

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Is my centre able to make entries for GCE English Language?

The WJEC AS and A level English Language specification, accredited by Welsh Government for first teaching from September 2015, is available to:

- all schools and colleges in Wales
- schools and colleges in independent regions such as Northern Ireland, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.

These Welsh Government regulated qualifications are **not** available to centres in England.

### Do you offer training for centres?

Yes. Details of our [training](#) can be found on the WJEC website and we offer a range of support material on the [subject page](#) and the dedicated WJEC [digital resources site](#).

### Is there any non-examination assessment [NEA] in the qualification?

Yes. A level Unit 5 is internally assessed and externally moderated. The NEA investigation gives opportunities for learners to select an aspect of linguistic study that interests them related to the theme of language and identity.

Learners are required to independently conduct a language investigation, to develop their methods of language analysis through research, data collection and interpretation and to select material that is culturally, personally and academically of interest to them.

There is no NEA in AS English Language if candidates are cashing-in before progressing to A level English Language.

## When should I do the NEA tasks with my learners?

Centres can choose to cover the NEA at any point during the two-year course. Centres should, however, ensure that there is sufficient time to allow for marking and internal standardisation, to undertake and complete any internal appeals, and to input marks prior to the deadline of 15 May.

## Can centres create their own NEA tasks?

WJEC sets the broad umbrella task for the NEA of Language and Identity. Learners should identify one of the following areas of study linked to the theme of language and identity as the focus of their investigation:

- a. Language and self-representation
- b. Language and gender
- c. Language and culture
- d. Language diversity

Teachers can support learners in developing their titles, but should refer to the JCQ document, [Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments](#), regarding the type of support they can offer to learners.

Further information and support about producing the NEA investigations can be found in our document [A level English Language NEA Task Structuring Guidance](#) on the WJEC website.

## Are centres required to have the NEA tasks formally approved by WJEC?

No. There is no requirement to submit tasks for approval. If you are uncertain about or need support with any non-exam assessment tasks, please email [gceenglish@wjec.co.uk](mailto:gceenglish@wjec.co.uk)

## How many texts should a learner use in their NEA investigation?

The question of how much data is always a tricky one as the richness will vary so considerably between different language uses. For example, learners may find all they need to sustain a 2500-3500 word investigation from one political speech that contains a variety of linguistic features and aspects of identity to discuss. Thinner sources may need to be voluminous simply to generate the same quality of analysis.

This is key when the learners are undertaking their initial data collection: they must evaluate which examples will provide the richest vein to encourage the depth of analysis necessary. If there are too many sets of data that are rather thin, this

inevitably leads to a superficial or too wide-ranging essay that fails to demonstrate achievement in the higher bands.

The ability to select data for this specific function is a key part of the method they utilise in constructing their investigation and, as such, can be credited under AO1a if made explicit.

## How do I administer the NEA?

It is important that non-exam assessment is rigorously monitored by centres to ensure that candidates' work is their own.

Centres should monitor in a number of ways, for example:

- careful record-keeping of the progress of learners' work, particularly the submission of drafts
- careful consideration of whether the work submitted is characteristic of the learner's ability/attainment
- keeping the work that learners have submitted secure in a securely locked cabinet or cupboard.

A [cover sheet](#) must be completed for all candidates, regardless of whether or not they are included in the sample sent to the moderator. All candidates are required to sign a statement confirming the authenticity of their assignment and teachers must countersign that they have taken all reasonable steps to validate this.

Centres may find it helpful to include in their sample to the moderator the [NEA checklist](#) found on the subject page to ensure that all the administrative elements have been completed.

## What happens if a learner goes over the word count for the NEA?

The word count of 2,500-3,500 words is guidance to steer learners to produce an investigation of an appropriate length rather than limit them. As such, there is no fixed penalty if learners write more or less as the word count is advisory only. Candidates who offer work that is too short, however, are self-penalising by not allowing appropriate coverage of the required assessment objectives. Candidates who exceed the advisory word count are penalising themselves through a lack of precision and focus, which may affect the AO1c mark awarded.

