

Switching to OCR from AQA A

Introduction

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

We've developed our specifications to encourage learners' interest in and enjoyment of English literature and literary studies. The specifications motivate learners to read widely and independently. Learners will develop their knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation to engage critically and creatively with a broad range of texts. So why choose OCR's AS/A Level English Literature?

- The variety and breadth of texts on offer means that there are many opportunities for a personal, tailored approach. We have chosen both familiar and fresh topic areas for study, including American Literature and The Immigrant Experience.
- The topics are structured to underpin the knowledge and understanding needed for the next generation of thoughtful and passionate critical readers.
- We offer clear, well balanced exam papers within a flexible assessment model.
- Learners develop the essentials for related higher education courses as well as many transferable, marketable skills.
- A comprehensive range of creative, well researched resources to cover every aspect of the course, from candidate exemplars to handy set text guides.

How do I find out more?

- Visit our [AS and A Level English Literature subject webpage](#) to access the specifications, specimen assessment materials and a wide range of free support materials, from scheme of work planners to guides to delivery, lesson activities and more.
- 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](#).
- Join our conversation on the [OCR English Community](#) and [@ocr_english](#) to talk about and share good practice.

Key differences

OCR AS and A Level English Literature	AQA AS and A Level English Literature A
We have created a straightforward assessment structure so you can focus on teaching the literary texts, rather than needing to spend time coaching learners in how to navigate the exam. Both papers in each qualification are of similar length, format and structure .	The structure of the exams differs , particularly at A Level: Paper 1 is a longer exam in which learners compare two unseen poems as well as writing about their studied Shakespeare text AND writing a comparative response to two studied texts. In Paper 2, learners are again faced with an unseen extract , which they have to write about in isolation and then answer a linked task comparing two studied texts – as well as writing an essay response to a third set-text.
We've avoided using scaling factors , to aid straightforward analysis of your learners' results.	At A level, a scaling factor is applied , meaning individual marks have a different weighting depending on which component they relate to.
There is a choice of six Shakespeare texts for study for AS and A level.	There is a choice of four Shakespeare texts for study.
At AS level, we offer a choice of five poetry texts.	At AS level, learners must focus on a specified poetry text.
At A Level, we offer five topic areas for study. We have chosen both familiar and fresh topic areas, including American Literature, Dystopia and The Immigrant Experience. The variety and breadth of text choice means that there are many opportunities for a personal approach tailored to learners' and teachers' interests .	Learners focus on one genre for each examined component.
When exploring different interpretations of texts, we don't privilege one particular critical approach .	The AQA A specification privileges the historicist approach in examined components.
There is optional task choice for the NEA.	There is one task choice for the NEA.

AS ENGLISH LITERATURE

Content

OCR AS Level English Literature	AQA AS Level English Literature A
<p>Learners study 4 texts in total:</p> <p>Drama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Shakespeare set text (Exam) One post-1900 set text (Exam) <p>Poetry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One pre-1900 set text (Exam) <p>Prose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One post-1900 set text (Exam) <p>Learners will also respond to an unseen prose extract that is linked to their set prose text.</p>	<p>Learners study 4 texts in total:</p> <p>Drama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Shakespeare set text (Exam) <p>Poetry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One specified pre-1900 or post-1900 text (Exam) <p>Prose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two set texts (Exam) <p>Learners will also respond to an unseen prose text.</p>
<p>In Paper 1 you choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Shakespeare text from a choice of 6 One pre-1900 poetry text from a choice of 5 <p>Shakespeare choices:</p> <p><i>Coriolanus – Hamlet – Measure for Measure – Richard III – The Tempest – Twelfth Night</i></p> <p>Pre-1900 poetry choices:</p> <p><i>The Merchant’s Prologue and Tale – Paradise Lost Books 9 & 10 – Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Selected poems – Alfred, Lord Tennyson: Maud – Christina Rossetti: Selected poems</i></p>	<p>In Paper 1 you choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Shakespeare text from a choice of 4 One specified poetry text: either pre-1900 or post-1900 <p>Shakespeare choices:</p> <p><i>Othello – The Taming of the Shrew – Measure for Measure – The Winter’s Tale</i></p> <p>Specified poetry text:</p> <p><i>AQA Anthology of love poetry through the ages (pre-1900)</i> OR <i>AQA Anthology of love poetry through the ages (post-1900)</i></p>
<p>In Paper 2 you choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One post-1900 drama text from a choice of 6 One post-1900 prose text from a choice of 5 	<p>In Paper 2 you choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two prose texts from a choice of 12 <p>Prose choices:</p> <p><i>Persuasion – Jane Eyre – Wuthering Heights</i></p>

