A-level English Language and Literature

Frequently Asked Questions v8.0 May 2016

A-level English Language and Literature

How many texts will have to be studied?

For A-level English Language and Literature, students need to study 6 substantial texts:
- 3 from the genres of prose fiction, poetry and/or drama
- 3 further texts, 1 of which must be non-literary (eg essays and journalism).

Why are there only 4 set text choices?

Teachers have four set texts to choose from. This provides choice to teachers, which we know is important, but at the same time, avoids the complexity of assessment that arises from having too much optionality within the paper.

Will the set texts change over the lifetime of the specification?

No, it is our intention that the set texts last for the lifetime of the specification. We do, however, reserve the right to change a text if it should become necessary.

A-level Paper 1: Telling Stories

Can students take the AQA Anthology: Paris into the exam?

No, students cannot take this into the exam as this section of the paper is closed book. Extracts from the anthology will be printed in the exam.

Are teachers expected to teach every text in the Paris anthology?

The *AQA Anthology: Paris* is a set text and counts as the substantial non-literary text as required by the Ofqual Subject Criteria. It is expected that students will be familiar with all the texts in the anthology and any of the texts could appear on an exam paper. However, it is up to teachers to decide which texts will be explicitly taught in the classroom and which texts students might tackle independently.

How should students study the multimedia texts that appear in the anthology, such as the Eurostar advert?

It is our intention that students will study multimedia texts both in their original format and as presented in the *AQA Anthology: Paris*. Our English e-library (which accompanies the anthology) will provide links to all these texts in their original format. When a multimedia texts is presented in a question paper, we intend to provide an appropriate screen shot from the original text alongside the transcript. This is to steer students to consider the original context in which the text was produced and received (AO3). We would encourage students to make reference both to the accompanying screen shot and to use their knowledge of the text in its original format (going beyond the screen shot) when making comments relevant to AO3. When analysing multimedia texts, we would expect students to comment on the full range of multimodality (words, images, use of space) that they think are relevant however, the primary analysis should linguistic.

The Paris SOW (Scheme of Work) seems to focus much on 'modality' and 'spatial deixis' at the expense of all the usual linguistic literary features- such as metaphor, personification, hyperbole etc. Is the emphasis on how audience and purpose and genre affect the language used, in any way similar to the old unseen section of ELLB1F?

The AQA Paris scheme of work explores discrete areas of study but these are not the only focuses students can have and we would of course encourage them to be able to explore other features related to the areas of study highlighted in the specification. There is a strong emphasis on audience, purpose, context and genre (AO3) that students will have to address on this question.

How much can we teach them of some spoken language theorists with regards to the anthology?

Since there are spoken texts in the anthology, students will need to know some basic frameworks for analysing speech: models of narrative structure (eg. Labov), turn taking, topic management and control, typical features of spoken discourse (eg. disfluency features, syntax). More pragmatic frameworks such as conversational maxims, politeness theory and deixis would be useful and prepare students well for A-level Paper 2 and NEA.

A-level Paper 1: Telling Stories – Section A: Remembered Places

The sample questions for both the AS and A level refer to generic ideas about Paris, Paper 1, A level - Compare and contrast how the writers of these texts express their ideas about people living in or visiting Paris. Will the questions be as generic as that, or could they for example ask how Paris is presented to children?

The AS question is generic and will remain the same for each series. At A-level the question will change each series (although the question stem will remain the same eg Compare and contrast how the writers/speakers of these texts …). The question focus will be drawn from the areas of study set out in the specification (Section 4.1.2 Remembered Places) and could include the example regarding how Paris is presented to children.

Several of the texts in the Paris anthology contain important presentation features, are students able to comment on the presentation/ graphological features of the texts?

Yes students should comment on the presentation/graphological features where these are important to how the text is received. In addition, when a multimedia text is presented in a question paper, we intend to provide an appropriate screen shot from the original text alongside the transcript. This is to steer students to consider the original context in which the text was produced and received (AO3). We would encourage students to make reference both to the accompanying screen shot and to use their knowledge of the text in its original format (going beyond the screen shot) when making comments relevant to AO3. When analysing multimedia texts, we would expect students to comment on the full range of multimodality (words, images, use of space) that they think are relevant however, the primary analysis should linguistic.

