

GCSE English Language and Literature Qualification Outline (Single Award and Double Award)

Version 1.0



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Summary of Amendments

Version	Description	Page Number
1.0	Document Introduction	N/A

Introduction

This document provides a high-level overview of the WJEC GCSE English Language and Literature qualification.

It is based on Qualifications Wales's Approval Criteria (<https://qualifications.wales/media/pssjsxko/gcse-english-language-and-literature-approval-criteria.pdf>). Our qualification **must** meet these requirements.

The qualification outline will provide a guide for the development of the Specification and Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs). Aspects of the outline may need to be revisited if issues arise during the development process.

Qualification Overview

The GCSE English Language and Literature qualification will support the Curriculum for Wales by:

- supporting the statements of what matters¹, giving learners the opportunity to:
 - develop their understanding, empathy and their ability to respond and to mediate effectively
 - interact, explore ideas, express viewpoints, knowledge and understanding and build relationships
 - experience and respond to a variety of diverse literature that gives them insight into the culture, people and history of Wales as well as the wider world
 - spark their imagination and creativity.
- supporting the principles of progression² by giving learners the opportunity to:
 - build on their linguistic skills
 - grow holistically in their understanding and purposeful use of languages, literacy and communication
 - apply their understanding of linguistic concepts
 - adapt and manipulate language to communicate effectively to a range of different audiences
 - develop receptive, interpretive and expressive language skills
 - transfer existing knowledge and skills into new contexts including the social and cultural aspects of language.
- supporting the key considerations for language development and selecting literature³ by giving learners the opportunity to:
 - experience relevant, engaging, authentic and challenging stimuli to inspire purposeful speaking and writing
 - experience a wealth of literature.

¹ [Languages, Literacy and Communication: Statements of what matters - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)

² [Languages, Literacy and Communication: Principles of progression - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)

³ [Languages, Literacy and Communication: Designing your curriculum - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)

Qualification Structure

The qualification will comprise four units of study for Single Award and six units for Double Award. Three of the units (Units 1,2 and 3) will be common to both the Single and Double Awards but will be weighted differently.

Common units	
<p>Unit 1: Context and meaning Written Examination 30% of the Single Award, 15% of the Double Award Marked by WJEC</p>	
<p>Unit 2: Belonging Non-examination assessment 20% of the Single Award, 10% of the Double Award Marked by the centre, moderated by WJEC</p>	
<p>Unit 3: Influence and power Non-examination assessment 20% of the Single Award, 10% of the Double Award Marked by the centre, moderated by WJEC</p>	
Single Award	Double Award
<p>Unit 4a: Motivations Single Award Written Examination 30% of the qualification Marked by WJEC</p>	<p>Unit 4b: Motivations Double Award Written Examination 22.5 % of the qualification Marked by WJEC</p>
	<p>Unit 5: Continuity and change Non-examination assessment 20% of the qualification Marked by the centre, moderated by WJEC</p>
	<p>Unit 6: Connections Written Examination 22.5% of the qualification Marked by WJEC</p>

The following assessment objectives will be targeted in all units:

AO1	<p>Understanding and response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Understand and respond critically to a range of written texts, visual texts and speech, selecting and evaluating relevant points to illustrate and support interpretations and develop ideas. ii. Make comparisons and explain links within and between both written texts and spoken communication, synthesising and summarising information, ideas and themes as appropriate. iii. Explain how language, structure and form contribute to the presentation of information, ideas and themes in written texts and speech and how these have an impact on the reader/viewer/listener. iv. Understand written texts, visual texts and speech in their social, cultural and historical contexts and how these may inform different viewpoints and perspectives.
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AO2	<p>Communication and expression</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, using forms, vocabulary and techniques to engage the reader/viewer/listener. ii. Adapt communication by selecting register, vocabulary and techniques appropriate to different contexts and audiences. iii. Organise communication using a variety of linguistic and structural features to support cohesion and overall coherence. iv. Use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with appropriate grammar and, in written communication, accurate punctuation and spelling.
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This will be a unitised qualification.

There is no hierarchy in the order in which the units are presented. The order does not imply the teaching order of the units.

It will be possible to sit the common units within the Single Award and the Double Award from the 2026 summer series onwards.

Units which are discrete to Single/Double Award will be available from 2027.

Unit Information

References to Assessment Objectives (AOs) within each Unit are given as an indication of focus. Decisions around exact weightings and which strands of an AO are targeted will be made during the detailed development.

Unit 1 – Context and Meaning (*single and double award*)

The purpose of this unit is to:

- understand and respond critically to a range of poetry
- write with clarity, adapting for purpose and effect, and using appropriate linguistic features and techniques.

This unit will be based on **Context and meaning**, with a focus on poetry, including poetic styles, themes, devices, perspectives.

The unit will be assessed via a written examination available from the 2026 summer series onwards. It will include a selection of tasks that will target AO1 and AO2 and will include a response to two linked poems, one from an anthology and one unseen through a mix of short item responses and more extended analysis, plus a creative literary or non-literary writing task.

This unit will be worth 30% of the single award and 15% of the double award. The duration of the examination is likely to be 1.5 hours, however this will be kept under review during the development process. There will be no optionality in this unit.

