

Benchmarking the Advanced Programme English

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Executive Summary

This report, commissioned by the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) of South Africa, provides a benchmarking analysis of the IEB Advanced Programme English (AP: English). The main objective of this study is to determine the comparability of this recently introduced programme in the context of a recognised standard of secondary school education in order to facilitate greater understanding and recognition of the programme. Piloted in 2011 and fully launched in 2012, the AP: English is designed as an extension programme to the National Senior Certificate (NSC) and aims to provide NSC students with the opportunity to study English in greater depth.

This study is intended to serve as a complementary analysis to a benchmarking study undertaken by UK NARIC in 2010, which focussed on the then recently introduced NSC as offered by the IEB. The 2010 study found the NSC comparable to General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level standard, and indicated that the NSC's other extension programme, the Advanced Programme: Mathematics, was 'broadly in line with the requirements of the GCE [Advanced] A level in Mathematics, both in terms of breadth of content and...the level of mathematical competence required.'¹ This background provided evidence that the most logical reference points for the AP: English would also be the GCE AS and A levels, whose overall standards are maintained and regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examination Regulation (Ofqual).

In order to provide a fair and comprehensive analysis of the AP: English, the study comprised three core stages, key to UK NARIC's well-established benchmarking methodology, based on the principles of credential evaluation. Firstly, and to ensure a thorough understanding of the qualifications, an initial qualitative review of the AP: English and the GCE A level was conducted, enabling consideration of each qualification's core components. The use of Edexcel qualifications in English Literature and English Language and Literature as exemplar programmes, demonstrating the practical implementation of Ofqual GCE A level standards, helped ensure continuity with the previous study. Subsequently a comparative analysis was undertaken to identify and analyse key similarities and differences between the qualifications' individual core components, including:

- Overall aims and design
- Entry requirements and progression
- Duration
- Programme content and structure
- Modes of learning
- Learning outcomes
- Associated outcomes including progression routes
- Assessment methods and rigour
- Quality assurance mechanisms.

¹ UK NARIC (2010) *Benchmarking Analysis: The National Senior Certificate (Republic of South Africa)* p106.

Finally, and in order to determine the overall comparability of the AP: English in the context of the UK education system, the results of the comparative analysis were aggregated and considered as a whole.

This report has found that the AP: English offered by the IEB in South Africa can be considered broadly comparable to overall GCE A level standard. This is particularly evident in the assessment standards that display clear links with the assessment objectives of the exemplar GCE A level programmes and ensure a strong foundation for tertiary study in related subjects.

In-depth examination of programme content revealed similarly broad coverage of literature genre and era, both qualifications presenting students with an equally challenging and thought-provoking range of authors to study. While variances exist in specific content, reflective of the varying national cultures and contexts, the AP: English nevertheless shares a distinctive element of the A2 programme in English Literature: a focus upon literary reflections that encourages students to reflect independently and critically across authors and genres.

Furthermore both qualifications place emphasis on developing students' ability to construct a solid, persuasive and well-structured argument that draws on both their reading history and a wider understanding of the potential impact of historic, socio-political and economic contexts on the way in which texts are produced and interpreted. As such the study has found almost full convergence in the coverage of skills, indicating the comparability of overall educational level.

In terms of assessment procedures, the GCE A level combines coursework and examinations split over the two year period, whereas the assessment of the AP: English is based solely upon the three hour examination. Despite this difference, the AP end-point examination offers a rigorous evaluation of students' skills, comparable to that observed from the sample of A level papers examined as part of this study.

A close examination of the AP: English and GCE A level exemplar assessment material revealed notable similarities both in the style and structure of the questions posed, as well as the range of knowledge and skills they demand of students. GCE A level papers on the whole perhaps offer students greater direction towards the type of answer required, potentially facilitating a higher level of achievement overall among candidates.

A particular recommendation to emerge from the analysis of assessment and grading procedures related to the terminology used within the AP: English marking guidelines. Whilst there is some clear correlation between the highest level grading bands for both qualifications, significant differences were observed between the marking criteria at lower achievement levels. The lowest grade for the GCE A level represents basic 'can do' statements that become increasingly more complex for higher grading bands. This enables clear identification of the baseline competency requirements to achieve a passing grade at A level. By contrast, descriptors for the lower achievement bands of the AP: English reflect what students at that level are not able to do.

It is, nonetheless, evident from the comparative analysis of the assessment standards, exemplar materials and marked scripts that students from both GCE A level and AP programmes are expected to study and discuss text-related themes in a similar degree of depth and complexity. This suggests that although they may place varying degrees of emphasis on different skills, the GCE and AP assessment methods and marking criteria employ a comparable degree of rigour and precision in their evaluation of student performance.

Analysis of the AP: English quality assurance procedures demonstrated that both programmes undergo a similarly rigorous set of internal and external quality assurance mechanisms, ensuring consistent standards in their development, delivery and assessment.

In light of a thorough examination of the criteria used for benchmarking qualifications, UK NARIC can confirm that the IEB AP: English is considered comparable to the overall GCE A level standard.

Independent Examinations Board Programme	Comparability
Advanced Programme English	Is considered comparable to the overall GCE A level standard

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1. Context and Scope

In 2010, a benchmarking study of the South African International Examinations Board's (IEB) National Senior Certificate (NSC) qualification was undertaken. The aim of this study was to provide stakeholders and the wider public with an objective, impartial and independent study of the relatively new NSC, thereby facilitating its introduction and strengthening its implementation across South Africa. The analysis found that the NSC taken in Grade 12 could be considered of a broadly comparable standard to the General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary (GCE AS) level qualifications regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulations (Ofqual) and taken in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Further to this, the analysis also highlighted the potential convergence of standards between the IEB's Advanced Programme Mathematics (AP: Mathematics) (introduced in South Africa in 2008) and Ofqual's General Certificate of Education Advanced (GCE A) level.