A-level Paper 1: Telling Stories – Section B: Imagined Worlds

Why is 'The Handmaid's Tale' is referred to as a 'fantasy' text rather than 'dystopian'. Is this a deliberate distinction and what would your definition of fantasy cover in the context of this text?

For the purpose of this specification, we mean fantasy in its broadest sense and do not define 'fantasy' as a single genre, but a cohesion of many different genres. Although we have categorised all of the texts set as part of Imagined worlds as 'fantasy', we recognise the 'sub-genre' under which these texts may be considered eg Dracula, gothic Fantasy and The Handmaid's Tale, dystopian fantasy. Reference is made to these 'sub-genres' in the indicative content of our specimen assessment mark schemes, for example: 'elements of dystopian fantasy fiction and associated genre conventions – for example use of time shifts to show how societies can change, use of language to represent new thinking.'

What version of Frankenstein should be used for study?

When we select extracts from Frankenstein for A-level Paper 1 Section B (Imagined worlds) we will use the 1818 version. This is the original, unabridged version.

However, if students write a response using a later version of this text, our examiners will look to reward all responses as appropriate.

It is worth bearing in mind that there are some marked differences between the original and later versions of this text, including the way the novel is organised: three volumes in the original and sequential chapter numbering in later editions. The question will include a brief statement explaining where in the novel the extract takes place. This is an open book examination so students should have access to a clean copy of the text they studied in class.

A-level Paper 1: Telling Stories – Section C: Poetic Voices

Will students be penalised if they compare and/or contrast at A-level?

Students will not be penalised if they compare and/or contrast at A-level but they need to be aware that they will not be credited for this as they would be at AS, where AO4 is assessed.

Do students need to study Browning poems 'Meeting at Night' and 'Parting at Morning' as a pair of linked poems or as separate poems?

Students should study 'Meeting at Night' and 'Parting at Morning' as a pair of linked poems. But equally, they need to see the differences between them (i.e. the fact that they are separate implies that each should be treated as distinct). For AS Paper 1 section B 'Parting at Morning' is so short it would always be with 'Meeting at Night' therefore treating them as one poem in this instance.

This would also be the case for A-level paper 1 section C if 'Meeting at Night' and 'Parting at Morning' were the named poems, however when students are selecting their own poem to examine they could be considered individually or together.

A-level Paper 2: Exploring Conflict - Section A: Writing about Society

Will students be asked to write from the point of view of a minor character?

Students will be asked to reconfigure events in the base text from the point of view of either:
- an *included participant* (a character explicitly mentioned in the base text)
- an *excluded participant* (a character not explicitly mentioned but whose existence can be assumed).

For example in the extract referred to in the specimen question on *Into the Wild*, students might be asked to recast the events from the perspective of the included participant Gallien (as in the specimen question) or an excluded participant such as another driver on the road out of Fairbanks who might have seen Alex.

For further guidance please see both our *Exemplar student response and examiner commentary* and the *Guide to textual intervention* which are available on our AS and A-level English Language and Literature webpage.

What genres might students be asked to use when re-casting texts?

The focus of this question is on reconfiguring events in the base text from a different point of view, therefore, students are asked to re-cast the text into an 'account'. For example, in response to the specimen question on *Into the Wild*, a student could choose to write in the first person, one of the third person modes, have it part written, part spoken, include dialogue etc. Students should make representational decisions around the use of dialogue, speech, narrative modes and so on, whilst producing a re-cast text that is within the same broad genre as the base text ie prose fiction/non-fiction.

Non-exam assessment: Making Connections

Do I need to get approval for the texts and tasks I want to set for my students?

No, you do not need to get your non-exam assessment tasks approved. You may, however, seek advice and guidance on task setting from your non-exam assessment adviser.

When do I teach the non-exam assessment component? Does it have to be in year 2 if I'm co-teaching?