## What should I do if I need to request an extension to the NEA submission deadline?

Where a centre has been affected by circumstances beyond its control, it may, in exceptional cases, be possible to grant a short extension. Such exceptional cases

could include technical issues at the centre; individual candidates with health issues; school disruption e.g. fires; severe weather issues at or around the submission date.

In such instances the centre should contact the Subject Officer who will consider the request for an extension. Contact details can be found on the [subject page](#).

It would not be possible to grant an extension on the basis of internal mark appeals, school holidays, or long-term teacher sickness, for example.

## How do I submit the marks for the NEA?

Marks are submitted to WJEC via the Internal Assessment Mark Input System (IAMIS). IAMIS will be open for centre use at least ten days ahead of the deadline for submission (4 May).

The first step in preparing to input marks is to request a secure website log-in as a secondary account holder from your Exams Officer. Your candidates' names/ numbers are pre-populated on the system from the entries your centre has made. You can submit marks as soon as the submission window opens. Marks **must** be inputted and submitted by the submission deadlines

For further details, please refer to the guidance on the WJEC webpage: [Internal Assessment – Submission of Marks](#).

## How do I choose the NEA sample?

Once the marks have been submitted on IAMIS, a sample of candidates will be identified automatically by the system. The automatic sample will be based on the overall rank order for the total entry.

If the sample contains a candidate whose work is incomplete, then subject teachers should indicate on the system the nearest candidate (either higher or lower) with complete work. The incomplete work should not be sent to the moderator.

An explanatory note to the moderator must accompany the folders in such cases where the sample sent by the centre differs from the sample chosen by the system.

## Are there any restrictions on what learners can do in the NEA?

Texts in translation offer limited opportunities for learners to explore the English language. For example, using WW2 German propaganda as data would not allow for exploration of "the systems of the English language" as a learner would be looking at a translation of the German language. This does mean that it would be difficult to analyse with any great accuracy the language levels, such as grammar, morphology, lexical/semantic choices, as these will be unintentional in a translation.

There could be a case to be made for more literary translations – Heaney's *Beowulf*, for example – but the focus would have to be on the translator's choices rather than the original writer's, which could be lost in translation.

There is also a danger in using literary texts in the NEA as the investigation may become a literary analysis rather than a linguistic one but, of course, this will be down to the skill of the learner in keeping that focus tight. The difficulty arises for learners ensuring that the focus is on the writer and what their text reveals about their individual thoughts regarding the links between language and identity. This is a very complex concept. How writers present characters is a literary/media analysis and not fitting for this investigation. The characters are fictional constructs and thus do not have identities.

Learners will similarly find a significant challenge in addressing the requirement for the investigation to be focused on language and identity when using child language acquisition as the focus of their NEA. It may be possible for a learner to explore identity in the language used by a care giver, but not of a child who is unlikely to be consciously using language to present an identity.

**Ultimately, all NEA investigations have to be rooted in the English language and identity.**

### How do I access my NEA moderator report?

Moderators' reports will be available on the [WJEC secure website](#). They will be available to view and download from results day until Christmas.

### What should I do if one of my learners needs to make access arrangements?

Some candidates may be entitled to certain arrangements to support them whilst taking examinations.

A wide range of arrangements are available - e.g. provision of reader, scribe, extra time etc.

All applications for 'access arrangements and reasonable adjustments' should be processed using the online system 'Access Arrangements Online' (AAO) used by all JCQ awarding bodies. AAO can be accessed from the [WJEC secure website](#).

### How can I access exemplar that demonstrate the marking standards for this qualification?

We keep exemplar responses on our [Online Exam Review](#) site. From here, you will be able to download responses annotated by the Principal Examiners and clean

versions of the responses to use in the classroom. Marked exemplar with annotations by the Principal Examiners are also available as PDFs on the [subject page](#) for teachers to familiarise themselves and their learners with the marking standards (Resources>Key Documents>Exemplars).