Two years on, the IEB has launched another Advanced Programme, this time in English. The Advanced Programme English (AP: English) was piloted in 2011 with national roll-out in 2012, and is designed as an extension course to complement learning acquired as part of the NSC English. Having already reviewed the NSC English programmes as part of the 2010 study, the purpose of this report is to perform a comprehensive analysis of the AP: English programme in isolation to the NSC, although an appreciation will be given to certain features within the AP: English programme covered by the NSC in appropriate sections.

The aim of fully understanding and analysing this programme is to provide some context around its immediate standing in relation to a recognised standard in secondary education. Central to this analysis, therefore, is the comparison of the AP: English to the established and widely recognised benchmark of the GCE A level.

The GCE A level, maintained and regulated by Ofqual in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, receives world-wide recognition in terms of the standard of education it implies. These standards are implemented by the three major examining boards, Edexcel, The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) and Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR), in the design and assessment of their qualifications. In line with the 2010 benchmarking study conducted on IEB qualifications, reference will be made to Edexcel GCE A level programmes in relevant subjects to provide evidence of how Ofqual standards have been put into practice. Edexcel GCE A level programmes will therefore provide the point of comparison for the AP: English in order to determine its comparability with the overall GCE A level.

The nature of analysis conducted in this study is predominantly qualitative, using primary and secondary sources as a basis for comparing and contrasting the two educational qualifications. Section 2 provides a thorough account of the applied methodology.

Importantly, Sections 3 and 4 incorporate a study of the background of the qualifications in order to affirm, in the context of their country of origin, their purpose and relative application within the education system. From this foundation, analysis of the content and structure of the AP: English and the GCE A level is central to understanding the qualifications, and

thereby achieving the overall objectives of the project. Section 5 therefore identifies distinct components of the qualifications and compares them, facilitating such understanding and ensuring that the breadth of analysis covers all aspects of the qualifications. Having considered and analysed these aspects as individual components, the final stage of analysis considers the accumulation of these findings and their implications for the overall standard of the AP: English against the benchmark standard of the GCE A level. This will provide the necessary context around the standing of the AP: English in relation to an internationally recognised standard in secondary school education. Section 6 therefore concludes the report with a summary of the study and the presentation of broad, qualitative judgements regarding the standard of the AP: English programme.

2. Methodology

This section outlines the UK NARIC methodology employed within this study to benchmark the AP: English. This methodology has been adapted from UK NARIC's secure process for benchmarking academic, vocational and professional qualifications based on the principles of credential evaluation. The result is a robust and comprehensive process which analyses the core components of the AP: English against an identified point of reference, in this case the GCE A level, in order to determine the overall comparability of the AP: English programme.

2.1 Sources of information

For the purposes of this study, UK NARIC collated information on the qualification design, content, structure, assessment methods, marking guidelines, learning outcomes and quality assurance for both the AP: English and the GCE A level in order to carry out a thorough review and comparative analysis.

A list of the key sources used to complete this study is found in the bibliography.

2.2. Methodological process

The project involved four key stages:

- i) Determining a suitable point of reference for the AP: English;
- ii) Initial review of the AP: English and the GCE A level: Isolation of the qualifications' core components;
- iii) Comparative analysis of the AP: English qualification design, assessment and quality assurance with reference to the GCE A level; and
- iv) Evaluation and benchmarking of the AP: English.

2.2.1 Determining a suitable point of reference for the AP: English

The 2010 benchmarking study showed the NSC to be comparable to GCE AS level standard in the context of the UK education system, and suggested that there may be elements of convergence between the AP: Mathematics and the GCE A level. Similarly to the Mathematics programme, the AP: English is offered to students who wish to expand on the knowledge gained through studying towards the NSC. It therefore followed that the GCE A level was the most appropriate qualification against which the AP: English should be examined.

In order to evaluate the level of the AP: English, the award was analysed against national standards established for GCE A level programmes. These standards are determined by Ofqual and are used by awarding bodies such as Edexcel as part of the qualification design process. UK NARIC examined the specific requirements of the Edexcel GCE A level programmes in English Literature and in English Language and Literature, firstly because they demonstrate how the Ofqual A level specifications are put into practice and secondly, to provide consistency and connectivity with the previous benchmarking study of the NSC. UK

NARIC aimed to identify areas of similarity between the levels of qualifications by comparing the AP: English against national GCE A level standards used in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Suitable A level programmes in English were selected following preliminary research into the content of the AP: English, in order to assist in identifying areas of convergence and divergence between subject-specific learning and assessment outcomes to support the wider analysis.

2.2.2 Initial review and isolation of the qualifications' core components

Before embarking on the comparative analysis, research was conducted on the qualifications to contextualise them in their respective education systems. It was important to understand why a particular programme had been created before looking at its relative merits and characteristics.

2.2.2.1 Identification of core qualification design components

In order to carry out the benchmarking progress, key information integral to the design of the qualifications was first determined. The following core components were considered:

- Entry requirements;
- Duration;
- Programme content and structure;
- Modes of learning;
- Learning outcomes;
- Associated outcomes (progression routes);
- Assessment methods and rigour; and
- Quality assurance.

The aims of the programmes were also considered in conjunction with the aforementioned core components, providing valuable contextual information as well as an indication of their nature and level.

Entry requirements and progression

It was useful to determine entrance requirements and progression as they can provide the basis for a comparison through illustrating the basic academic level required for students undertaking the course. They also provide an indication of the standard of study students are able to complete successfully.

Duration

The duration of the qualifications was considered. Although duration is not the most important factor in determining the comparable level of a qualification, it is taken into account as it gives an indication towards the depth and breadth of study that can be completed within a specified timeframe.

Programme content and structure

An examination of the programme content and structure involved a detailed examination of the breadth and requirements of the programme leading to the AP: English in comparison to similarly focused GCE A level programmes. Whilst UK NARIC recognises that the content of programmes may differ, this study focused on the breadth and depth of the programmes, as indicated by their key learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes

A comparison of the key learning outcomes of the programmes was carried out. The term “learning outcome” is used to identify the key knowledge, skills and competencies that candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate upon successful completion of the qualification. As such analysis takes a holistic approach of the prescribed learning outcomes and what the assessment requires students to demonstrate in order to successfully complete the qualification.

