

OXFORD

INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Teaching guidance

For teaching from September 2016 onwards

For International GCSE exams in June 2018 onwards

Specimen 2018

Our specification is published on our website (www.oxfordaqaexams.org.uk). We will let centres know in writing about any changes to the specification. We will also publish changes on our website. The definitive version of our specification will always be the one on our website; this may differ from printed versions.

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Introduction

Oxford International AQA GCSE English Language specification gives teachers freedom of choice. It allows teachers to design a course that will suit their students both in content and in pace and which will facilitate independent learning. It provides a rigorous summative assessment of candidates' skills and abilities in Reading and Writing through two distinctly different examination papers. The Coursework Project offers a challenging alternative to Paper 2 and, with its focus on independent research and development of study-skills, it provides invaluable preparation for A Level.

This specification has an optional endorsement for Speaking and Listening, which will enable students to show future employers and educational institutions that they have a proficiency in Spoken English.

Aims and Learning Outcomes

The course you design based on this specification should encourage your students to:

- develop and enhance skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening necessary to communicate with others confidently, effectively, precisely and appropriately
- express themselves creatively and imaginatively
- understand the patterns, structures and conventions of written and spoken English
- select and adapt speech and writing to different situations and audiences
- become critical readers of a range of texts
- use reading to gain access to knowledge and to develop their own skills as writers
- connect ideas, themes and issue, drawing on a range of texts.

Assessment Objectives (AOs)

The Assessment Objectives for Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening will form the basis of your students' course in English Language, helping you to devise lesson content and guide student learning. Students will need to have a wide and varied reading experience across a range of genres, using high-quality texts designed to raise reading skills and exemplify effective writing.

AO1: Reading 50%

R1: Read and understand texts, selecting and utilising material appropriate to purpose

R2: Collate and synthesize detail from one or more sources, making cross-references and comparisons as appropriate

R3: Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives

R4: Explain and evaluate how writers use linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational features to achieve effects and engage and influence the reader.

AO2: Writing 50%

W1: Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively; use and adapt forms and select vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose in ways that engage the reader

W2: Use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect

W3: Organise information and ideas into sentences, paragraphs and whole texts; use a variety of linguistic and structural features to support cohesion and overall coherence

W4: Demonstrate technical accuracy in grammar, punctuation and spelling

AO3: Speaking and Listening (optional endorsement)

SL1: Communicate clearly and purposefully; structure and sustain talk, and use a variety of techniques as appropriate.

SL2: Prepare and develop ideas and concepts; listen and respond to questions about these.

SL3: Interact with others, shaping meanings through comments, responses to questions and drawing ideas together.

Weighting of Assessment Objectives

The table below shows the approximate weighting of each of the Assessment Objectives in the Oxford AQA International GCSE English Language examined components:

Assessment objectives (AOs)	Component weightings (approx %)		Overall weighting (approx %)
	Paper 1	Paper 2 /Coursework	
AO1	30	20	50
AO2	30	20	50
AO3	0	0	0
Overall weighting of components	60	40	100

Specification at a Glance

Paper 1 (AO1, AO2)

Written paper

60% of the English Language assessment

2 hours

80 marks

PLUS

Paper 2 (AO1, AO2)

Written paper

40% of the English Language assessment

2 Hours

80 marks

OR

Coursework Project (AO1, AO2)

40% of the English Language assessment

80 marks

Optional endorsement: Speaking and Listening (AO3)

Each student will undertake one extended task, which will be a presentation or an interview with extended turns.

Assessment in closer detail

Paper 1: Literary Non Fiction and Composition

Section A: Candidates will be given a single prose text for close study. It will be literary non-fiction e.g. autobiography, biography, letters, memoir and travel or adventure writing. The text will be divided into sections with questions. **At least one** question will relate to the whole text. There is no pre-defined number of questions nor do the questions have a pre-defined focus. They will be linked with the assessment objectives and will target relevant aspects of the text. As such, the selected passage will determine the nature of the questions on it.

Section B: Composition

There will be three tasks from which candidates choose one:

Descriptive, Imaginative, Argumentative and/or Discursive

PLUS

Paper 2: Source Based Reading and Directed Writing

Section A: The stimulus material will consist of 5-6 sources, some of which may be brief or solely visual. Sources may be fiction or non-fiction and will be linked thematically. Questions will be posed on individual sources and pairs of sources. **At least one** question will require candidates to consider two texts. As with Paper 1, there is no pre-defined number of questions nor do the questions have a pre-defined focus. They will be linked with the assessment objectives and will target relevant aspects of the source or sources. As such, the selected sources will determine the nature of the questions.