A-level students may start work on their non-exam assessment at any point during their two year course. Co-teaching doesn't mean that it can't be started until year 2.

What is the standardisation process for teachers?

All AQA registered schools and colleges mark their students' non-exam assessment work. To make sure that you are marking to the correct standard the following support is offered:

Teacher standardisation takes place via our Teacher Online Standardisation System (T-OLS). It is made available during the autumn term. It is accessed via e-AQA.

Teacher online standardisation (T-OLS) offers a number of benefits to schools and teachers. For example in T-OLS, you can see example work that's been marked by the lead moderator, then mark it yourself to get instant feedback on how you compare to the standard. The whole department can access the materials and it is available any time. You can revisit the examples and the lead moderator's advice whenever you need to before you start marking.

How do I find out the details of my Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) adviser?

Each A-level English specification will be supported by NEA advisers. They will be able to offer advice and guidance on NEA matters, including guidance on task setting.

If you don't have your NEA adviser details please contact the A-level English team on 0161 953 7504 or send an email to english-gce@aqa.org.uk.

Word count: Will students be penalised for exceeding the word count?

No the word count is provided as guidance only. There are no penalties for exceeding the word count, or indeed falling short of the stated word count. Teachers are advised, however, to guide their students towards the recommended word count.

Are quotes included in the word count?

No, quotes are not included.

What is meant by literary and non-literary material?

For the purposes of this specification, literary texts are defined as those that are drawn from the three main literary genres of prose fiction, poetry and drama. 'Non- literary' is an overarching term which describes more than simply non-fiction. It includes non-fiction but also texts and data that are not formally published and marketed – for example, personal letters, spontaneous speech and multimedia texts. Non-literary texts do not have to occur in continuous prose: they can be charts and diagrams, transcripts and lists. For further guidance please see our resource Making Connections: guidance on non-exam assessment which is available on our AS and A-level English Language and Literature webpage.

Can secondary reading for NEA go beyond literary critical and language theory reading eg historical background reading, or Psychology or Gender Studies, if appropriate to chosen texts?

Secondary reading for the NEA can come from any academic field: literary criticism, linguistics, stylistics, narratology, psychology and so on **but** it must be relevant to the task and the language feature(s) being discussed. For example, if a student is investigating the representation of females in a novel and advertising they might draw on ideas from gender studies or if they were looking at how historical events are framed in a novel and some song lyrics they might make use of historical facts. Students and teachers are free to choose the most suitable background reading for the NEA.

However, most students are most likely to focus on language-based books/articles and we are also keen to encourage the use of literary criticism as secondary reading so that so that students can show or reject in more rigorous ways what literary critics might be saying about the texts they are studying.

AS English Language and Literature

Is the AS content different to A-level?

The content of AS will be a sub-set (approximately 50%) of the content of the A-level. AS assessments will be different to the A-level assessments.

Should the new AS be studied over 1 or 2 years?

The new AS may be assessed after one year and we would generally expect schools and colleges would teach AS over one year.

How many texts will have to be studied?

At AS, students must study 3 substantial texts:
- 2 from the genres of prose fiction, poetry and/or drama
- 1 non-literary text.

Why are there only 4 set text choices?

Teachers have four set texts to choose from. This provides choice to teachers, which we know is important, but at the same time, avoids the complexity of assessment that arises from having too much optionality within the paper.

Will the set texts change over the lifetime of the specification?

No, it is our intention that the set texts last for the lifetime of the specification. We do, however, reserve the right to change a text if it should become necessary.

AS Paper 1: Views and Voices - Section A: Imagined Worlds

Why is 'The Handmaid's Tale' is referred to as a 'fantasy' text rather than 'dystopian'. Is this a deliberate distinction and what would your definition of fantasy cover in the context of this text?