Comparisons were drawn firstly between the learning outcomes of the AP: English and the outcomes specified by the Ofqual GCE AS level and A level descriptors and then between those of the AP: English and Edexcel programmes in relevant subjects. Where differences existed between the learning outcomes prescribed by the AP: English and the GCE A level, these were highlighted in the comparative analysis. These gaps, together with identified lines of similarity between the outcomes were used to establish the overall comparability of the award to the GCE A level.

Assessment methods and rigour

An examination of the qualification assessment frameworks enabled comparisons to be drawn between the two systems. This element considered the relevance and appropriateness of the assessment methods used to evaluate the learning objectives and outcomes prescribed in the course syllabi. It was important to consider whether the AP: English assessment methods could be considered sufficiently rigorous and appropriate for the purpose and the level of the overall qualification. The extent to which the assessment procedures evaluate the key knowledge and competencies outlined in the learning outcomes was examined, as well as whether students are required to demonstrate these competencies as part of the assessment. This involved a close examination of the marking guidelines and grading procedures.

Attention was also given to the grading systems employed for both the AP: English and the GCE A level, taking into account the grade procedures and descriptors used in assessing both qualifications. Grade distribution data from the 2011 AP: English pilot launch was used, as well as the grade distribution for some of the GCE A levels in English. In analysing such evidence, the potential challenges in attempting to convert grades from one system to another were taken into consideration.

Quality assurance mechanisms

The fourth stage in the benchmarking process constituted a review of quality assurance mechanisms, considering the procedures established by the IEB and determining whether these are sufficiently robust in comparison to national accreditation procedures established in the UK. As part of this process, it was important to bear in mind that the AP: English is currently in its first year of being taught and is yet to be assessed on a national scale. This may have impacted on the detail that could be provided on quality assurance.

The following aspects were considered:

- Overarching responsibility for school education;
- Monitoring provision;
- Responsibility for standards setting and curriculum development; and
- Marking and moderation procedures.

As the awarding bodies for both the AP: English and the GCE A level qualifications are national boards and are already well recognised by the relevant government or ministerial bodies, it was not deemed necessary to undertake an in-depth analysis into the level of recognition and status of the qualification providers although contextual information has been provided.

2.3 Benchmarking the AP: English

The final stage in the process was to benchmark the AP: English using the accumulated knowledge and key findings from the comparative analysis. The comparisons were conducted using the methodology as outlined in this section and determined whether the AP: English could be considered comparable to the overall GCE A level standard.

When assessing and comparing qualifications, it is important to highlight that UK NARIC has used the term 'comparable' rather than 'equivalent'. The latter term may imply that two qualifications are identical in terms of level, structure and content whereas the term 'comparable', used for the purposes of this study, acknowledges that two qualifications may be of the same academic standing, without necessarily having the same aims, curriculum or structure.

3. Overview of the Advanced Programme English

This section provides an overview of the AP: English, including information about the awarding body, status of the programme, aims, content, structure, learning outcomes and assessment. A thorough understanding of the nature of the AP: English is essential to the benchmarking process as it ensures that all of the information required for the benchmarking criteria can be examined in order to determine comparability.

3.1 The Independent Examinations Board

The IEB is an assessment body in South Africa responsible for the design, delivery and promotion of assessment products. It was established in 1989, taking over the examination function previously undertaken by the Joint Matriculation Board (JMB). Until 1996, the IEB was the only independent, non-regional examining body in South Africa. It is a non-profit, non-governmental and self-funding organisation, which enables it to work as an independent entity whilst adhering to national quality assurance practices. Members of staff at the IEB come from a variety of academic and professional backgrounds. The IEB also employs a number of full time staff and those on a consultancy basis.

3.1.1 Qualifications offered by the International Examinations Board

The IEB assesses the following school-based qualifications:

- The NSC (Grade 12);
- Grade 9: General Education and Training Certificate (GETC);
- Grade 6 and 9: Core Skills Tests;
- ACER International Benchmarking Tests;
- AP: Mathematics (Grade 12); and
- AP: English (Grade 12).

The NSC is the school-leaving examination in South Africa, which is taken at the end of Grade 12. Students sit the NSC after three years of study following the national curriculum. It is accepted by higher education institutions for admission.

The IEB sets examination papers that are moderated by Umalusi, who are also responsible for the examinations, marking and results obtained in the NSC examinations. The additional subjects assessed by the IEB are:

- All non-official languages (Arabic, French, German, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Latin, Modern Greek, Portuguese, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu);
- Equine Studies;
- Nautical Science;
- Maritime Studies; and
- Sports and Exercise Science².

² IEB, (n.d.) *About School Assessment*. Available at <http://www.ieb.co.za/School/about.php> [accessed September 2012].

The AP: Mathematics and the AP: English courses have been developed by the IEB. They are currently not offered by any other assessment body in South Africa.

The programmes are intended to encourage students to develop their own opinions around a subject, whilst building on existing subject knowledge and stretching their capacity in order to prepare them for undergraduate study, reflecting the style of learning and application of knowledge favoured by the IEB.

3.2 Overview of the IEB Advanced Programme English

The IEB AP: English, piloted in 15 schools in 2011 and fully implemented in 2012, is intended to encourage independent and creative thinking on the part of the student³. The AP: English was introduced following the successful development and roll-out of the AP: Mathematics in 2008.