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<p>Drama choices:</p> <p><i>Private Lives – A Streetcar Named Desire – The Homecoming – The History Boys – That Face - Jerusalem</i></p> <p>Prose choices:</p> <p><i>The Great Gatsby - The Bloody Chamber & Other Stories - Nineteen Eighty-Four – Mrs Dalloway – The Reluctant Fundamentalist</i></p>	<p><i>– The Awakening – The Rotters' Club – The Mill on the Floss – Tess of the D'Urbervilles – The Great Gatsby – A Room with a View – The Go-Between – Rebecca - Atonement</i></p>

Assessment

OCR AS English Literature	AQA AS English Literature A
<p>Paper 1: Shakespeare and poetry pre-1900</p> <p>50% of AS</p> <p>Written paper: 1 hour 30 minutes (closed text)</p> <p>60 marks</p> <p>Section 1 – Shakespeare:</p> <p>One essay question from a choice of two. (30 marks)</p> <p>Section 2 – Poetry pre-1900:</p> <p>One extract-based question – one poem or section of poetry from set text printed in the exam paper, relating to the wider text. (30 marks)</p>	<p>Paper 1: Shakespeare and poetry</p> <p>50% of AS</p> <p>Written paper: 1 hour 30 minutes (closed text)</p> <p>50 marks</p> <p>Section A – Shakespeare:</p> <p>One passage-based question and linked essay. (25 marks)</p> <p>Section B – Poetry:</p> <p>One essay question on printed poem. (25 marks)</p>
<p>Paper 2: Drama and prose post-1900</p> <p>50% of AS</p> <p>Written paper: 1 hour 45 minutes (closed text)</p> <p>60 marks</p>	<p>Paper 2: Prose</p> <p>50% of AS</p> <p>Written paper: 1 hour 30 minutes (open text)</p>

OCR AS English Literature	AQA AS English Literature A
Section 1 - Drama: One essay question from a choice of two. (30 marks)	50 marks
Section 2 - Prose: One essay question on set text, making links with a thematically linked unseen prose extract. (30 marks)	Section A - Unseen prose: One essay question on unseen prose extract. (25 marks) Section B - Comparing prose texts: One comparative essay question. (25 marks)

A LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE

Content

OCR A Level English Literature	AQA A Level English Literature A
<p>Learners study 8 texts in total:</p> <p>Drama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Shakespeare set text (Exam) One pre-1900 set text (Exam) One post-1900 or post-2000 text of own choosing (NEA) <p>Poetry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One pre-1900 set text (Exam) One post-1900 or post-2000 text of own choosing (NEA) <p>Prose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two set texts from chosen topic area (Exam) One post-1900 or post-2000 text of own choosing (NEA) <p>Five texts are assessed in the exams.</p> <p>Three texts are assessed in the non-examined assessment.</p>	<p>Learners study 8 texts in total:</p> <p>Drama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Shakespeare set text (Exam) One post-2000 set text (Exam) <p>Poetry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One pre-1900 set text (Exam) One post-2000 set text (Exam) <p>Prose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One pre-1900 set text (Exam) One post-2000 set text (Exam) <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two texts of own choosing from any genre: drama, poetry or prose (NEA) <p>Six texts are assessed in the exams</p> <p>Two texts are assessed in the non-examined assessment.</p>
<p>In Paper 1 you choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Shakespeare text from a choice of 6 One pre-1900 drama text from a choice of 5 One pre-1900 poetry text from a choice of 5 	<p>In Paper 1 you choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Shakespeare text from a choice of 4 One poetry text from a choice of 2 One prose text from a choice of 10 <p>Either the poetry or prose text must be pre-1900.</p>

OCR A Level English Literature	AQA A Level English Literature A
<p>Shakespeare choices: <i>Coriolanus – Hamlet – Measure for Measure – Richard III – The Tempest – Twelfth Night</i></p> <p>Pre-1900 drama choices: <i>Edward II – The Duchess of Malfi – She Stoops to Conquer – A Doll's House – An Ideal Husband</i></p> <p>Pre-1900 poetry choices: <i>The Merchant's Prologue and Tale – Paradise Lost Books 9 & 10 – Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Selected poems – Alfred, Lord Tennyson: Maud – Christina Rossetti: Selected poems</i></p>	<p>Shakespeare choices: <i>Othello – The Taming of the Shrew – Measure for Measure – The Winter's Tale</i></p> <p>Poetry choices: <i>AQA Anthology of love poetry through the ages: pre-1900 - AQA Anthology of love poetry through the ages: post-1900</i></p> <p>Prose choices: <i>Persuasion – Jane Eyre – Wuthering Heights – The Awakening – Tess of the D'Urbervilles – The Great Gatsby – A Room with a View – The Go-Between – Rebecca - Atonement</i></p>
<p>In Paper 2 you choose one topic area from a choice of 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Literature 1880-1940 The Gothic Dystopia Women in Literature The Immigrant Experience <p>From your chosen topic area you choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One core text from a choice of 2 One other text from a choice of 9 <p>Core text choices: American Literature 1880-1940 <i>The Great Gatsby – The Grapes of Wrath</i></p> <p>The Gothic <i>Dracula – The Bloody Chamber & Other Stories</i></p>	<p>In Paper 2 you choose one theme from a choice of 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WW1 and its aftermath Modern times: literature from 1945 to the present day <p>THEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One prose text from a choice of 9 or 10 One poetry text from a choice of 5 One drama text from a choice of 5 <p>At least one text must be post-2000.</p> <p>Learners also respond to one unseen extract.</p> <p>WW1 and its aftermath choices: Prose: <i>Regeneration – Birdsong – The Return of the Soldier – All Quiet on the Western Front – Strange Meeting – A Farewell to Arms – Goodbye to All That – A Long, Long Way – The First Casualty – Life Class</i></p>