For the purpose of this specification, we mean fantasy in its broadest sense and do not define 'fantasy' as a single genre, but a cohesion of many different genres. Although we have categorised all of the texts set as part of Imagined worlds as 'fantasy', we recognise the 'sub-genre' under which these texts may be considered eg Dracula, gothic Fantasy and The Handmaid's Tale, dystopian fantasy. Reference is made to these 'sub-genres' in the indicative content of our specimen assessment mark schemes, for example: 'elements of dystopian fantasy fiction and associated genre conventions – for example use of time shifts to show how societies can change, use of language to represent new thinking.'

Are we to interpret "narrative techniques" in the AS Language and Literature Paper 1 Section A specimen mark scheme to mean point of view/characterisation/presentation of time or space/narrative structure in a similar way to the legacy LITB1 'aspects of narrative' method?

Yes - this covers the entire range of resources that writers use to represent fictional characters, events, locations and so on.

The AO2 indicative content seems to be largely focused on themes rather than narrative technique. We are also not entirely sure how the "tension between awareness..." links to the steer of the question.

AO1 is about the relevant identification and careful reference to narrative techniques/strategies/language; AO2 is more about interpretation so 'tension between awareness' is an interpretative comment which is fine since it focuses on character's relationship/response to place. Students must ensure that they are linking AO1 comments (the descriptive) to AO2 ones (the interpretative).

What version of Frankenstein should be used for study?

When we select extracts from *Frankenstein* for AS-level Paper 1 Section A (Imagined worlds) we will use the 1818 version. This is the original, unabridged version.

However, if students write a response using a later version of this text, our examiners will look to reward all responses as appropriate.

This is a closed book examination so students will <u>not</u> have access to a copy of the text they studied in the examination. However, the question requires students to respond to an extract from the novel which will be printed on the question paper.

AS Paper 1: Views and Voices - Section B: Poetic Voices

How should students structure their responses to an AS Poetic voices question?

There is no one way of answering the question and we would not want to set a 'formula' that students need to follow for this or any other question on the specification. Students can choose to explore and analyse their poems at various language levels (discourse, syntax, lexis, semantics, pragmatics, phonology). What is important is that they use precise and accurate linguistic terminology and avoid making general intuitive comments that either make no reference to the language of the poems or talk about language in vague and impressionistic ways. The focus for this questions is on the construction and projection of poetic voice and candidates should be able to explore how poets present and build on perspectives on time, place, memories, events and people.

To what extent do we need to focus on the ways that narrative voices are created linguistically by authors?

Yes, answers to 'Poetic voices' questions should explore the ways that identity and voices are represented through linguistic strategies to give a strong personal perspective on events, people, memories, places and so on.

Do students need to study Browning poems 'Meeting at Night' and 'Parting at Morning' as a pair of linked poems or as separate poems?

Students should study 'Meeting at Night' and 'Parting at Morning' as a pair of linked poems. But equally, they need to see the differences between them (i.e. the fact that they are separate implies that each should be treated as distinct). For AS paper 1 section B 'Parting at Morning' is so short it would always be with 'Meeting at Night' therefore treating them as one poem in this instance.

This would also be the case for A-level paper 1 section C if 'Meeting at Night' and 'Parting at Morning' were the named poems, however when students are selecting their own poem to examine they could be considered individually or together.

AS Paper 2: People and Places

Are teachers expected to teach every text in the Paris anthology?

The *AQA Anthology: Paris* is a set text and counts as the substantial non-literary text as required by the Ofqual Subject Criteria. It is expected that students will be familiar will all the texts in the anthology and any of the texts could appear on an exam paper. However, it is up to teachers to decide which texts will be explicitly taught in the classroom and which texts students might tackle independently.

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The AQA Paris scheme of work explores discrete areas of study but these are not the only focuses students can have and we would of course encourage them to be able to explore other features related to the areas of study highlighted in the specification. There is a strong emphasis on audience, purpose, context and genre (AO3) that students will have to address on this question.

How much can we teach them of some spoken language theorists with regards to the anthology?

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AS Paper 2: People and Places - Section A: Remembered Places

The comparative question for the anthology is marked for AOs 1, 3 and 4. We are confused about why AO2 is not marked for this as the question seems to invite analysis of how meanings are shaped?