Undertaking an AP: English requires students with a specific talent or interest in the subject to extend and enrich their application of knowledge beyond the demands of an NSC qualification. It increases the breadth of learning through opportunities to engage more broadly across the range of prescribed texts, whilst also increasing the depth of learning through closer examination of themes and features. Specifically, the AP: English enables learners to:

- Establish connections between different genres, texts, trends and contexts;
- Structure arguments and insights in a coherent manner using accurate textual references;
- Use higher-order cognitive skills to design critical judgements;
- Draw on the recommended texts as well as other texts they have encountered;
- Draw broadly on their experience of a variety of texts;
- Apply their knowledge, compare and contrast, analyse and critique both seen and unseen texts;
- Reflect philosophically on the texts they have studied; and
- Present sophisticated, well-structured and clearly substantiated responses which synthesise their personal views in relation to the variety of texts which they have studied⁴.

There is a depth and breadth of skills required when completing an AP: English, including the ability to structure sophisticated arguments and to study independently. This reflects one of the aims of the programme, which is to prepare students to study English at undergraduate level.

³ IEB (n.d.), *Advanced Programme Courses*. Available at <http://www.ieb.co.za/School/advancedprogrammecourses.php> [accessed September 2012].

⁴ IEB (2011) *Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General): Advanced Programme English: A subject in addition to the NSC requirements*.

3.2.1 Entry requirements

The AP: English is designed as an extension and challenge for learners who demonstrate ability in, or enthusiasm for, English. There are no identifiable specifications for entry to the AP: English in terms of previous attainment in the GETC awarded to successful candidates on completion of Grade 9, other than students are usually of above-average ability in the subject area, and show a passion and interest for it.

3.2.2 Programme duration, content, structure and modes of learning

The programme of study is three years in duration and taken as an extension to students' Grade 10-12 studies for the NSC English Home Language. Learners are given discussion questions or a source pack to accompany their reading and enable them to prepare for tutorials. Teaching time is limited to one or two tutorials of between two and three hours per week, enabling students to discuss with their peers and tutors the texts they have encountered both as part of the course and in their own time.

Within the programme, students need to have studied at least two schools of poetry from the following schools:

- The Metaphysicals;
- The Romantics;
- The Victorians;
- Modernists;
- Early South African Poetry;
- South African Protest Poetry;
- 21st Century South African Poetry.

In addition, students are required to read broadly across two of the three following options: prose, drama and/or film. The AP: English Curriculum Statement explains that studying only two texts or films is unlikely to be sufficient preparation for the rigour of the questions that will be asked in the final assessment.

The reading list for the AP: English can be found in Appendix 1.

3.2.3 Assessment methods

Learners are assessed by teachers through both formative and summative methods, and continued participation in the programme at Grades 10 and 11 is based on students passing these forms of internal assessment and reporting. However, school-based assessment does not contribute to the students' final grade in the AP: English. Instead, the final AP: English assessment is in the form of a three-hour examination⁵:

⁵ List of subjects sourced from: IEB (2011) *Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General): Advanced Programme English: A subject in addition to the NSC requirements*.

The structure of the examination consists of three questions each allocated an equal number of marks. Responses are not subject to a word limit, and candidates must ensure they can answer the three questions within the time limit whilst ensuring that their responses are characterised by a strong own voice. The examination structure is demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1: AP: English examination structure

Question number	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3
Marks available	100	100	100
Theme applicable) (if applicable)	Power and Powerlessness	N/A	N/A
Section	Two of the following: prose, drama or film	Poetry	Quotation / visual stimulus provided in the examination paper
Question type	Respond to stimuli which relates to the chosen theme – Power and Powerlessness – as well as to a range of texts or films they have studied (where a candidate's response includes reference to film, they will be expected to comment on directorial concerns)	A comparative response to two of the prescribed schools of poetry. Candidates must respond to a quotation or a visual which they must use as a departure point to discuss the schools of poetry which they have studied.	A question which will require candidates to reflect philosophically on their reading history in response to a quotation or visual stimulus. Candidates can draw on texts beyond the AP programme to respond to this question.

3.2.3.1 Grading system

The grading system of the AP: English follows the same scale of achievement as the NSC, whereby Grade 7 denotes the highest level of achievement (80-100%), and Grade 1 the lowest (0-29%). The competence descriptors for each level of study are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Grading system and competence descriptors for the IEB AP: English⁶

Grade	Scale	Competence Descriptors
7	80% – 100% Outstanding	By the end of Grade 12 the learner with outstanding achievement can: confidently and skilfully interpret, analyse, synthesise and evaluate and make meaningful connections across an array of texts; demonstrate sophisticated insight and convincingly assert and justify own opinions with accurate and thorough substantiation; structure ideas and arguments in a sustained, persuasive and creative way, adopting a clear personal style with a powerful, authentic voice; revise and edit writing independently to ensure a well-crafted text; understand and use the structures and conventions of language confidently, accurately and with ease to create a compelling argument.
6	70% – 79% Meritorious	By the end of Grade 12 the learner with meritorious achievement can: confidently and effectively interpret, analyse, synthesise and evaluate and make relevant connections across texts; demonstrate considerable insight, and clearly assert and justify own opinions with mostly accurate and relevant substantiation; structure ideas and arguments in a sustained, clear way, showing evidence of a personal style as well as a strong personal voice; revise and edit writing independently to ensure a fluent, well-written response. Understand and use the structures and conventions of language accurately and confidently to produce a clear well-sustained argument.
5	60% – 69% Satisfactory	By the end of Grade 12 the learner with satisfactory achievement can: with reasonable confidence interpret and analyse individual texts ; but demonstrates some uncertainty when evaluating and integrating ideas across a range of texts, demonstrate insight when asserting and justifying own opinions with generally appropriate and sufficient substantiation; structure ideas and arguments in a reasonably clear, detailed and focused way and display strong evidence of a personal style and individual voice; revise and edit writing to avoid stylistic errors; understand and use the structures and conventions of language with reasonable accuracy to produce a solid argument.
4	50% – 59% Adequate	By the end of Grade 12 the learner with adequate achievement can: interpret and analyse individual texts sufficiently but experiences discernible difficulty when evaluating and integrating ideas across a range of texts; show sufficient insight and give and motivate own opinions with some relevant and considered substantiation; sufficiently develop ideas and arguments, although the focus is not always sustained; show sufficient evidence of a personal style which contains some evidence of an individual voice; revise and edit writing although there are lapses which detract from the overall fluency of the response; sufficiently understand the structures and conventions of language and sometimes use them accurately to construct a valid argument.
3	40% – 49% Moderate	By the end of Grade 12 the learner with moderate achievement can: seldom interpret more than a single text and finds it considerably challenging to analyse, evaluate and integrate ideas across a range of texts; show some insight and express some own opinions but gives limited or inaccurate substantiation; develop ideas and arguments with some relevant detail but with an inconsistent focus and with hardly any evidence of a personal style or voice; revise and edit writing although there are still numerous errors; understand some structures and conventions of language but struggles to employ them correctly in the creation of a sensible argument.

