

OXFORD

INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL AS AND A-LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Scheme of work

For teaching from September 2017 onwards

For AS exams in June 2018 onwards

For A-level exams in June 2019 onwards

Version 2.0 Specimen

Our specification is published on our website 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.

Introduction

This *Scheme of work* is intended to offer teachers a structure through which the International AS and A-level English Language specification may be delivered. It is not the only way the subject could be taught. Teachers may use or amend it according to the needs of their particular students and institution. In order to be understood fully, the *Scheme of work* should be used alongside the *Specification* itself, the *Teacher guide* and the specimen assessments materials.

Year 1 AS

Autumn Term

Language and context

Because of the interdependence of **understanding texts** and **directed writing**, it is recommended that the two components be taught in parallel during this term.

Understanding texts

Students should gain experience of a variety of texts with different:

- **audiences** (varying according to age, gender, education, social position, interests)
- **purposes** (eg to persuade, inform, instruct, entertain or mixture of different purposes)
- **modes** (written, spoken, multi-modal/hybrid)
- **genres** (eg advertisements, fiction, instructions, SMSs, emails, blogs, web forums, newspaper articles, editorials, speeches).

Students should discuss and explore the significance and implications of the above variations.

Teachers may encourage students either individually or in groups to create their own collections of texts, using students' own particular interests as a starting point. These texts should include published or web-based texts, as well as recordings and transcriptions of live or pre-recorded speech as long as the necessary permissions are obtained.

Students could also be asked to devise directed writing tasks related to the texts.

The texts collected by students (and/or provided by teachers) should be drawn from a range of sources, including advertising and promotional material, informative booklets and flyers, news and magazine articles, digital texts such as blogs, discussion forums and other website material, spontaneous speech, more planned and formal spoken language, different kinds of non-fiction writing and reference material.

Students will need to pay particular attention to **spoken language analysis** which they may not have previously encountered. It is always possible that one of the texts for analysis in the examination could be a transcript of a spoken interaction. Teachers should note that there are such transcripts in the specimen assessment materials. For reasons of practicality, spoken data will always be presented in the form of transcripts on examination papers. Transcript conventions are explained in the *Teacher guide*.

Spoken interactions are often more complex-looking than written texts and they need to be approached differently. In spoken interactions meanings are created and narratives are shaped collaboratively by a group of people who speak, duet and duel, overlap, monitor, support, challenge, question and answer; speech is also one code among many that operate alongside each other in face to face contexts, so students need to be aware of how speech is embedded in action. You will find detailed notes on spoken discourse analysis in approved text books (details of which can be found at oxfordaqaexams.org.uk).

Another key area for students to focus on at this stage of the course is **representation**. When examining how meanings are constructed by and within texts, students should be encouraged to explore how the creators of the texts (writers, speakers) use language to represent themselves, their audiences, topics, people, social groups, issues, ideas and institutions; and how meaning is always negotiated because readers and listeners will bring their own interpretations to bear. You will find further clarification of the concept of representation in the mark schemes (AO2) in the specimen assessment materials and in approved text books (details of which can be found at oxfordaqaexams.org.uk).

Students should analyse various texts to explain how language is used to construct meanings with reference to the different ‘levels’ of language as follows:

- **Phonetics and phonology:** articulated speech sounds
- **Lexis and semantics:** meaning at word and phrase level
- **Grammar:** structural patterns and shapes of English at sentence, clause, phrase and word level
- **Pragmatics:** contextual aspects of language use eg inference, assumed meaning
- **Discourse:** extended stretches of communication occurring in different genres, modes and contexts
- **Graphology:** visual aspects of textual design and appearance.

Teachers will find the above explained in greater detail in the *Teacher guide* and the *Specification*. Examples of texts for analysis may also be found in the specimen assessment materials.

Directed writing

Students should apply the knowledge and understanding acquired when using the above models and methods of textual analysis to the skill of directed writing. Students should create various texts for different audiences and with different purposes in different genres and using different modes. They will develop the ability to write to a specific brief, involving the transformation of some or all of the material in texts they have used for analysis in order to create new texts. Students should be encouraged to sustain a style of writing which is appropriate to the task chosen.

Examples of these writing tasks may be found in the specimen assessment materials and the *Teacher guide*.

Spring Term**Language and society**

Because of the interdependence of **Language and social groups: texts** and **language and social groups: writing**, it is recommended that the two components be taught in parallel during this term.

Language and social groups: texts

Students should study social aspects of language use, which include the ways in which people use language to:

- express identities
- construct and maintain relationships
- mark group membership
- claim and exercise power and status
- play and entertain themselves and others.

Students should study texts for analysis which may be spoken, written or multimodal/web-based material and which illustrate the social dimensions listed. Texts should be garnered from contexts where the factors above are strongly in evidence – for example:

- power-laden contexts such as interviews
- spoken or written texts that exhort and persuade by asserting power and status
- interactions between people or written texts focusing on shared interests or group affiliations.

In their analyses of these texts, students should be encouraged to identify how language choices contribute to:

- group rapport and shared perspectives
- assertions of power and status
- expressions of identity and relationship
- creative play and performance.