Section B: Writing will be linked with the reading sources from Section A.

There will be a choice from two tasks.

Form, purpose and audience will be specified in each task.

OR

Coursework Project

Candidates will carry out independent research across a range of sources and utilise their findings for a written task in which audience, purpose and form are specified. This will be assessed alongside two commentaries produced by the candidate, one on reading and research and one on writing. Both reading and writing skills will be assessed in this project. The unit will be centre set, centre marked and AQA moderated.

The aim of this unit is to develop the relevant reading, study, research, and writing skills as those required for the optional Paper 2, whilst allowing for students to pursue personal interests. The Coursework Project carries 40% of the final mark awarded, and this weighting should be reflected in the time centres allocate to it. Students need to be taught, as part of a structured and developed course in reading and research skills, what is necessary to show criticality of sources and reflections on the research and writing processes.

Course planning should allow for incremental practice and development and teachers need to ensure that students' potential attainment is not limited by the wording of the task or by naïve selection of undemanding sources. Given the time and favourable conditions available for the

Coursework Project, it is reasonable to expect that the work produced will be more developed and polished than that produced under examination conditions.

Detailed examples of the wording of possible tasks are given in the specification. Further examples of the range of possible subjects are given below:

- The ethics of stem cell research
- The truth behind the rumours about Global Warming
- Why video games are better than reading
- The fashion industry behind the cat walk
- The real cost of hosting the Olympic Games
- Why cricket has more to offer than football

Optional endorsement: Speaking and Listening (AO3)

Whilst Speaking and Listening will be an optional endorsement to the English Language specification, it is anticipated that the development of these skills will form an essential and integral part of any course in English Language. Regular speaking and listening activities are a vital part of enabling students to recount learning, exchange and explore ideas, and learn from other students.

Students will be graded on a three point scale: Pass, Merit, Distinction. Students who fail to reach the minimum standard for a Pass may be awarded a 'Working Towards' Pass. Each student will be expected to undertake one extended task, which will be a presentation or an interview with extended turns. This task can be delivered to either a group, or a whole class, or to a single teacher and will include a series of questions and answers.

As part of the process students will be expected to prepare for their presentation. This preparation could involve working in small groups with other students. The topic chosen can be an integral part of ongoing work in English. If the candidate is entered for the optional written coursework, then the topic could naturally be part of this. Some examples of tasks are given below:

Example 1

Your local government representative is soon to take part in a national conference on the causes and consequences of climate change and is keen to represent the views of young people at the conference.

You make a speech to a group of your peers outlining the fact that you are going to be lobbying your representative on global warming and indicating to your peers your initial ideas.

Example 2

On a current affairs television programme you are invited to speak about whether or not your country should bid to host an international sporting event, such as the Olympics, World Cup etc. You give your extended uninterrupted presentation, before facing questions from an audience.

Example 3

As part of their work in Reading students could be encouraged to choose a novel (or play/poem) which they think should be read by a wider audience. They then present their chosen text to their audience, with the aim of encouraging them to read it.

Example 4

Students can be asked to present on a topic which is close to their own personal lives and interests. This could involve such things as travel, hobbies, sport and/or music which they actively participate in, an aspect of their local community etc.

Teachers will complete a record form for each student taking the endorsement. These forms must be available for inspection.

What does the Oxford AQA International GCSE English Language specification offer?

Time to prepare: you decide the pace of learning most appropriate to your students. As the course is linear with, if you choose, two terminal exams, then you have potentially five terms in which to develop your students' skills.

Challenge for all abilities: this certificate is designed for students of all abilities. Questions are staged in Paper 1 to enable less-able students to successfully navigate the text. There is a wide range of accessible sources in Paper 2. The coursework option offers exciting possibilities for students of all abilities to explore individual interests and develop study-skills.

Skills based learning: with the emphasis very much on the process of learning, the assessment objectives clearly define the targeted skills. Achieved grades will be the summative assessment of students' learning and development over two years.

A voice for students: teachers are free to pursue the areas of most relevance and interest to their students. The Coursework Project offers the opportunity for close negotiation and collaboration between teacher and student in determining the course of learning.

Progression: this course offers specific progression to A Level study through the skills that students are developing:

- Paper 2 and the Coursework Project require students to manage different texts and look for connections across texts
- The Coursework Project facilitates independent study and research
- Development of sustained writing skills are required for Paper 1 and Paper 2
- The skills of argument and discussion are fostered through Paper 1
- The optional Speaking and Listening unit develops skills in formal presentation necessitating effective preparation, the appropriate development of interactive strategies, and the effective use of spoken language.

Get help and support

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at oxfordaqaexams.org.uk

You can contact the English subject team directly;

E: english@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk