castle* question stem, AQA question stem)

Show how far you would agree that rescue becomes less important to the boys as the novel progresses. (*Lord of the Flies* question stem, CCEA)

How do Sade's family and upbringing influence her reactions to her experiences in London? (*The Other Side of Truth*, Edexcel)

In your opinion, who or what had the greatest influence over Paddy as he was growing up? (*Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha*, WJEC)

Reviewers judged that the lack of consistent and appropriate focus on the assessment objectives led to a lack of suitable challenge in some questions at the top end of the higher tier across all the awarding bodies.

## Tiering

Reviewers judged that Edexcel had the most clearly differentiated papers in both 1997 and 2007. The topics and wording in both years and, in 1997, extracts were different across foundation and higher tiers. OCR's 2000 and 2007 papers tended to have a common topic and extracts across tiers but used wording appropriate to the different tiers.

In Edexcel and OCR 2007 question papers, bullets provided a strategy at foundation tier, but were not used at higher tier. Elsewhere, reviewers judged that the use of bullets at higher tier (in CCEA 2007, and in AQA and WJEC in both years) provided a surprisingly and unnecessarily high level of support, which had the potential effect of limiting demand, particularly for very able candidates. Reviewers considered that excessive direction, of the kind found in the CCEA example above on page 18, would be likely to constrain candidates' personal and original responses.

In AQA's 2000 syllabus one of the stated methods of differentiation was 'the use of supporting prompts and structures at foundation tier'. In practice, support of this kind was also provided in some questions at higher tier in both 2000 and 2007. For example:

What do you think is the importance of the 'beast' in *Lord of the Flies*?

Write about:

- ideas that the boys have about the 'beast'
- what the beast may symbolise
- how Golding presents the beast. (AQA higher tier, 2007)

In AQA's 2007 question papers, at least one of the two higher tier questions on each text included bullets, although no rationale for the disposition of questions was offered in the syllabus. This was similarly the case in 2000. Occasionally, a question stem set at higher tier did not encourage more able candidates to engage with the targeted assessment objectives, for example:

'Write about Scout's education in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.' (2007, higher tier, question 3).

WJEC provided detailed scaffolding in Section C (unseen poetry), where the question stem and bullets had the same wording at both higher and foundation tiers. For CCEA, too, the question topics were the same across tiers, with only very minimal changes to the wording.

Overall, reviewers concluded that for AQA, CCEA and WJEC there was a tendency to provide an unnecessarily high level of support in some questions, which had the possible effect of limiting challenge for very able candidates. This issue was more

pronounced in 2007. It was compounded by the inconsistent coverage of assessment objectives across all awarding bodies (discussed in the section on 'Question papers' above on page 15) which also led on occasions to a lack of suitable challenge for the most able candidates.

## Coursework

Coursework was weighted at 30 per cent across all the awarding bodies in both years. It was compulsory for all awarding bodies, except OCR in 2007.

Table 5 shows the coursework requirements for each awarding body in 2000 and 2007.

**Table 5: coursework requirements for each awarding body in 2000 and 2007**

	2000	2007
<b>AQA</b>	Prose pre-1900 Drama pre-1900 Drama post-1900 <i>No prescribed length</i> <i>Restricted focus on 'one or more scenes' or 'part of a text' permitted</i> <i>Exemplar tasks included empathic/imaginative responses</i> <i>AO1, AO2, AO4 targeted</i> <i>One piece may be assessed orally</i>	Prose pre-1914 Drama pre-1914 Drama post-1914 <i>No prescribed length</i> <i>Parts of texts must be related to the whole text</i>  <i>AO1, AO2, AO4 targeted</i> <i>One piece may be assessed orally</i>
<b>CCEA</b>	Syllabus materials not seen	Poetry post-1914 Prose pre-1914 Shakespeare play <i>Word limit: maximum 2500 words</i> <i>Minimum of two poems or two stories discussed in poetry and prose pieces respectively</i> <i>Exemplar tasks include focus on one scene )</i> <i>AO1 and AO2 targeted in all three pieces; AO3 in poetry; AO4 in both Shakespeare and prose</i>
<b>Edexcel [1997]</b>	Two sections: The Open Study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• two whole texts from any of the main genres</li> <li>• may include one or more</li> </ul>	Poetry pre-1914 Prose pre-1914 Drama pre-1914