Language and social groups: writing

Students should be encouraged to develop the directed writing skills they have acquired in Unit 1. In Unit 2 Section B, students will write an academic argument in which they discuss an aspect of language and social group behaviour that connects with the data in the texts they have analysed.

Summer Term (Part 1)

Students should revise **language and context** and **language and society** in preparation for the **International AS examination**.

Summer Term (Part 2)

Teachers could prepare students who intend to carry on and take the A2 qualification by giving an outline of the areas of study required for **Unit 3 (language variation)** where there are sections on **learning language** and on **International English**; and for **Unit 4 (language exploration)** which can be assessed via examination or coursework options. Obviously, learning and teaching will need to be organised a little differently depending on which route is taken; however, the skills being developed and assessed are very similar. The essential difference for the coursework route is that students need to determine their own areas for exploration and collect their own data, while in the examined route data is provided (but not research questions). So in both cases, students need to be able to determine research questions, to analyse material, draw some conclusions, and write up their work in a report style. The International A2 study areas are explained in more detail below, in the *Teachers' guide* and the *Specification* itself. Teachers will also find teaching material suitable for the introduction of these study areas in the approved text books (details of which can be found at oxfordaqaexams.org.uk).

Year 2 A-level

Autumn Term and Spring Term

Language variation

Because students may choose to develop areas of study from **language variations** in their **language explorations**, it is recommended that the two Units are taught in parallel during the Autumn and Spring terms of the A2 year.

Before embarking on any work for language exploration, however, students should be encouraged to think back over their **AS year** – particularly if they are taking the coursework option – and ask themselves whether there were specific areas that they found interesting and that would be worth taking further.

Learning language

Students should explore the topic of language learning, which includes both early language acquisition in young children and later language development in teenagers. They should be given data to analyse as a starting point for their writing about learning language. This data might include speech, writing, or multimodal texts produced by native speakers or English as an Additional Language (EAL) speakers.

Students should develop their academic writing skills (already introduced in Unit 2 Section B) to enable them to move beyond the data to examine and evaluate ideas, research and theories about learning language.

In order to prepare for the examination, students should:

- examine and evaluate theories about spoken language development eg innateness, social interaction
- analyse extended data sets
- apply relevant language methods and accurate terminology
- study stages of language and literacy development
- examine and evaluate theories about literacy development.

Teachers will also find teaching material suitable for the topic of learning language in the specimen assessment materials and in the approved text books (details of which can be found at oxfordaqaexams.org.uk).

International English

Students should develop awareness of the different terms that are used to describe English across the world, such as 'World Englishes', 'global English', 'international English', 'English as a lingua franca'. They should learn about some of the different Englishes that are used around the world, and be aware of how and why these have developed historically. Where possible, students should explore real examples of English as used in international contexts. These examples may be spoken, web sites or published writing eg newspapers such as the *Times of India* or *Gulf News*. Students should also be encouraged to examine factors that have helped to shape the development of English use across the world such as broadcast media and the internet. They should also be made aware of some of the models proposed by academic researchers for understanding aspects of international English.

Language exploration

As explained earlier, this Unit can be assessed either by a written examination or by non-exam assessment (NEA), ie coursework. Teachers will determine which of these pathways to follow according to the nature of their school/college and the needs of their students.

Examined assessment

In order to introduce the examined version of language exploration, teachers are advised to use the specimen assessment materials for Unit 4. Using this material, students will devise a research question to suit the data given, using some or all of the data provided. They will plan and carry out an analysis, using at least two of the texts or data sets, and write up their results in the form of a report structured as follows:

- 1 **Aim(s):** A statement about the aim(s) of the investigation.
- 2 **Method:** An explanation of which data has been selected and why; and how the data is to be analysed.
- 3 **Analysis:** A presentation of findings, categorized as appropriate to the aim(s) and explored in detail.
- 4 **Conclusion:** Conclusions drawn from the analysis and connected with the aim(s).

Non-exam assessment

If opting for the non-examined assessment, students will carry out a language investigation by researching an aspect of language use. They will devise a research question, collect their own data and analyse it. They will write up the results of their research in the form of a report of approximately 2,500 words (excluding data).

Students should be encouraged to pursue an area of individual interest examples of which may found in the *Teachers' guide*.

Students need not restrict themselves to those areas that are formally taught, as the basis of the investigation is the value of student-led enquiry supported by open learning. Therefore, any area seen by supervising teachers as yielding interesting questions about language in use may be chosen.

When conducting their own language exploration coursework, students should:

- devise their own methodologies
- collect their own texts or data
- analyse their material
- draw conclusions
- apply relevant and suitable language concepts and terminology.

When undertaking their language exploration, students will develop:

- skills in critical thinking
- planning and organizational skills
- analytical skills
- knowledge of linguistic methods, concepts and issues
- data-handling skills
- skills of academic argument and report-writing.

All the skills above are highly prized in higher education as representing the type of independent, research led work that often forms the basis of assessment on undergraduate modules and that goes on to produce successful academic thesis planning and writing.

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 at:

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