

Switching to OCR from Edexcel

Introduction

The key content and skills to be covered by all new AS and A Level English Language specifications mean it's straightforward to move to a different exam board.

We've developed our specifications to provide learners with a deep knowledge of how English language works in a variety of contexts. The specifications encourage learners to develop their skills in linguistic analysis and their knowledge of concepts and methods, as well as motivating them to engage creatively with topical language issues. So why choose OCR's AS/A Level English Language?

- Textual analysis of a variety of written, spoken and multi-modal texts is at the heart of the course with 5 of the 6 A Level exam questions directly asking for a learner response to an unseen text.
- Our specifications favour meaningful application of critical and conceptual understanding, above testing learners' theoretical understanding.
- We offer clear, well balanced exam papers. The topics and approaches have been structured to provide learners with the essentials for related higher education courses as well as many transferable, marketable skills.
- The coursework provides the opportunity for independent learning and investigation is an area of particular personal interest.
- We offer a comprehensive range of creative, well researched resources to cover every aspect of the course, from candidate exemplars to guides to delivery of the different topic areas.

How do I find out more?

- Visit our [AS and A Level Language subject webpage](#) to access the specifications, specimen assessment materials and a wide range of free support materials, from scheme of work planners to skills guides, suggested lesson activities and more.
- We've structured the AS to maximise opportunities for co-teaching with the A Level. You can find out more about co-teachability in our [guide](#).
- Join our conversation on the [OCR English Community](#) and [@OCR_English](#) to exchange ideas and share good practice.

[#EnglishLanguage #engchat #englishteacher](#)



Key differences

| OCR AS and A Level English Language | Edexcel AS and A Level English Language |
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| <p>At A Level, there are two examined components with a total of 5 hours' exam time. Both papers mirror each other in weighting, length, format and structure.</p> | <p>At A Level, there are three examined components with a total of 5 hours' exam time. The weighting, length and format vary across the three exams.</p> |
| <p>Child language acquisition is only assessed at A Level through the analysis of spoken texts.</p> | <p>Child language acquisition is assessed at both AS and A Level through the analysis of spoken and written texts.</p> |
| <p>Conceptual understanding is more important than a discussion of theorists.</p> | <p>There is a focus on theoretical knowledge and perspectives—the discursive nature of some questions implies the need for specific theoretical reference.</p> |
| <p>At AS and A Level, learners produce one original writing response on a topical language issue.</p> | <p>At A Level, learners produce two original writing responses linked by genre, plus a commentary.</p> |
| <p>Research and investigation skills are assessed by non-examined assessment. Learners can choose the topic of their language investigation based on their own interests.</p> | <p>Research and investigation skills are assessed by exam. Learners choose a topic from a choice of five topic areas.</p> |



AS ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Content

All AS Level English Language qualifications require learners to study a wide range of written and spoken forms of English, including electronic and multi-modal texts.

Learners will need to show a broad knowledge and understanding of:

- Phonetics, phonology and prosodics
- Lexis and semantics
- Grammar including morphology
- Pragmatics
- Discourse

- Concepts, methods and issues relevant to English language use and linguistics.

| OCR AS English Language | Edexcel AS English Language |
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| <p>Learners study the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of non-fiction texts • Spoken forms of English • Language and gender • Language and power <p>Learners write a creative response that will relate directly to Language and gender and/or Language and power.</p> | <p>Learners study the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of non-fiction texts • Spoken forms of English • Language and identity (based on twenty-first century language use) • Child language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 0-8 years old - Spoken language acquisition - Children's written text - Theories of child development. <p>Learners write a creative response based on a stimulus of children's written text.</p> |



Assessment

| OCR AS English Language | Edexcel AS English Language |
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| <p>Paper 1: Exploring language 50% of AS Written paper: 1 hour 30 minutes 60 marks</p> <p>Section A – Understanding language features in context: Analysis of a single non-fiction text (24 marks)</p> <p>Section B – Comparing and contrasting texts: One comparative question on two unseen texts, one of which is always spoken (36 marks)</p> | <p>Paper 1: Language: Context and identity 50% of AS Written paper: 1 hour 30 minutes 50 marks</p> <p>Section A – Language and context: One comparative question on a set of three thematically linked written and spoken texts. (25 marks)</p> <p>Section B – Language and identity: One question analysing a 21st century text. (25 marks)</p> |
| <p>Paper 1: Exploring contexts 50% of AS Written paper: 1 hour 30 minutes 60 marks</p> <p>Section A – Writing about a topical language issue: One original writing task on Language and gender and/or Language and power (24 marks)</p> <p>Section B – Exploring language in context: One essay question from a choice of two responding to a multi-modal text on either Language and gender or Language and power. (36 marks)</p> | <p>Paper 2: Child Language 50% of AS Written paper: 1 hour 30 minutes 50 marks</p> <p>Question 1: One original writing task using one written text as a stimulus. (20 marks)</p> <p>Question 2: One essay question analysing a transcript of spoken language. (30 marks)</p> |



A LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Content

All A Level English Language qualifications require learners to study a wide range of written and spoken forms of English, including electronic and multi-modal texts.