	<p>examination texts</p> <p>The Shakespeare unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one play</li> </ul> <p><i>Word limit: the folder should 'not normally exceed 1500-2000 words'</i></p> <p><i>Weighting of assessment objectives unclear</i></p> <p><i>One piece may be assessed orally</i></p>	<p><i>No prescribed length</i></p> <p><i>AO4 must be targeted in one piece</i></p> <p><i>Parts of texts must be related to the whole text</i></p> <p><i>Exemplar tasks include empathic on Magwitch</i></p> <p><i>One piece may be assessed orally</i></p>
<b>OCR</b>	<p>Poetry pre-1900</p> <p>Prose pre- or post-1900</p> <p>Drama pre- or post-1900</p> <p><i>No prescribed length: 'avoid unnecessary length'</i></p> <p><i>No exemplar tasks in the syllabus, although 'exploratory and imaginative approaches may be encouraged'</i></p>	<p>Poetry pre- or post-1914</p> <p>Prose or literary non-fiction pre- or post-1914</p> <p>Drama pre- or post-1914</p> <p><i>No prescribed length</i></p> <p><i>Folder must include evidence of AO3 and AO4</i></p>
<b>WJEC</b>	<p>Two poetry pieces: one before 1900, and one after 1900</p> <p>Prose pre- or post-1900</p> <p>Drama pre- or post-1900</p> <p><i>No prescribed length</i></p> <p><i>No exemplar tasks in the syllabus</i></p> <p><i>Two pieces must make comparisons</i></p> <p><i>One piece may be assessed orally</i></p>	<p>Two poetry pieces: one before 1900, and one after 1900</p> <p>Prose pre- or post-1900</p> <p>Drama pre- or post-1900</p> <p><i>No prescribed length</i></p> <p><i>No exemplar tasks in the syllabus, although a reference in examiners' report implies that focus on part of a text is permitted</i></p> <p><i>Two pieces must make comparisons</i></p> <p><i>One piece may be assessed orally</i></p>

Awarding bodies varied considerably in the level of detail about coursework provided in their syllabuses and this made it difficult on occasions for reviewers to compare the requirements. For example, only Edexcel in 1997 and CCEA in 2007 specified a word limit for the coursework folder.

Two particular areas likely to have an effect on demand but which were difficult to gauge were:

- the amount of reading required for coursework assignments on poetry and short stories

- the scope of coursework responses, in particular whether focus on a particular scene might be acceptable or whether reference to the wider text would be required.

Reviewers could make judgements only on the basis of evidence seen. They agreed that it would be reasonable for the regulatory body to require awarding bodies to provide more precise detail on coursework requirements in future syllabuses. Exemplar tasks in the syllabus enable teachers to consider the suitability of their own choice of texts and tasks, while the same information implied by judgements made in the examiners' report often comes too late to be of benefit to candidates preparing for the examination.

Reviewers also raised concerns about task-setting in coursework and in particular the use of empathic tasks and writing frames. The use of empathic tasks in coursework, as in question papers, could make it difficult for candidates to address all the assessment objectives properly and to reach the higher mark bands.

AQA permitted empathic responses to coursework texts in 2000, but there were no empathic tasks in the 2007 list of exemplar tasks. The restricted focus on 'one or more scenes' or 'part of a text' in 2000 was no longer permitted in 2007 tasks, where there had to be reference to the whole text. There was an observation in the AQA 2007 examiners' report that *Romeo and Juliet* 'seems to have become a play of two scenes – Act 3 scene 1 and Act 3 scene 5'. The scope of short story responses was outlined in the AQA moderator's report, which stipulated that the focus on one story was permissible provided that there was additional 'reference' to two more stories. This piece of guidance did not suggest that detailed analysis of the additional stories was required and reviewers judged that the requirements were relatively undemanding.