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<p>Dystopia <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four – The Handmaid’s Tale</i></p> <p>Women in Literature <i>Mrs Dalloway – Sense and Sensibility</i></p> <p>The Immigrant Experience <i>The Reluctant Fundamentalist – Call It Sleep</i></p> <p>The list of other texts to choose from for each topic area can be found in the specification.</p>	<p>Poetry: <i>Up the Line to Death – Scars Upon My Heart – The Penguin Book of First World War Poetry – The Oxford Book of War Poetry – The War Poems of Wilfred Owen</i></p> <p>Drama: <i>Oh! What a Lovely War – Journey’s End – The Accrington Pals – Blackadder Goes Forth – My Boy Jack</i></p> <p>Modern times: literature from 1945 to the present day choices:</p> <p>Prose: <i>The Handmaid’s Tale – Waterland – Spies – One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest – The God of Small Things – The Help – The Colour Purple – Oranges are not the Only Fruit – Revolutionary Road</i></p> <p>Poetry: <i>Feminine Gospels – Skirrid Hill – Tony Harrison: Selected Poems – Seamus Heaney: New Selected Poems – Ted Hughes: Birthday Letters – Sylvia Plath: Ariel</i></p> <p>Drama: <i>Top Girls – A Streetcar Named Desire – Translations – All My Sons – Our Country’s Good – Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i></p>
<p>For the NEA you choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One drama text of your own choosing One poetry text of your own choosing One prose text of your own choosing <p>All texts must be post-1900. At least one text must be post-2000.</p>	<p>For the NEA you choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two texts of own choosing from any genre: drama, poetry or prose

Assessment

OCR A Level English Literature	AQA A Level English Literature A
<p>Paper 1: Drama and poetry pre-1900 40% of A level Written paper: 2 hours 30 minutes (closed text) 60 marks</p> <p>Section 1 - Shakespeare: One two-part question: a) close analysis of an extract (15 marks) b) discursive essay considering a given proposition (15 marks)</p> <p>Section 2 - Drama and poetry pre-1900: One comparative essay question from a choice of six, comparing a set drama text with a set poetry text. (30 marks)</p>	<p>Paper 1: Love through the ages 40% of A level Written paper: 3 hours (open text for Section C) 75 marks (scaling factor x4)</p> <p>Section A - Shakespeare: One passage-based question with linked essay. (25 marks)</p> <p>Section B - Unseen poetry: Compulsory essay question on two unseen poems. (25 marks)</p> <p>Section C - Comparing texts: One essay question linking two texts. (25 marks)</p>
<p>Paper 2: Comparative and contextual study 40% of A level Written paper: 2 hours 30 minutes (closed text) 60 marks Two questions based on chosen topic area:</p> <p>Close reading: one unseen prose task based on the topic area studied. (30 marks)</p> <p>Comparative essay: one essay task from a choice of three (depending on texts studied) comparing two studied texts. (30 marks)</p>	<p>Paper 2: Texts in shared contexts 40% of A level Written paper: 2 hours 30 minutes (open text) 75 marks (scaling factor x4)</p> <p>Section A – Set texts: One essay question on set text (25 marks)</p> <p>Section B – Contextual linking: One compulsory question on an unseen extract. (25 marks) One essay question linking two texts. (25 marks)</p>

OCR A Level English Literature	AQA A Level English Literature A
Component 3: Literature post-1900; 20% of A level Non-examined assessment 40 marks Learners complete two tasks on chosen texts: Task 1: Close reading or re-creative writing piece with commentary (15 marks) Task 2: Comparative essay (25 marks)	Component 3: Texts across time 20% of A level Non-examined assessment (scaling factor x3) 50 marks One extended essay – a comparative critical study of two texts, at least one of which must have been written pre-1900.

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 Literature](#) qualification page of the OCR website.
2. Get in touch if you'd like specific advice, guidance or support – email english@ocr.org.uk or telephone 01223 553 998.
3. Get a login for our secure site, [Interchange](#) – 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 drop-in webinar sessions every half term.
6. Attend one of our free regional [teacher network events](#).