⁶ IEB (2011) *Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General): Advanced Programme English: A subject in addition to the NSC requirements*, p.18.

2	30% – 39% Partial	By the end of Grade 12 the learner with partial achievement can: not interpret a text/s with sufficient understanding and is unable to analyse, evaluate or integrate ideas across a range of texts except in the most superficial and simplistic manner; seldom show insight or express own opinions or motivate; present ideas and arguments but these are random, superficial or repetitive and with no personal style or voice; revise and edit own writing but often without understanding or correcting errors; understand only basic structures and conventions of language but seldom uses them correctly; show virtually no control over grammar and vocabulary which mars any attempt to create a cohesive argument.
1	0% – 29%	By the end of Grade 12 the learner with inadequate achievement can: not interpret a text/s with understanding and is unable to analyse, evaluate or integrate ideas across a range of texts; show insight or express own opinions or motivate; present ideas and arguments but these are unfocused and repetitive and with no personal style or voice; revise and edit own writing with extremely limited ability; understand only basic structures and conventions of language but cannot employ them correctly; show virtually no control over grammar and vocabulary which presents comprehension of the very limited argument.

3.2.4 Learning outcomes

There are three central learning outcomes that are intended to be gained by students taking an AP: English:

1. Establishing connections between different genres, texts, trends and contexts

Table 3: Learning outcome 1: Establishing connections between different genres, texts, trends and contexts

Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
We know this when a learner is able to:	We know this when a learner is able to:	We know this when a learner is able to:
Extrapolate the most relevant and valuable information in the creation of a new argument.	Extrapolate the most relevant and valuable information in the creation of a new argument.	Extrapolate the most relevant and valuable information in the creation of a new argument.
Demonstrate knowledge of the socio-political, economic and literary-historical conditions that inform the production of texts.	Demonstrate knowledge of the socio-political, economic and literary-historical conditions that inform the production of texts.	Demonstrate knowledge of the socio-political, economic and literary-historical conditions that inform the production of texts.
Display a specific understanding of genre.	Display a specific understanding of genre.	Display a specific understanding of genre.

2. Structuring arguments and insights in a coherent manner using accurate textual references

Table 4: Learning outcome 2: Structuring arguments and insights in a coherent manner using accurate textual references

Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
We know this when a learner is able to:	We know this when a learner is able to:	We know this when a learner is able to:
Write a logically structured essay, in which all aspects of the topic are analysed and explored in appropriate detail.	Write a logically structured essay, in which all aspects of the topic are analysed and explored in appropriate detail.	Write a logically structured essay, in which all aspects of the topic are analysed and explored in appropriate detail.
Select and use effectively detailed, relevant textual evidence, and acknowledge that evidence accurately.	Select and use effectively detailed, relevant textual evidence, and acknowledge that evidence accurately.	Select and use effectively detailed, relevant textual evidence, and acknowledge that evidence accurately.
Engage with the topic in a manner that displays both breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding.	Engage with the topic in a manner that displays both breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding.	Engage with the topic in a manner that displays both breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding.

3. Using cognitive skills to design critical judgements

Table 5: Learning outcome 3: Using cognitive skills to design critical judgements

Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
We know this when a learner is able to:	We know this when a learner is able to:	We know this when a learner is able to:
Construct and defend a focused, sustained and engaging argument.	Construct and defend a focused, sustained and engaging argument.	Construct and defend a focused, sustained and engaging argument.
Integrate an awareness of a multiplicity of perspectives and texts in a coherent way.	Integrate an awareness of a multiplicity of perspectives and texts in a coherent way.	Integrate an awareness of a multiplicity of perspectives and texts in a coherent way.
Demonstrate the capacity to produce relevant, compelling reasoning to support a convincing argument.	Demonstrate the capacity to produce relevant, compelling reasoning to support a convincing argument.	Demonstrate the capacity to produce relevant, compelling reasoning to support a convincing argument.
Convey clarity of thought.	Convey clarity of thought.	Convey clarity of thought.
Construct an argument that is inspired by an independent voice and which reflects insight, understanding, maturity and originality of thought.	Construct an argument that is inspired by an independent voice and which reflects insight, understanding, maturity and originality of thought.	Construct an argument that is inspired by an independent voice and which reflects insight, understanding, maturity and originality of thought.

3.2.5 Associated outcomes (progression routes)

The central intention of the IEB's APs in both English and Mathematics is to prepare students for tertiary education. The IEB's annual report states that 'learners proceeding to institutions of higher education having taken AP: English will certainly be proficient to progress effectively in whatever English related discipline they decide to follow'⁷ and the associated AP: English learning outcomes reflect this.

3.2.6 Quality assurance

The *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act (Act No. 58 of 2001)* recognised the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, known as Umalusi, as the body responsible for the standards in general and further education and training, ensuring the quality assurance of assessments in South Africa. As such Umalusi is involved in the quality assurance and assessment of the NSC in South Africa. Within Umalusi, the Assessment Standards Committee oversees the processes of quality assurance, involving contracting external moderators for each subject within a qualification⁸.