CCEA in 2007 specified a minimum of two poems and two stories for its poetry and prose coursework assignments, which was relatively undemanding.

Edexcel permitted 'performances, role-plays and simulations' in 1997, and one empathic task (writing as Magwitch) was offered as an exemplar in 2007. In 2007, candidates had to refer to whole texts.

There was no guidance about the number of stories/poems or acceptable scope of responses in either OCR or WJEC syllabuses in either year. In the case of WJEC, there was in the 2007 examiners' report an implied acceptance of 'tasks based on a single scene' (for example from *Romeo and Juliet*). It further observed that 'when a section [of a novel] is chosen, it is most often the opening chapter'.

Both the AQA and WJEC examiners' reports criticised the 'Who is responsible for...?' type of question because it made it difficult for candidates to address AO2 and therefore to access the higher mark bands of the assessment criteria. This reflected

reviewers' wider concerns about coursework, namely that inappropriate task-setting was responsible in some cases for denying candidates the opportunity to demonstrate a full range of abilities across the relevant assessment objectives. Some evidence of this was seen at the script review.

In 2007, several awarding bodies expressed concern in their examiners' reports about the excessive use of writing frames in coursework, which hindered more able candidates in particular.

'[Writing frames] go beyond the acceptable level of general advice.' (AQA)

'Equally tiresome is where every student appears to be using the same essay structure... and the same quotations.' (OCR)

'Good students are particularly disabled by this approach. It becomes impossible to sort out the competent from the good and the very good.' (WJEC)

There was also a general issue about the coverage of AO4 in coursework. By 2007 AO4 (relate texts to their social, cultural and historical contexts and literary traditions) had been introduced across all awarding bodies and was tested mostly in the coursework component. Examiners' reports on the 2007 examinations pointed to some uncertainty among teachers about how candidates should address 'contexts' in their work. The reports referred to much use of use of extraneous background material to the detriment of informed personal responses to texts. For example, AQA referred to 'endless descriptions of the Globe Theatre' and 'potted biographies of Dickens', whilst OCR referred to 'irrelevant and unassimilated' biographical detail. Reviewers saw evidence at the script review that confirmed this. The CCEA syllabus stated that AO4 'should not be treated in isolation' but offered no guidance on how it might best be addressed. Reviewers concluded that teachers would welcome greater clarity on this issue. In particular, awarding bodies might usefully provide exemplification of how candidates might best address AO4.

Overall, the lack of detailed information provided in syllabuses about the amount of reading and the scope of reference (whole or part of text) required made it difficult for reviewers to make judgements about the comparability of demands in coursework either over time or across awarding bodies. In addition, reviewers were concerned about the use of writing frames and the extent to which tasks set, such as empathic questions, enabled candidates to cover the intended assessment objectives properly and to reach the higher mark bands. Reviewers concluded that it would be helpful for awarding bodies to provide more information on these areas in future syllabuses.

## Summary

Reviewers concluded that over the period of the review the overall demand of syllabuses had remained broadly comparable. The following judgements should be considered in that context.

There was greater clarity in syllabuses in 2007 and reviewers welcomed the extension of the range of reading by Edexcel and OCR to include non-literary fiction.

Reviewers were concerned that the Edexcel scheme of assessment offered candidates the possibility of opting to answer questions on prose post-1914 and literary non-fiction, thereby avoiding either poetry post-1914 or drama post-1914. This was an infringement of the spirit of the subject criteria and would also result in an imbalance in the coverage of genres, with an overweighting of prose.