Unit 2 – Belonging (*single and double award*)

The purpose of this unit is to:

- **develop oracy skills**
- **show understanding of and respond to narrative fictional prose in writing**
- **conduct research towards an individual oral presentation linked to the studied prose.**

This unit will be based on **Belonging**, with a focus on investigating the themes, issues and representations around *cynefin*, community and citizenship in the selected narrative fictional prose text both orally and in writing.

The unit will take the form of non-examination assessment available from the 2026 summer series onwards. It will be equally weighted across AO1 and AO2, with a written task on the selected text and an individual oracy task, based on research around a theme/issue/representation from the studied prose text.

We propose that the choice of narrative fictional prose text should be from a comprehensive longlist of suggested texts that fit the requirements of the Approval Criteria, section 13. This will allow centres an element of choice and flexibility to select a text that is appropriate to their context, in line with section 14 of the Approval Criteria, whilst also ensuring that the selected texts meet the defined criteria for the writing to be studied.

The unit will be worth 20% of the single award and 10% of the double award. We will confirm before the end of the Spring term 2024 whether non-examination assessment must be submitted digitally.

Unit 3 – Influence and power (*single and double award*)

The purpose of this unit is to:

- **compile a portfolio of evidence in different forms, including an oracy task and creative writing**
- **show evidence of planning and organising own work.**

This unit will be based on **Influence and power**, with a focus on the writer's craft, strategies for influence and persuasion, power dynamics, bias and interpretation and manipulation.

The unit will be assessed via non-examination assessment available from the 2026 summer series onwards. It will require students to compile a portfolio of three tasks based on non-fiction texts from an anthology. This will include an oral group discussion and a creative non-fiction writing task. Evidence of planning and redrafting will be assessed as part of this unit in the form of a commentary on own writing.

The unit will focus on AO1 and AO2. It will be worth 20% of the single award and 10% of the double award. We will confirm before the end of the Spring term 2024 whether non-examination assessment must be submitted digitally.

Unit 4a – Motivations (*single* award only)

The purpose of this unit is to:

- **consider the (re)presentation of characters, relationships and communities through drama**
- **understand written texts in their social, cultural and historical contexts and how these may inform different viewpoints and perspectives.**

This unit will be based on **Motivations**, with a focus on how language is used for context, perspective and representation, writer's craft and pragmatics.

The unit will be assessed via a written examination available from the 2027 summer series onwards. It will include a mix of tasks that will target AO1 and AO2 and may include textual analysis and a piece of literary writing. The focus of the unit will be a drama text that centres will select from a list of texts prescribed by WJEC.

The unit will be worth 30% of the overall award. The duration of the exam is likely to be 1.5 hours, however this will be kept under review during the development process.

Unit 4b – Motivations (*double* award only)

The purpose of this unit is to:

- **consider the (re)presentation of characters, relationships and communities**
- **understand written texts in their social, cultural and historical contexts and how these may inform different viewpoints and perspectives.**

This unit will be based on **Motivations**, with a focus on how language is used for context, perspective and representation, writer's craft and pragmatics. There will be optionality in this unit, with centres given the flexibility to select a text that is either drama or narrative fictional prose for this unit. Centres will select the text for study for this unit from a list of texts prescribed by WJEC.

The unit will be assessed via a written examination available from the 2027 summer series onwards. It will include a mix of tasks that will target AO1 and AO2 and may include textual analysis and a piece of literary writing.

The unit will be worth 22.5% of the overall award. The duration of the exam is likely to be 1.5 hours, however this will be kept under review during the development process.

Unit 5 – Continuity and change (*double* award only)

The purpose of this unit is to:

- **consider language use through time**
- **consider themes, characters and plot through the lens of their relevance to contemporary life.**

This unit will be based on **Continuity and change**, with a focus on language use and change over time, character and plot development. The unit will require the study of one Shakespeare play and a number of poems from the period 1600-1900.

The unit will be assessed by non-examination assessment available from the 2027 summer series onwards. It will assess equally AO1 and AO2, via speaking and listening, and reading and writing. This will include a paired oral response to poetry, and a piece of literary writing based on a Shakespeare play. With regard to the selection of a Shakespeare play for study in this unit, centres will be afforded a free choice from any of his plays.

The unit will be worth 20% of the overall award. We will confirm before the end of the Spring term 2024 whether non-examination assessment must be submitted digitally.

Unit 6 – Connections (double award only)

The purpose of this unit is to:

- **make connections between pieces of writing**
- **make connections relating to time, place, space, setting, language and relationships.**

This unit will be based on **Connections**, with a focus on the skills of synthesis and summary, comparison and evaluation of sources, and making connections such as social, relational, temporal, as well as between genre, meaning and purpose of texts.

The unit will be assessed via an examination available within the 2027 summer series, with a selection of tasks that will target AO1 and AO2 and may include comprehension and analysis tasks based on one text from an anthology and one unseen text, plus a non-literary writing task.

This unit will be worth 22.5% of the overall award. The duration of the exam is likely to be 1.5 hours, however this will be kept under review during the development process. There will be no optionality in this unit.