

Switching to OCR from AQA

Introduction

We are really excited about our English Language A level qualification. Whether taking on the AS or the full A Level, this fantastic course is a great qualification for those with an interest in the subject. Why choose OCR English Language?

- Textual analysis is at the heart of the course, with 5 of the 6 exam questions directly asking for a student response to an Unseen text
- The '6th question' asks for a creative response to a statement about a language issue (drawn directly from the A level course)
- Conceptual understanding is an integral part of the course but students do not have to produce any discursive essays on theoretical understanding
- The topics and approaches have been decided on following close consultation with leading academics so that the course gives students the essentials for related higher education courses as well as many transferable, marketable skills
- The coursework is largely familiar with students able to choose their own language topic, so it is enjoyable for teaching and learning. The 'new' element is a transformative piece of work that is centred on the Language Investigation
- The topics are presented in a clear and logical linear order.

Our offer

- Our English team are passionate about English teaching. With a breadth of teaching and assessment experience, we are fully committed to supporting centres' delivery of the OCR English Suite.
- We have produced a wide range of [support materials](#) from teacher guides to delivery guides, lesson elements, Topic Exploration Packs, candidate exemplars and more.
- Join our conversation on the [OCR English Community](#) and [@OCR_English](#) to talk about and share good practice.

[#EnglishLanguage](#) [#engchat](#) [#englishteacher](#)



Key differences

OCR English Language A level	AQA English Language A Level
5 of the 6 exam questions ask directly for an analysis of a text in the exam paper.	Paper 2 has questions that either have no text (Questions 1 and 2) or use the text as a starting place for a discursive essay (Question 3).
Conceptual understanding is more important than a discussion of theorists.	The discursive nature of some questions implies the need for a specific theoretical reference.
Topics/question areas are familiar and clearly delineated in the titles, so are reassuring to students.	Some of the areas are clear (CLA) but others are less obvious as to what the question will be asking, especially 'Textual Variations and Representations' and also 'Language Discourses'.
There's a straightforward assessment structure mirrored across both exams.	Although both exams are of the same length, Paper 1 has 4 questions and Paper 2 has 3 questions.
We take an integrated approach to marking, so that all AOs are considered at the same time when marking student responses.	The mark scheme suggests that AOs are treated separately as there are 2 separate marking grids.
There is no scaling of marks, the marks for exam questions are the actual marks.	Exam question marks are 'scaled' so that the overall weighting is achieved, meaning a mark in one component is not worth the same amount as a mark in another.



Content

The content within the OCR English Language specification covers the key skills and concepts of linguistic study at this level and will be very familiar. We've structured the AS to maximise opportunities for co-teaching with the A level, and you can [find out more about co-teachability](#) in our guide.

OCR English Language A level	AQA English Language A Level
<p>Students must study 5 areas in total:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-fiction textual analysis - Spoken word - Child Language Acquisition (Speech only) - Language Change - Language in the Media (Language and Power/Gender/Technology) <p>Students will also write a creative piece that will relate directly to one of the above areas.</p>	<p>The specification suggests that there is a common core that all teachers and students need to understand. This means that there are 2 broad areas outlined.</p> <p>'Language, the individual and society' focusing on individual and immediate social contexts for language, and 'Language diversity and change' working outwards to consider larger-scale public discourses about change and variety, drawing on regional, ethnic, national and global Englishes</p> <p>One of the questions in 'Language diversity and change' asks students to produce a creative piece.</p>
<p>Component 1: 40%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-fiction textual analysis of a single text - Creative Writing (Topical Language issues) - Comparison of 2 texts (one will always be a transcript) 	<p>Component 1: 40%</p> <p>Section A - Textual Variations and Representations</p> <p>Two texts (one contemporary and one older text) linked by topic or theme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A question requiring analysis of one text - A question requiring analysis of a second text - A question requiring comparison of the two texts <p>Section B - Children's Language</p>



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	<p>Development</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Component 2: 40%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child Language Acquisition (always a spoken transcript) - Language in the Media (single text that raises issues on Language and Power/Gender/Technology) - Language Change (2 texts from different eras) 	<p>Component 2: 40%</p> <p>Section A - Diversity and Change</p> <p>One question from a choice of two:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an evaluative essay on language diversity <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an evaluative essay on language change <p>Section B - Language Discourses</p> <p>Two texts about a topic linked to the study of diversity and change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - question requiring analysis of how the texts use language to present ideas, attitudes and opinions - directed writing task linked to the same topic and the ideas in the texts.