The question will require candidates to analyse how meanings are shaped but they will predominantly do this through their linguistics exploration (AO1) of genre, audience, purpose and context (AO3), and their comparative comments (AO4). To provide balance to the component, AO2 is assessed on question 3 where students explain how their own language choices help to shape meanings.

What does 'significant examples of language' mean?

Students should write about four *different* language features in their response. By 'language feature', we mean a specific example of language that they have chosen to use at any of the language levels (grammar, lexis, discourse and so on). For example, students could make reference to their use of a group of modified noun phrases, a certain kind of pronoun, terms of address, lexical fields, the active or passive voice, superlative adjectives, deictics and so on. These should have been consciously chosen by the student with particular interpretative effects in mind, and consequently allow them to explain why they included them. Whilst it would be acceptable for students to comment on isolated language choices, particularly when they are used in striking and clearly intentional ways, students should also be aware of and write about how they create textual cohesion through patterns of language use. This means that they could comment both on **one single use** of the passive voice for effect and on the use of various pronouns **across** their writing as examples of one 'language feature'.

In their commentary students should:
- consider the importance of purpose, audience, mode and genre in their language choices
- consider how they have used language to shape their intended meaning
- structure their writing clearly to express their ideas.

Are the texts in Question 1 of the Paris Anthology likely to be linked thematically (there are so many themes present in the material that this seems likely)?

The texts in AS paper 2 (People and Places) section A will not be thematically linked (the theme is Paris). Both texts will be exploring the subject content listed in section 3.2.2 (Remembered Places) of the specification (pages 15-16). The text paring could be any two texts in the Paris Anthology. The question will always be the same.

The sample questions for both the AS and A level refer to generic ideas about Paris, eg: Paper 1, A level - Compare and contrast how the writers of these texts express their ideas about people living in or visiting Paris. Will the questions be as generic as that, or could they for example ask how Paris is presented to children?

The AS question is generic and will remain the same for each series. At A-level the question will change each series (although the question stem will remain the same eg Compare and contrast how the writers/speakers of these texts …). The question focus will be drawn from the areas of study set out in the specification (Section 4.1.2 Remembered Places) and could include the example regarding how Paris is presented to children.

Several of the texts in the Paris anthology contain important presentation features, are students able to comment on the presentation/ graphological features of the texts?

Yes students should comment on the presentation/graphological features where these are important to how the text is received. In addition, when a multimedia text is presented in a question paper, we intend to provide an appropriate screen shot from the original text alongside the transcript. This is to steer students to consider the original context in which the text was produced and received (AO3). We would encourage students to make reference both to the accompanying screen shot and to use their knowledge of the text in its original format (going beyond the screen shot) when making comments relevant to AO3. When analysing multimedia texts, we would expect students to comment on the full range of multimodality (words, images, use of space) that they think are relevant however, the primary analysis should linguistic.

AS Paper 2: People and Places - Section B: Re-creative Writing

What types of genre might students be required to write for the AS re-creative writing? Will students be required to follow all the layout conventions of a genre, for example, writing the address at the start of a letter?

Students will be asked to write in a genre (excluding spontaneous speech) that is represented in the *AQA Anthology: Paris* but the emphasis should be on producing the copy with the spirit of the genre conventions recognised in the discourse structure rather than in the signalling of layout intentions.

How much of the original text should/can a student use in the re-creative task?

There is no 'amount' of the base text that students should use. There is a guidance document about 'Textual Intervention' on our website that should clarify the approach that should be taken for the re-creative writing at A-level. This also includes a link to the exemplar and examples for further reading. Please see link below to access a helpful support resource:

http://www.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/as-and-a-level/english-language-and-literature-7706-7707/teach/textual-intervention

Will students be asked to write a spontaneous speech for the re-creative task?

Students will not be asked to write spontaneous speech (eg Memories of Places in Paris).

Does it matter if commentaries are 300-400 words long? I have tried writing a couple and struggled to keep them anywhere near 200.

The instruction in the exam paper is to write **about** 200 words. Students would not be penalised for going over 200 words but they may struggle in the time they have to write more than 200 words and pay attention to the rest of the paper.