Each of the nine provincial education departments in South Africa is accredited by the Umalusi Council as assessment bodies. IEB is the largest private assessment body in South Africa accredited by Umalusi offering external assessments at Grade 9 and 12. As a result of this accreditation, the IEB is able to assess national qualifications for school-based and adult education, including the NSC. The IEB is also accredited by the ETDP-SETA, which enables the IEB to train those involved with the design and moderation of assessments.

The AP: Mathematics has been a certified qualification of the IEB since 2008 and is also accredited by the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, known as Umalusi (see section 5.9). A pilot for the AP: English was conducted in 2011 with the view of implementation to all schools (independent and state) in 2012. The curriculum and assessment quality for the AP: English is quality assured by Umalusi in the same way as the AP: Mathematics with successful learners receiving a certificate issued by the IEB.

⁷ IEB (2011), *Annual Report 2011*, p. 9 <available at: <http://www.ieb.co.za/report/>> [accessed September 2012].

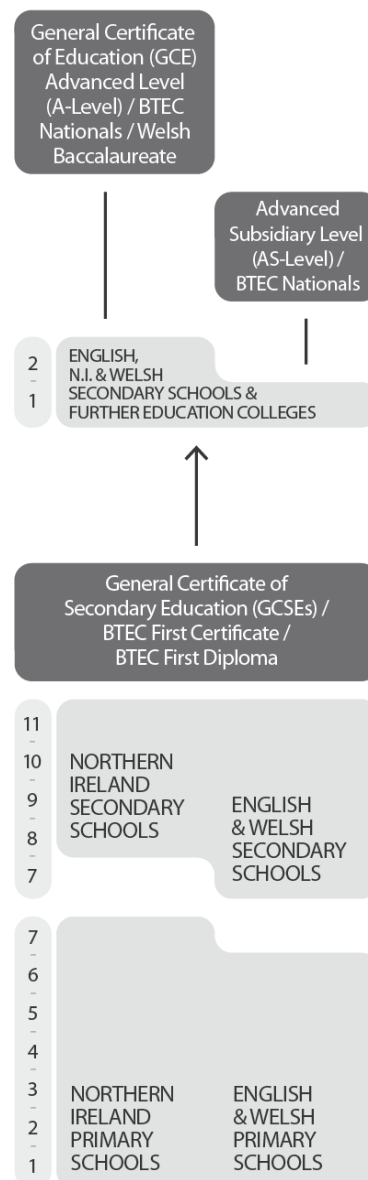
⁸ Umalusi (2012), *Frequently Asked Questions: Quality Assurance of Assessment* [pdf].

4. Overview of the GCE A Levels

This section examines the key characteristics of the GCE A levels as studied in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Regulated by Ofqual⁹, GCE A levels are open to anyone at any age who wishes to attain the qualification, but they are usually awarded to 16-18 year old students in schools or further education colleges. The flow diagram below demonstrates the progression route from primary school through to the GCE A level in England, Wales and Northern Ireland,

Figure 1: UK education system flow diagram



⁹ Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (n.d.) *A and AS Levels*. Available at: <http://www2.ofqual.gov.uk/qualifications-assessments/89-articles/13-a-and-as-levels> [accessed October 2012].

A full GCE A level qualification is comprised of AS and A2 units. The AS is a stand-alone qualification in its own right, usually made up of two units and is worth half of a GCE A level. The A2 follows the AS and is also typically made up of two units that are considered more demanding than the AS qualification. Individuals can opt to re-sit some or all AS and A2 units, although the awarding body will automatically use the highest mark from all attempts to count towards the final grade¹⁰. Units are generally assessed by external written examination and coursework, although some can be assessed internally as well. A2 units are graded from A* to E and AS units from A to E. Individuals can study one or more GCE A level subjects at any one time. The full GCE A level is commonly taken over a two-year period but it is not unusual for it to be taken over one year¹¹.

A detailed overview of the GCE A level, as prescribed by Ofqual is provided in Appendix 2, whilst the following section below illustrates the way in which Ofqual's central standards have been implemented by an examination board, Edexcel. Edexcel and its programmes were selected to ensure continuation with the 2010 benchmarking analysis of the NSC¹².

4.1 Edexcel

Edexcel was formed in 1996 and is formally recognised by Ofqual as one of the UK's awarding bodies for academic and vocational qualifications studied in the UK and overseas in a variety of settings. Edexcel is now part of Pearson, but was originally formed when the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) and the University of London Examination and Assessment Council (ULEAC) merged. The qualifications offered by Edexcel include:

- GCSE;
- International GCSE;
- GCE A level;
- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs); and
- BTECs.

Edexcel offers GCE A levels in a range of subject areas¹³. In relation to GCE A levels, awarded from 2008, Edexcel provides subject specifications, examiner reports, question papers, sample assessment materials, mark schemes and teacher guides.

¹⁰ Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (2010) *A levels. The official student guide to the system* [pdf].

¹¹ Pearson Edexcel (n.d.) *About GCE A levels*. Available at: <<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/gce-learn.aspx>> [accessed September 2012].

¹² UK NARIC (2010), *Benchmarking Analysis: The National Senior Certificate (Republic of South Africa)*.

¹³ Arabic, Art and Design, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Chinese, Design and Technology – Food Technology, Design and Technology – Product Design, Drama and Theatre Studies, Economics, Economics and Business, English Language, English Language and Literature, English Literature, French, General Studies, Geography, German, Global Development, Government and Politics, Greek, History, Italian, Japanese, Mathematics, Music, Music Technology, Physical Education, Physics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Russian, Spanish and Urdu.

4.2 Edexcel GCE A level programmes in English

Specific reference is made to GCE A levels in English Literature and English Language and Literature, as they provide information that can be used to assist in finding a comparable level for the AP: English. Key qualification components are cited as these will form the benchmark criteria against which the AP: English will be assessed.

Both the Edexcel GCE A level English Literature and English Language and Literature are QCF Level 3 qualifications that have been designed based on the criteria set by Ofqual for GCE AS and A level English Literature and English Language and Literature respectively.