Learners will need to show a broad knowledge and understanding of:

- Phonetics, phonology and prosodics
- Lexis and semantics
- Grammar including morphology
- Pragmatics
- Discourse
- Concepts, methods and issues relevant to English language use and linguistics.

Learners will also need to understand different contexts for language use including:

- Historical, geographical, social and individual varieties of English
- Aspects of language and identity.

| OCR A Level English Language | Edexcel A Level English Language |
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| <p>Learners study the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of non-fiction texts • Spoken forms of English • Language in the media: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language and gender - Language and power - Language and technology. • Child language acquisition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 0-7 years old - Speech only • Language change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Features of language use from 1600 onwards - Twenty-first century language use. <p>Learners write a creative response that will relate directly to one of the above areas.</p> <p>Learners conduct an independent language investigation on a topic of their own choosing.</p> <p>Learners produce an academic poster based on their language investigation.</p> | <p>Learners study the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of non-fiction texts • Spoken forms of English • Language and identity (based on twenty-first century language use) • Child language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 0-8 years old - Relationship between spoken language acquisition and literacy skills - Theories of child development • Language change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Features of language use from 1550 onwards - Twenty-first century language use. • Learners choose one area of language investigation from a choice of 5:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Global English - Language and gender identity - Language and journalism - Language and power - Regional language variation. <p>Learners write two creative responses linked by genre, plus a commentary.</p> |



Assessment

| OCR A Level English Language | Edexcel A Level English Language |
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| <p>Paper 1: Exploring language 40% of A level Written paper: 2 hours 30 minutes 80 marks</p> <p>Section A – Language under the microscope: One two-part question analysing one non-fiction text. (20 marks)</p> <p>Section B – Writing about a topical language issue: One original writing task on Language and gender/power/technology/language change. (24 marks)</p> <p>Section C – Comparing and contrasting texts: One question requiring a comparison of two texts. One text will always be a transcript of spoken language. (36 marks)</p> | <p>Paper 1: Language variation 35% of A level Written paper: 2 hours 15 minutes 60 marks</p> <p>Section A – Individual variation: One question on two 21st century linked texts. (30 marks)</p> <p>Section B – Variation over time: One comparative question on two thematically linked texts from different time periods. (30 marks)</p> |
| <p>Paper 2: Dimensions of linguistic variation 40% of A level Written paper: 2 hours 30 minutes 80 marks</p> <p>Section A – Child language acquisition: One question analysing a transcript of spoken language. (20 marks)</p> <p>Section B – Language in the media: One question analysing one multi-media text that raises issues on Language and gender/power/technology. (24 marks)</p> <p>Section C – Comparing and contrasting texts: One question requiring a comparison of two thematically linked texts from different time periods. (36 marks)</p> | <p>Paper 2: Child language 20% of A level Written paper: 1 hour 45 marks</p> <p>One question analysing either a spoken or a written text.</p> |



| OCR A Level English Language | Edexcel A Level English Language |
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| <p>Component 3: Independent language research 20% of A level Non-examined assessment 40 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language investigation on a topic of learners' own choosing (2000-2500 words) (30 marks) • Academic poster based on language investigation (750-1000 words) (10 marks) | <p>Paper 3: Investigating language 25% of A level Written paper: 1 hour 45 minutes 45 marks</p> <p>Learners choose one research topic area from a choice of five:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global English • Language and gender identity • Language and journalism • Language and power • Regional language variation. <p>Learners' investigations will focus on a specified subtopic from their chosen topic area. Details of the specified subtopic pre-released every January.</p> <p>Section A: One question analysing a text from the subtopic learners have researched. (15 marks)</p> <p>Section B: One evaluative question on specified subtopic, connecting to data from learners' own investigations. (30 marks)</p> |
| | <p>Component 4: Crafting language 20% of A level Non-examined assessment 50 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two pieces of original writing from the same genre, differentiated by function and/or audience. (1500-2000 words) (30 marks) • One commentary connecting the original writing to research undertaken. (1000 words) (20 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. When you're ready to enter your learners, you just need to speak to your exams officer to make estimated entries then final entries by the specified deadline ahead of the examination session.

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

Next steps

1. Familiarise yourself with the specification, sample assessment materials and teaching resources on the [AS/A Level English Language](#) qualification page of the OCR website.
2. Browse the teaching and learning resources including [online delivery guides](#) for teaching ideas and use the [Scheme of work builder](#) to create your personal scheme of work.
3. Get in touch if you'd like specific advice, guidance or support – email english@ocr.org.uk or telephone 01223 553 998.
4. 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.
5. Sign up to receive [subject updates](#) by email.
6. Sign up to attend a [training event](#) or take part in webinars on specific topics running throughout the year and/ or our Q&A drop-in webinar sessions every half term.
7. Attend one of our free regional [teacher network events](#).