There was in both years a lack of clarity across all awarding bodies about the relationship between the assessment objectives, the questions and their associated mark schemes. This led in some questions to an under-emphasis on AO2 and contributed to a lack of suitable challenge for candidates at the top end of the higher tier.

Some assessment objectives were underweighted in some awarding bodies. For example, the WJEC syllabus assessed AO3 in the coursework component only. In the case of Edexcel in 2007, the assessment of AO2 did not feature in the examination component weighted at 70 per cent, which led to the under-weighting of AO2. However, in practice, some questions did test AO2, but this was inconsistent.

The introduction of AO4 in 2007 across all awarding bodies required candidates to consider contexts and literary traditions, whereas this had been a requirement of AQA only in 2000. AO4 was mostly tested in coursework. Comments in examiners' reports suggested that there was uncertainty about how best to address AO4 and this was confirmed by evidence seen at the script review. More specific information about how AO4 might be addressed would be helpful to teachers.

In both 2000 and 2007, the design of the AQA poetry question, where candidates were given one hour in which to compare four poems, was likely to result in superficial responses from all but the most able candidates. The question tested two elements: pre-1914 and post-1914 poetry in 2007 (pre- and post-1900 in 2000) and was worth 40 per cent of the overall marks (35 per cent in 2000).

There were significant differences between the awarding bodies in the weightings given to different genres. For example, in 2007 AQA attached 40 per cent of marks to poetry and 20 per cent to drama, which reviewers judged to be under-weighted. By contrast, in the WJEC syllabus drama had a 37.5 per cent weighting, while poetry carried 25 per cent. Reviewers were concerned that the options within the 2007

Edexcel scheme of assessment could result in unbalanced coverage of the genres, with a possible overweighting of prose.

Reviewers judged that there were no significant changes in the demand of the question papers between 2000 and 2007. However, they found variation in the demand of questions within papers in both years, particularly at higher tier. Edexcel and OCR question papers showed the most effective differentiation. However, for AQA, CCEA and WJEC reviewers found questions with similar wording across the two tiers and often a high level of direction was given to candidates in the form of bullets at both foundation and higher tier. This lack of effective differentiation in question papers was most marked in CCEA (2007) and in WJEC (2000 and 2007) and, along with inconsistent coverage of the assessment objectives across all the awarding bodies, contributed to a lack of suitable challenge at the top end of the higher tier.

It was difficult to make judgements about the comparability of demand in coursework either over time or across awarding bodies, as syllabuses contained insufficient detail about the amount of reading required and the scope of reference (whole or part of a text).

Reviewers were concerned about ongoing issues in coursework regarding the use of writing frames and the setting of tasks, such as empathic questions, which made it difficult for candidates to address the intended assessment objectives properly and to reach the higher mark bands.

The most significant change over the period was the introduction of OCR's unitised course in 2007. This afforded opportunities for re-sits and dual entry for coursework and examination alternative units (subject to the 50 per cent terminal external assessment rule) denied to candidates for other awarding bodies. Reviewers questioned whether the optional routes through the OCR syllabus (coursework or an alternative examination) could test effectively the same assessment objectives, particularly AO4.

## **Standards of performance**

Reviewers considered candidates' work from all the awarding bodies in 2007 and from CCEA, OCR and WJEC in 2000. The Edexcel candidates were from 1997. Details of the materials used are provided in Appendix B.

Reviewers were asked to identify key features of candidate performance in 2007, based on the work seen at each of the key grades. Performance descriptors for each grade boundary were drawn up, focusing on the assessment objectives, as well as allowing for additional features of performance.

### **GCSE grade A boundary performance descriptor**

Candidates respond critically and with sensitivity to a range of texts. They recognise and take account of alternative interpretations. They explore and evaluate the way meanings, ideas and feelings are created through language, structure and form. They develop detailed connections and comparisons between texts. They comment appropriately on social, historical, cultural contexts, and comment on literary genres. They select appropriate forms to convey their understanding and ideas coherently.