4.2.1 Programme aims

English Literature

At AS level the English Literature programme focuses on encouraging students to understand different genres, whilst the A2 level is more focused on developing the capacity to interpret texts independently. At A2 level, students are encouraged to respond more creatively to texts than at AS level. The aims of the Edexcel programme are 'to develop students' interest in and enjoyment of literature and literary studies as they:

- read widely and independently set texts and others that they have selected for themselves;
- engage creatively with a substantial body of texts and ways of responding to them;
- develop and effectively apply their knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation in speech and writing;
- explore the contexts of the texts they are reading and others' interpretations of them; and
- deepen their understanding of the changing traditions of literature in English¹⁴.

Other key skills include:

- 'communication;
- information and communication technology;
- improving own learning and performance; and
- working with others¹⁵.

English Language and Literature

At AS level the English Language and Literature programme focuses on exploring meanings and interpretations, whilst the A2 level focuses more on the varieties in written and spoken language. The aims of the Edexcel programme are 'to develop students' interest and enjoyment in English as they:

¹⁴ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*.

¹⁵ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*.

- use integrated linguistic and literary approaches in their reading and interpretation of texts;
- engage creatively and independently with a wide range of spoken, written and multimodal texts, exploring relationships between texts; and
- undertake independent and sustained studies to develop their skills as producers and interpreters of language¹⁶.

Other key skills in English Language and Literature are the same as those listed for the English Literature programme above.

4.2.2 Entry requirements

Edexcel has developed the GCE Advanced level English programmes to build on the skills and competencies established at GCSE level. According to the Edexcel guidelines, students with Level 2 qualifications, such as a GCSE in English at grade A*-C, would be the best suited for this programme.¹⁷ As Edexcel lists the required entry conditions and aptitudes necessary for the GCE A level, this is indicative of the nature and academic level of the programme.

4.2.3 Programme content, structure and learning outcomes

Both programmes are divided into four units throughout the AS and A2 years. Each unit has a different focus, shaping the structure of what will need to be studied. The units adhere to the Ofqual requirements for each subject. During the AS and A2 year, students are prepared for an examination and a coursework piece, which can be completed either in the January or June of each year. The combination of examination and coursework provides students with two different opportunities for assessment. Within each unit, students are examined according to set assessment objectives.

¹⁶ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*.

¹⁷ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*.

English Literature

The units covered as part of the Edexcel GCE A level English Literature programme are as follows:

Table 6: Edexcel GCE A level English Literature units

	Units	
AS level		
Unit	Unit 1: Explorations in Prose and Poetry (6ET01)	Unit 2: Explorations in Drama (6ET02)
Assessment	External	Internal
Weighting	60% of AS level, 30% of GCE A level	40% of AS level, 20% of GCE A level
A2 level		
Unit	Unit 3: Interpretations of Prose and Poetry (6ET03)	Unit 4: Reflections in Literary Studies (6ET04)
Assessment	External	Internal
Weighting	60% of A2 level, 30% of GCE A level	40% of A2 level, 20% of GCE A level

Unit 1: Explorations in Prose and Poetry

Unit 1, Explorations in Prose and Poetry, was introduced in the academic year 2008/2009, with the first assessment taking place in January 2009.

Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of:

- 'How the features of the genres of prose fiction and poetry function;
- How writers use language in a variety of forms;
- The different ways that texts can be interpreted by different readers; and
- The ways texts can be grouped and compared to inform interpretation'¹⁸.

To achieve these learning outcomes, students must read one selection of poems, one novel and one novella, the choice of which is based on the following specification:

- 'Prose and poetry, including texts from 1800 to 1945;
- One prescribed selection of poetry; and
- One prescribed core literary heritage novel and one further novella'¹⁹.

¹⁸ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*, p. 18.

The reading list for the Edexcel GCE A level English Literature can be found in Appendix 3.

Students are assessed during a 2.25 hour examination, in which they must answer one question on poetry and one question on prose, both of which are based on examination texts the students have studied, as well as three questions on an unseen piece of poetry or prose. A total of 100 marks are allocated to this unit.

Unit 2: Explorations in Drama

Unit 2, Explorations in Drama, was introduced in the academic year 2008/2009 and was first assessed in January 2009.

Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of:

- 'The relevance of genre in relation to the particular texts studied and how texts and influenced by literary conventions;
- How playwrights use dramatic forms to evoke responses in audiences;
- The contexts in which texts have been produced and received and understand how these contexts influence meaning;
- Key connections between drama texts studied;
- A range of ways to read and experience texts;
- Ways to interpret texts independently in response to interpretations by different readers;
- Ways to communicate clearly and effectively their responses to the texts studied, in a range of forms; and
- Ways to construct critical arguments'²⁰

Students study three texts as part of this unit, which must meet the following requirements:

- 'Shakespeare and drama, including plays from 1300 to 1800; and
- Free choice of Shakespeare and other texts'²¹

Students must complete a 2000-2500 word essay, encompassing an explorative study of the plays and a creative critical response. Whilst this coursework is internally assessed by teachers, it is also externally moderated to ensure the quality of the assessment. The assessment is broken down into criteria for the explorative study and criteria for the creative critical response. A total of 80 marks are allocated to this unit based on the following assessment criteria²²:

¹⁹ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*, p. 4.

²⁰ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*, p. 22.

²¹ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*, p. 4.

²² Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*, pp. 24-26.

Explorative study

A01	Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression.
A02	Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts.
A03	Explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers
A04	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

Creative critical response

A01	Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression.
A04	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

Through examining the nature of these two AS level units, it is evident that they encompass a variety of genres and media from 1300 to 1945. The combination of internal and external assessments gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their skills through answering questions in an examination and through coursework.

Unit 3: Interpretations of Prose and Poetry

Unit 3, Interpretations of Prose and Poetry, was introduced in the academic year 2009/2010 and was first assessed in January 2010.