Students are marked for AO5 (Assessment Objective) which requires students to demonstrate their expertise in their use of language. You would therefore expect the communication to be well structured and concise.

Anthologies

There are quite a few anthologies mentioned in the specifications. What are they?

AS/A-level English Language and Literature Poetry Anthology

GCSE teachers will be familiar with our digital anthology. This is evolving and being extended to offer a distinctive and interactive resource centre for our suite of English specifications. The resource centre will offer a wide variety of resources and interactive tools that will support the teaching and study of different types of text.

How will the anthologies be enhanced with digital resources?

Our A-level English anthologies will form part of the bank of interactive resources that will be integrated into our on-line digital specifications.

We hope that these new interactive resources will support teaching and learning in a variety of ways. For example, this might include:

- providing different ways for teachers and students to access and view texts,. For example using an interactive whiteboard to engage with texts in a whole class setting

- the ability to manipulate texts on screen, for example, zooming in for closer analysis of a text and annotating texts with the ability to save and print annotated versions

- allowing students to watch or hear selected literature pieces performed aloud

- allowing students to fully engage with the texts with the option to listen to recordings of spoken texts and view audio visual texts in their original format, as well as viewing transcripts (Anthology: Paris and Language Corpus)

- providing links to contextual information and wider reading for students and additional resources for teachers.

Terminology

Is there a list of key terminology you expect students to know?

We have produced a glossary of key terms which teacher and students might find useful. We would encourage students to use established terms but there is no expectation that students know all the terms set out the glossary document.

What is meant by 'discourse' – is it to do with cohesion? Structure? Genre features?

Discourse means the study of language above the sentence. So it covers cohesion, genre and structure but it also means exploring the social aspects of language and how these impact on use.

What you mean when talking about narrators and their 'deontic' and 'epistemic' modality?

Deontic modality refers to degrees of obligation (eg modal verbs 'must', 'need', adjectives 'required' and so on). Epistemic modality refers to degrees of knowledge and possibility (eg modal verbs 'will', 'might', adjectives 'possible' and so on). As with all language features, patterns of a particular type of modality in a narrative voice will give a different impression of the identity of that speaker and provide interpretative effects for the reader. For example, a narrator who uses lots of deontic modal terms might come across as powerful and commanding in a certain context; a narrator who uses lots of epistemic terms might come across as either knowledgeable (as in the case of strong modality that shows strong belief in something eg 'know', 'will', probably' or uncertain and unconfident (in the case of weaker modality such as 'might', 'possible' etc)

What do you mean by 'phonoaesthetics'; do you mean just simply rhyme, half rhyme, dead rhyme, meter etc? What do you mean by sound iconicty, do you just mean short sentences?

'Phonoaesthetics' means the exploration of effects generated by sound patterns. So yes, these could be aspects of rhyme and metre but could also be other types of patterns (eg clusters of different sounds, alliteration, assonance, consonance etc used for effects). 'Sound iconicity' refers to when a sound mirrors a sense of meaning. So for example in Browning's 'Meeting at night', the following lines have two examples of sound iconicity: the repeated plosive 'p' mirroring the pushing of the boat through the water and the determination of the speaker to reach land; the repeated fricative sounds 'ch', 's', 'sh' that are intended to mimic the sound of the boat touching and then stopping on the beach.

As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

What is the significance of the term deixis? For example, in Porphyria's lover when the speaker says, 'made my cheek lie there', that's spatial deixis but what is the point you would make in an essay about it?

As with all language features, we would expect students to comment on the interpretative effects of their use rather than just label them. In this example, the pointing (deictically) towards a location (Porphyria's body) is significant in terms of what happens next in the poem. Ultimately, students need to look either for striking isolated examples of language or more built up patterns of use that draw attention to words and/or structures so as to suggest certain interpretative effects.

What do you mean by modality? Could you give me an example?