## What resources are available to help me deliver this course?

There are plenty of resources tailored to support you in delivering GCE English Language. Some can be found under Related Documents on the [qualification page](#), which is where you will also find the Teacher Handbook for GCE English Language that includes a wide range of classroom activities to support teaching. On our [WJEC Digital Resources](#) site you will find lots of free interactive resources developed to support our specifications.

We have also produced a detailed [Resource Guide](#), which is an essential dynamic documents for teachers as it curates the key support, guidance and resources offered by Eduqas.

## Are there any re-sit opportunities for AS or A level English Language qualifications?

There are no re-sit opportunities outside the summer examination series, but a qualification may be taken more than once. Marks for NEA may be carried forward for the life of the specification.

## Are there textbooks to support the delivery of the new specifications?

There are no WJEC-endorsed textbooks to support the delivery of this specification, however, many schools use the Sara Thorne book, 'Mastering Advanced English Language'. Similarly, David Crystal's books are very useful in providing a good linguistic foundation for learners. Many learners also find interesting the Radio 4 programme *Word of Mouth*, which is a weekly exploration of how we use language (available on BBC Sounds). The [WJEC Teachers' Guide to AS/A level English Language](#) is 179 pages of useful advice, classroom activities and resources to support the delivery of the course.

## Where can I find Sample Assessment Materials for the specification?

Sample Assessment Materials are available on the subject page of our WJEC website. Question papers will be available on the day the results are issued for that series in August on the WJEC secure website. Assessment materials will then be published on the WJEC public website in January each year.

## What should I understand by the terms 'concepts' and 'issues' where AO2 is assessed?

The focus for AO2 is concepts and issues, rather than theory. Concepts would be the body of knowledge itself – the 'big idea' – such as genre, register, purpose/audience, whereas issues could encompass the abstracts associated with those concepts such as status, power, class and attitudes. These are the drivers for AO2.

Some tasks/questions will lend themselves well to established theory whilst others will not, so the discussion of theory is not a requirement of this assessment objective. Where theory is relevant, it is important that it is embedded to inform the response rather than lead it.

## What is the difference between grammatical features (Q1c) and grammatical structures and punctuation (Q1d) tested in A level Unit 3?

Learners should know how to identify form and grammatical features, such as frequently occurring EME pronouns, verb forms and inflections, for Question 1c; while grammatical structures, for 1d, are linked to phrase/clause/sentence structures and word order.

Because of variations in the content/style of extracts across papers/years, there is some overlap between 1c) and 1d) for the EME feature, the possessive apostrophe. This can be described as a grammatical inflection OR a punctuation feature. However, we aim to ensure that candidates will not be able to acquire marks for making the same point in different parts of the question - if there is an example of a possessive apostrophe in 1c), there won't be an example to select in 1d) and vice versa.

## Are learners expected to answer on all of the texts that comprise the corpus of data in AS Unit 1?

There is no need for candidates to deal with all texts presented on AS C2 or A level C2, neither to deal equally with those that they do select.

It is worth reminding learners, however, that all texts in the corpus will have been carefully selected for their relevance to the question and that by focusing on just a handful of texts they may be limiting the range of their analyses.

Although AO4 (comparison) is not assessed here, learners may – for expediency – wish to group texts together to comment on their shared features/attitudes.

## If I have any more questions who do I contact?

The GCE English Language team and the wider WJEC team will be happy to answer any queries you might have.

For administration queries please contact:

**GCE Admin Section**

029 2026 5336

[gce@wjec.co.uk](mailto:gce@wjec.co.uk)

For access arrangements please contact:

**Special Requirements Section**

029 2026 5155

[Specialrequirements@wjec.co.uk](mailto:Specialrequirements@wjec.co.uk)

For all other subject queries please contact:

**Julia Harrison**

**Subject Officer**

**Matt Oatley**

**Subject Support Officer**

029 2240 4292

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