### **Performance at the GCSE grade A boundary over time**

In general the performance of candidates was comparable between 2000 and 2007 at this grade boundary. However, for Edexcel 2007 candidates were found to be stronger. Candidates' responses in 2007 were more focused on the questions and more sustained, with more detailed attention to the question, than their counterparts in 1997.

### **Performance at the GCSE grade A boundary in 2007**

The performance of candidates was broadly comparable across the awarding bodies at this grade boundary.

### **GCSE grade C boundary performance descriptor**

In responding to a range of texts, candidates show understanding of how meanings and ideas are conveyed through language, structure and form. They identify and explain connections and comparisons between texts, supporting their views by referring to details, such as quotations. They show some understanding of contexts,

but not always relevantly. They convey most of their ideas appropriately and in a variety of forms.

### **Performance at the GCSE grade C boundary over time**

The performance of candidates was broadly comparable between 2000 and 2007 within all awarding bodies at both foundation and higher tiers.

### **Performance at the GCSE grade C boundary in 2007**

The performance of candidates was broadly comparable across the awarding bodies at this grade boundary, at both foundation and higher tiers.

### **Comparison across the tiers at the grade C boundary in 2007**

The performance of candidates from all awarding bodies was broadly comparable across foundation and higher tiers. However, reviewers did note that higher tier candidates from OCR tended to produce more developed answers than their foundation tier counterparts.

### **GCSE grade F boundary performance descriptor**

In giving responses to texts candidates make reference to the key features, such as themes and characters. They recognise straightforward features, such as themes, characters or language. They make very straightforward connections between texts and identify some of the influences on texts and readers. They refer to the text when recounting or giving their views. They convey their responses in appropriate ways.

### **Performance at the GCSE grade F boundary over time**

There was a general decline in the standards of performance at this grade boundary between 2000 and 2007. This was most marked for Edexcel and WJEC candidates. Reviewers commented that candidates in 2000 (1997 for Edexcel) tended to demonstrate more personal response and better knowledge and understanding of texts.

## **Performance at the GCSE grade F boundary in 2007**

The performance of candidates was broadly comparable across the awarding bodies at this grade boundary.

### **Summary**

Standards of performance were broadly comparable across awarding bodies at all grade boundaries within 2007.

Between 2000 and 2007 standards of performance were maintained at grades A and C. At grade F there was a general decline in the standards of performance and this was particularly marked for Edexcel, where candidates were from 1997, and for WJEC.



## Appendix A

### Syllabus codes of GCSE English literature syllabuses reviewed

Year	Awarding body and syllabus				
	AQA	CCEA	Edexcel (1997)	OCR	WJEC
<b>2000</b>	1121		1212	1501	0153
<b>2007</b>	3712	5110	1213	1901	5110

## Appendix B

### Number of GCSE scripts reviewed

Grade	AQA		CCEA		Edexcel		OCR		WJEC	
	2000	2007	2000	2007	1997	2007	2000	2007	2000	2007
A	0	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
C (H)*	0	8	8	8	8	8	0	8	8	8
C (F)*	0	8	8	8	8	8	4	8	5	8
F	0	8	6	1	8	8	2	8	6	8

\*H = higher tier; F = foundation tier

# Appendix C

## List of reviewers

<b>Review team</b>	
<b>Coordinator</b>	Russell Carey
<b>Syllabus reviewers</b>	Mick Connell Lois Nicholls Rosemary Stephens
<b>Script reviewers</b>	Caroline Bentley-Davies Tony Childs (AQA) Don Coleman (OCR) Margaret Graham (WJEC) Peter Huke (Edexcel) Arthur McGarrigle (CCEA) Ian McNeilly (National Association for the Teaching of English) Jackie Moore Jenny Stevens Pamela Taylor

Note: Where a participant was nominated by a particular organisation, the nominating body is shown in parentheses after their name.

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