Modality is any kind of language that presents a writer or speaker's stance (or level of commitment) towards something. Modality can be expressed via modal auxiliary verbs (eg 'must', 'might') modal lexical verbs (eg 'believe', 'seem', 'want), modal adjectives (eg 'possible', 'likely'), modal adverbs (eg 'probably', definitely'), modal participial constructions (eg 'it is hoped that', 'it is believed that', and modal tags (eg 'I guess')

Again, the best identification of modality will always include some comment on interpretative effects. In Porphyria's Lover' the lines contain two modalised expressions 'sure' and 'knew' that convey certainty on the part of the speaker and these are used to justify his actions. So the modality here is used to represent a powerful and purposeful poetic voice.

'So, she was come through wind and rain.
Be sure I looked up at her eyes
*   Happy and proud; at last I knew*
Porphyria worshipped me'

What do you mean by the phonetic alphabet?

By the phonetic alphabet we mean the IPA. Knowing the IPA would be useful when exploring poems in Poetic voices but it's not an absolute necessity.

Co-teaching

What does co-teachable mean?

This means that the AS has been designed to be co-taught with the first year of A-level. This means that you will be able to cover, in the first year of the two year A-level course, the content that students will require in order to take the AS exam at the end of that first year. In practice this means that AS students can be taught in the same classes as students in their first year of study for the A-level.

Will the AS and A-level exams be timetabled together? Will they be at different times? Will the exam be later in the summer?

The timetable is set at an inter-board level. All exam boards are involved in that process. Details about how the AS and A-level exams are timetabled will be available in due course.

Do students have to do the AS if they are intending to do A-level?

No, the AS is now a separate standalone qualification. Performance in the AS will not contribute to the overall A-level grade. Students may elect to take the A-level only, the AS only, or the AS and the A-level.

When do students need to make the decision to study either the AS or A-level?

This will depend on the approach taken in individual schools and colleges. We have designed the specifications to be co-teachable, to allow schools and teachers the flexibility of being able to defer entry to AS or A-level until part way through the course. We know that schools will have different approaches to the teaching of AS and A-level. Some schools may elect to offer A-levels only, some AS and A-level, and some schools and colleges will choose not to co-teach. AQA does not require entries to be made until term 2 (by Feb 21st) in the year of the examination, thus giving teachers and students opportunity to determine the most appropriate approach, depending on their circumstances.

AS and A-level qualifications are now linear – what does that mean?

It means that students will sit all their exams and submit their non-exam assessment work (A-level only) at the end of their course.

Guided learning hours

A-level: 360 GLH, Grading A*-E

AS: 180 GLH, Grading A-E

Does Guided Learning Hours (GLH) include homework?

Homework is not included in GLH - the regulations state that unsupervised study or preparation, or the time taken for assessments cannot be taken as part of GLH. Please see further detail from Ofqual at http://ofqual.gov.uk/blog/whats-the-deal-with-guided-learning-hours/

Support and resources

What networking opportunities are there for teachers?

The AQA English hub school network offers free, regional, termly opportunities for GCSE and A-level teachers to:

- discuss assessment objectives, schemes of work and resources with peers
- build confidence through shared ideas, inspiration and support
- review suggested resources.

Although facilitated by specialist English advocates, agendas are tailored to voiced regional needs.

http://www.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/plan/hub-school-network

What is the e-library and how can it help me?

Our English e-Library, developed by Cambridge University Press, brings literary authors and non-fiction texts to life in your classroom by providing a wealth of ways to access texts, whatever the learning preferences of your students.

In the English e-Library, students can access relevant digital content, both audio and video, together with the actual section of the text they're covering in class. You can use it to create seamless learning and engage your students across a range of media.

It can be accessed via tablets and PCs through a classroom-based and downloadable app, giving you immediate access to the resources you need for each chapter of text, so you can spend more time focusing on creating and steering student discussions.

It's a unique teaching resource that will support you in teaching our new English GCSEs, AS and A-levels.