As you would expect for the study of language at this level, students are expected to explore:

- the ways writers intentions can shape meanings;
- the ways texts are interpreted by different readers;
- the ways different texts relate to one another
- the significance of cultural and contextual influences on readers and writers.

With OCR, these expectations are explored through direct responses to texts – so we believe ***your ability to choose texts which most inspire and enable engagement from your students*** is critical to the success and enjoyment of your classes – there is no required learning, just the ability to see meaning(s) in any linguistic text.



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<p>NEA (coursework) 20%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Language Investigation (2000-2500 words) 15%- Academic Poster (750 -1000 words) 5%	<p>NEA (coursework) 20%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Language Investigation (2,000 words excluding data) 10%- Original writing and commentary (1,500 words total) 10%



Assessment

OCR English Language A level	AQA English Language A Level
<p>AS Component 01 – Exploring Language 50% (60 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of single non-fiction text (24 marks) - Comparing 2 texts, one of which is always spoken (36 marks) 	<p>AS Component 01 – Language and the Individual 50% (70 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyse Text A (25 marks) - Analyse Text B (25marks) - Compare/contrast Texts A and B (20 marks)
<p>AS Component 02 – Exploring Contexts 50% (60 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creative writing on either Language & Power or Language & Gender (24 marks) - Responding to a multi-modal text on either Language & Power or Language & Gender (36 marks) 	<p>AS Component 02 – Language Varieties 50% (70 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choice of discursive essays on language (centred on language diversity in the British Isles) that build from small amount of data (30 marks) - Creative piece – an ‘opinion article’ on a piece that builds from a piece of data (40 marks)
<p>A Level Component 01 – Exploring Language 40% (80 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of a single non-fiction text (20 marks) - Creative writing on a Topical Language Issue drawn directly from OCR A level course(24 marks) - Comparing 2 texts, one of which is always spoken (36 marks) 	<p>A Level Component 01 – Language, the Individual and Society 40% (100 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyse Text A (25 marks) - Analyse Text B (25marks) - Explore similarities and differences of Texts A and B (20 marks) - Using either 1 or 2 data sets, evaluate a statement about Child Language Acquisition. Choice of questions. (30 marks)



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<p>A Level Component 02 – Dimensions of Linguistic Variation 40% (80 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of a transcript for Child Language Acquisition (20 marks) - Analysis of a multimodal media text for Language and Power/Gender/Technology (24 marks) - Comparing 2 texts from different eras for Language Change (36 marks) 	<p>A Level Component 02 – Language Diversity and Change 40% (100 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choice of 2 questions on either language diversity and/or change (30 marks) - Compare 2 pieces of data that are about either language change or language diversity (40 marks) - Creative piece – an ‘opinion article’ on a piece that builds from the 2 pieces of data in the previous question (30 marks)
<p>NEA (coursework) 20%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language Investigation (2000- 2500 words) 30 marks - Academic Poster (750 -1000 words) 10 marks 	<p>NEA (coursework) 20%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language Investigation (2000 words excluding data) 50 marks - Original writing and commentary (1500 words total) 50 marks



Want to switch to OCR?

If you're an OCR-approved centre, all you need to do is download the specification and start teaching.

Your exams officer can complete an [intention to teach form](#) which enables us to provide appropriate support to them. When you're ready to enter your students, you just need to speak to your exams officer to:

1. Make estimated entries by 10 October so we can send you any early release materials, prepare the question papers and ensure we've got enough examiners.
2. Make final entries by 21 February

If you are not already an OCR-approved centre please refer your exams officer to [the centre approval section](#) of our admin guide.

Next steps

1. Familiarise yourself with the specification, sample assessment materials and teaching resources on the [English Language](#) qualification page of the OCR website.
2. Browse the [online delivery guides](#) for teaching ideas and use [scheme of work builder](#) to create your personal scheme of work.
3. Get a login for our secure extranet, Interchange – this allows you to access the latest past/practice papers and use our results analysis service, Active Results.
4. Sign up to receive [subject updates](#) by email.
5. Sign up to attend a [training event](#) or take part in webinars on specific topics running throughout the year and or our Q&A webinar sessions every half term.
6. Attend one of our free [teacher network events](#).
7. When you're ready to explore investigation topics with your learners for the NEA component, first take a look at our [teacher guide](#).
8. Then submit your tasks using the [Task title\(s\) proposal form](#) before your learners begin their tasks.

