

Guildford County School

A Level English Language

Course Handbook

Welcome to the English Language A Level course; this handbook tells you everything that you need to know about what you will study and when. There are also some tips about how you will need to change your studying habits now that you are a member of the Sixth Form. We do have different expectations of you (as, no doubt, you have of us) and we want to make that clear in this handbook.

All the staff in the English Department warmly welcome you onto our course and hope that you enjoy the experience as much as we do.

What are the differences between GCSE and A Level?

At A Level you will find...

- A relaxed atmosphere
- More in-depth study
- More discussion
- More opportunity to express opinions
- More chances to hear what others think
- The need to apply your own knowledge to questions
- Independent study

These are not just our views, this list was compiled by students sitting right where you are now.

What will the lessons be like?

Smaller classes mean that you will get much more interaction with your teacher and classmates. Many of the lessons will involve an element of discussion so that you can develop your responses as a student of the English language and discover alternative ones from others.

Your teachers will, of course, guide you and make sure that you are stimulated and stretched in your studies, but there is much more focus on YOU.

You will need to develop into more of an independent learner in the Sixth Form. This means that you will need to take the main responsibility for your own learning. If there is something you don't understand, it is now down to you to find out the answers. This style of learning is hugely beneficial – it prepares you for university and adulthood.

Assessment

Assessment is very different at A level. We use bands to mark your work, not grades. The Non-Exam Assessment element of the course will be marked by your teacher and then moderated both by the department and an external moderator, so you can be sure that your mark is fair.

Because the learning is very much in your hands, your teacher will make sure you are well aware of the assessment criteria too. In other words – we tell you what the examiners want you to do and then guide you towards achieving it.

As well as regular essay practice and coursework, you will be set other types of home and class work. You may be asked to prepare a presentation or topic for class discussion. There will also be smaller writing tasks which may ask you to write for particular audiences and purposes. These tasks are an essential indication of your progress and so must be completed by the deadline. Acting on the feedback your teachers give you is a vital part of your learning and DIRT is integral to the process.

In addition to regular home learning tasks you are expected to spend a minimum of 1 hour per fortnight on your own independent learning and research. Your teachers will expect to see the notes you make from this research in the Independent Learning section of your subject folder. Use ideas from the transition tasks, as well as the reading list provided at the end of this booklet.

Study Skills

You will be expected to keep charge of your own notes, marked work, exemplar materials, mark schemes and any other pieces of paper you might be given. We suggest that you use a large lever arch file and use dividers to organise your work. It is really important that you start well and don't let the filing get on top of you. Your folder is your responsibility, but your teachers will check regularly to make sure it meets the high standards we expect of you. Your folder should be divided into sections for Paper 1 and Paper 2. Within these sections you should have dividers for lesson notes and handouts on each topic, marked work, and independent learning.

In addition to your notes, you will have a number of texts which you will annotate as you study them. It is important that you keep these annotations clear and readable, so it is often a good idea to use a combination of text written notes and supplement these with more in depth notes written on paper.

Compared to KS4, there is a much greater emphasis placed on you analysing your own strengths and weaknesses; you will be expected to produce DIRT sheets for all pieces of assessed work in which you analyse your own performance against set criteria, setting yourself personal targets for improvement.