List of resources

Name of resource	AS-level/A-level
AS and A-level	
Summary of changes	AS/A-level
An introduction to stylistics and further reading	AS/A-level
Glossary of key terms and guide to methods of language analysis	AS/A-level
Co-teaching: a possible route through AS and A-level	AS/A-level
Guidance on co-teaching	AS/A-level
Specification launch webcast	AS/A-level
Preparing to teach resources	AS/A-level
English Webinars	AS/A-level
The definite article	AS/A-level
Textbooks	AS/A-level
English hub school network	AS/A-level
English e-Library	AS/A-level
e-Library: Teaching Ideas	AS/A-level

AS	
Imagined worlds Teaching ideas: Beginnings	AS/A-level
Imagined worlds: Scheme of work	AS/A-level
Imagined worlds Teaching ideas: Point of view	AS/A-level
Poetic voices Teaching ideas: Location and Settings	AS/A-level
Poetic voices: Scheme of work	AS/A-level
Poetic voices Teaching ideas: Phonoaesthetics	AS/A-level
Remembered places Teaching ideas: Love and relationships	AS/A-level
Remembered places Teaching ideas: Memories	AS/A-level
Remembered places: Re-creative writing: Scheme of work	AS/A-level
Remembered places Teaching ideas: Re-creative writing commentaries	AS/A-level
Remembered places Teaching ideas: Re-creative Writing: Style	AS/A-level
Remembered places: Scheme of work	AS/A-level
Remembered places Teaching ideas: Spoken discourse	AS/A-level
Paper 1 Section B (AS): Assessment guide	AS
AS: Paper 1 Section B: Student responses with examiner commentary	AS
Paper 1 (AS): Specimen question paper	AS
Paper 1 (AS): Specimen mark scheme	AS
Paper 1 Section A (AS): Assessment Guide	AS
AS: Paper 1 Section A: Student responses with examiner commentary	AS
Paper 2 (AS): Specimen question paper	AS
Paper 2 (AS): Specimen mark scheme	AS
AS: Paper 2 Section A: Student responses with examiner commentary	AS
AS: Paper 2 Section A: Assessment Guide	AS
AS: Paper 2 Section B: Student responses with examiner commentary	AS
AS: Paper 2 Section B: Assessment Guide	AS
A-level	
Imagined worlds Teaching ideas: Beginnings	AS/A-level
Imagined worlds: Scheme of work	AS/A-level
Imagined worlds Teaching ideas: Point of view	AS/A-level
Poetic voices Teaching ideas: Location and Settings	AS/A-level
Poetic voices: Scheme of work	AS/A-level
Poetic voices Teaching ideas: Phonoaesthetics	AS/A-level
Remembered places Teaching ideas: Love and relationships	AS/A-level
Remembered places Teaching ideas: Memories	AS/A-level
Remembered places: Re-creative writing: Scheme of work	AS/A-level
Remembered places Teaching ideas: Re-creative writing commentaries	AS/A-level
Remembered places Teaching ideas: Re-creative Writing: Style	AS/A-level
Remembered places: Scheme of work	AS/A-level
Remembered places Teaching ideas: Spoken discourse	AS/A-level
Dramatic encounters: Scheme of work	A-level
Dramatic encounters Teaching ideas: Schemas	A-level
Dramatic encounters Teaching ideas: Speech acts	A-level

Writing about society: Scheme of work	A-level
Writing about society Teaching ideas: Characterisation	A-level
Writing about society Teaching ideas: Commentaries	A-level
Writing about society Textual intervention: a guide for teachers	A-level
Paper 1 (A-level): Specimen question paper	A-level
Paper 1 (A-level): Specimen mark scheme	A-level
A-level: Paper 1 Section A: Student responses with examiner commentary	A-level
A-level: Paper 1 Section B: Student responses with examiner commentary	A-level
A-level: Paper 1 Section C: Student responses with examiner commentary	A-level
Paper 2 (A-level): Specimen question paper	A-level
Paper 2 (A-level): Specimen mark scheme	A-level
A-level: Paper 2 Section A: Student responses with examiner commentary	A-level
A-level: Paper 2 Section B: Student responses with examiner commentary	A-level
Making connections: guidance on non-exam assessment	A-level
Non-exam assessment (A-level): Student responses with commentary	A-level