Curriculum Outline

SUBJECT: English Language	Year 12	Year 13
Autumn 1	<p>Paper 1 Textual variations and representations – introduction to the frameworks</p> <p>Paper 2 Language Diversity (Gender)</p>	<p>NEA – Language Investigation</p> <p>Paper 2 Language Diversity – ethnicity & world English</p>
Autumn 2	<p>Paper 1 Textual variations and representations – introduction to the frameworks</p> <p>Paper 2 Language Diversity (Age & occupation)</p>	<p>NEA – Language Investigation</p> <p>Paper 2 Language Diversity – ethnicity, world English & Language Change</p>
Spring 1	<p>Paper 1 Textual variations and representations – using data</p> <p>Paper 2 Language Diversity (Region)</p>	<p>Revision/exam prep cycle</p> <p>Mock exam prep.</p>
Spring 2	<p>Paper 1 Textual variations and representations – using data</p> <p>Paper 2 Language Diversity</p>	<p>Revision/exam prep cycle</p>
Summer 1	<p>Paper 1 Child Language Development - spoken language</p> <p>NEA – Original Writing</p>	<p>Revision/exam prep cycle</p>
Summer 2	<p>Paper 1 Child Language Development - spoken language</p> <p>NEA – Original Writing</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Paper 1: Language, the individual and society	Paper 2: Language Diversity and change	Non-exam assessment: Language in action
What's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Textual variations and representations Children's language development (0-11 years) Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities 	What's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language diversity and change Language discourses Writing skills Methods of language analysis are integrated into activities 	What's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language investigation Original writing Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities
Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes 100 marks 40% of A-level 	Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes 100 marks 40% of A-level 	Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word count: 3.500 100 marks 20% of A-level Assessed by teachers Moderated by AQA
Questions Section A – Textual variations and representations Two texts (one contemporary and one older text) linked by topic or theme. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A question requiring analysis of one text (25 marks) A question requiring analysis of a second text (25 marks) A question requiring comparison of the two texts (20 marks) Section B – Children's language development A discursive essay on children's language development, with a choice of two questions where the data provided will focus on spoken, written or multimodal language (30 marks)	Questions Section A – Diversity and change One question from a choice of two: Either: an evaluative essay on language diversity (30 marks) Or: an evaluative essay on language change (30 marks) Section B – Language discourses Two texts about a topic linked to the study of diversity and change. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A question requiring analysis of how the texts use language to present ideas, attitudes and opinions (40 marks) A directed writing task linked to the same topic and the ideas in the texts (30 marks) 	Tasks You will produce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A language investigation (2,000 words excluding data) A piece of original writing and commentary (1,500 words total)

It is worth familiarising yourself with the **AQA website** where, amongst other resources, you will find past paper questions.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/as-and-a-level/english-language-7701-7702>

Assessment Objectives

All your pieces of extended writing will be assessed according to the relevant Assessment Objectives (AOs). Here they are – become familiar with them quickly to help you focus your work appropriately.

- **AO1** Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression
- **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.
- **AO5** Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways.

Weighting of AOs for A-level English Language

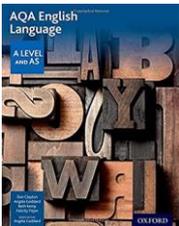
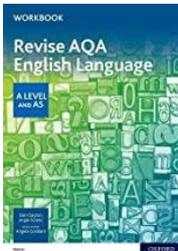
Assessment objective	Component weightings (approx. %)			Overall weighting (approx. %)
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Non-exam assessment	
AO1	14	8	4	26
AO2	6	16	4	26
AO3	12	6	5	23
AO4	8	6	1	15
AO5	-	4	6	10
Overall weighting of components	40	40	20	100

Reading List

The following list of books is a suggestion and is by no means exhaustive:

Author	Title
David Crystal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Glossary of Netspeak and Textspeak (Edinburgh University Press, 2004) • Language and the Internet (CUP, 2001)
Ronald Carter and Sandra Cornbleet	The Language of Speech and Writing (Routledge, 2011)
Alison Ross	Language and Representation in Language – A Student Handbook on Key Topics and Theories (English and Media Centre, 2013)
Ron Carter and Michael McCarthy	Cambridge Grammar of English (CUP, 2006)
William O’Grady	How Children Learn Language (CUP, 2005)
Pinker, Steven	The Language Instinct (1994)
Frank Myszor	Language Acquisition (Hodder, 1999)
Henry Hitchings	The Language Wars (John Murray, 2011)
David Marsh	For Who the Bell Tolls (Guardian Books, 2013)
Jennifer Jenkins	World Englishes: a resource book for students (Routledge, 2009)
Kerry Maxwell	Brave New Words (Pan, 2007)
Deborah Cameron	The Myth of Mars and Venus (OUP, 2008)
Angela Goddard	Language and Gender (Routledge, 2010)
Melvyn Bragg	The Adventure of English (Sceptre, 2004. Also on youtube)
Joan Beal	Language and Region (Routledge, 2006)
The following are also excellent on-line resources:	
English and Media Centre emagazine (www.englishandmedia.co.uk) You will be given login details for this resource.	
Babel emagazine (www.babelzine.co.uk)	
EngLangBlog (www.englishlangsfx.blogspot.com)	

You may also find the following textbooks useful, but you are not obliged to buy them as all the material will be covered in lessons and resources shared with you on Teams.

<p><i>AQA A Level English Language by Dan Clayton (OUP, 2015)</i></p> 	<p><i>Revise AQA English Language Workbook by Dan Clayton. (OUP, 2018)</i></p> 	<p><i>English Language A/AS Level for AQA Student Book (CUP, 2015)</i></p> 
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