Students study three texts from a choice of six within one of four groups. To meet the Ofqual criteria, at least one of the chosen texts must have been published post-1990 and the range of texts must include prose and poetry. Students are expected to draw links between the texts and respond independently to them. The texts must meet the following criteria:

- 'Prose and poetry, including texts published after 1990; and
- Three prescribed texts from a choice of six, including at least one text published after 1990 and both prose and poetry'²³

Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of:

- 'The importance of the relationship between texts, making comparisons between texts in the light of different interpretations by other readers;

²³ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*, p. 5

- The significance of the cultural and contextual influences under which literary texts are written and received;
- How to respond creatively, relevantly and in an informed way to texts using appropriate terminology and concepts as well as coherent and accurate written expression; and
- How to analyse texts from a critical perspective'²⁴

Students must sit a 2.75 hour examination, which comprises questions on an unprepared prose or poetry and an analytical essay. A total of 100 marks are allocated to this unit.

Unit 4: Reflections in Literary Studies

Unit 4, Reflections in Literary Studies, was introduced in the academic year 2009/2010 and was first assessed in January 2010.

In this unit there are no prescribed texts or limitations to the types of texts that are to be studied. Students must study three texts in preparation for coursework; one text must be studied in depth whilst the other two texts can be used for reflection. The texts chosen must fit the following specification:

- 'Poetry, prose or drama for independent study
- Free choice of texts'²⁵

Students must complete a 2500-3000 word essay, encompassing one of the following:

- One extended study;
- Two shorter studies; or
- A creative response with a commentary.

A total of 80 marks are allocated to this unit based on the following assessment criteria:

A01	Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression.
A02	Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts.
A03	Explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers.
A04	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

²⁴ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*, p. 33

²⁵ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*, p. 5

English Language and Literature

The units covered as part of the Edexcel GCE A level English Language and Literature programme are as follows:

Table 7: Edexcel GCE A level English Language and Literature units

	Units	
AS level		
Unit	Unit 1: Exploring Voices in Speech and Writing (6EL01)	Unit 2: Creating Texts (6EL02)
Assessment	External	Internal
Weighting	60% of AS level, 30% of GCE A level	40% of AS level, 20% of GCE A level
A2 level		
Unit	Unit 3: Varieties in Language and Literature (6EL03)	Unit 4: Presenting the World (6EL04)
Assessment	External	Internal
Weighting	60% of A2 level, 30% of GCE A level	40% of A2 level, 20% of GCE A level

Unit 1: Exploring Voices in Speech and Writing

Unit 1, Exploring Voices in Speech and Writing, was introduced in the academic year 2008/2009, with the first assessment taking place in January 2009.

Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of:

- 'The differences between speech and writing;
- The features of spontaneous and scripted speech;
- The features of natural conversation and the construction of dialogue in written texts;
- The features of oral and written narratives;
- The use of narrative voice in written texts, both literary and non-literary, in a range of genres;
- Idiolect in speech and the creation of distinctive voices in written texts;
- Audiences, purposes and contexts for spoken and written texts and how these might influence choices of language;
- Register in spoken and written texts and the degree of formality and informality; and
- Representations of regional dialect in written texts'.

To achieve these learning outcomes, students must read one text from the following:

- *The Bloody Chamber*, Angela Carter;
- *Paddy Clarke ha ha ha*, Roddy Doyle;
- *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker;
- *Restoration*, Rose Tremain;
- *Address Unknown*, Kressman Taylor;
- *Cloudstreet*, Tim Winton; and
- *Dubliners*, James Joyce.

Students are externally assessed during a 2.25 hour examination, in which they are examined on one prose text from a prescribed list and reading from a range of other texts. In addition, students are required to answer short question style – data response to unseen material.

Unit 2: Creating Texts

Unit 2, Creating Texts, was introduced in the academic year 2008/2009 and was first assessed in June 2009.

Key learning outcomes for this unit are:

- 'Select reading in preparation for their own writing;
- Classify their reading in a topic area and identify different forms for different purposes and audiences;
- Structure content to meet the needs of purpose;
- Write appropriately for a listening and a reading audience; and
- Comment on the effectiveness of their own work'.

To achieve these learning outcomes, students must choose from a prescribed list of topic areas listed below. Examples of study for the coursework folder can be found in Appendix 4.

- Entrapment;
- Dystopia;
- Women's Lives
- Gothic and Supernatural; and
- Journeys and Pilgrimages.

Students are assessed internally, in which they produce a coursework folder containing no more than 2,000-2,500 words of the student's own writing, supported by two commentaries of no more than 500 words each. The coursework folder should show evidence of the student's wider reading, which will be informed by a topic that includes the study of one prose fiction texts (not otherwise studied in Unit 1), and one text from either drama or poetry. There are no prescribed texts: it is hoped that students will choose texts and tasks that reflect their own interests.

Unit 3: Varieties in Language and Literature

Unit 3, Varieties in Language and Literature, was introduced in the academic year 2009/2010 and was first assessed in January 2010.

Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of:

- 'Literary and linguistic concepts and approaches;
- The significance of contextual factors in the production and reception of texts; and
- Critical judgements about issues raised in the analysis of texts'.

To achieve these learning outcomes, students must choose either two drama or two poetry texts from four different topic areas:

- A Sense of Place;
 - Drama: *Translations*, Brian Friel **and** *Stuff Happens*, David Hare
 - Or**
 - Poetry: *Poems*, Thomas Hardy **and** *The Best Loved Poems of John Betjeman*, John Betjeman
- The Individual in Society;
 - Drama: *Othello*, Shakespeare **and** *Equus*, Peter Schaffer
 - Or**
 - Poetry: *Selected Poems*, Thom Gunn and Ted Hughes **and** *The Waste Land and Other Poems*, T S Eliot
- Love and Loss; and
 - Drama: *The Glass Menagerie*, Tennessee Williams **and** *Betrayal*, Harold Pinter
 - Or**
 - Poetry: *Metaphysical Poetry*, editors C Burrow and C Ricks **and** *Selected Poems*, Sylvia Plath
- Family Relationships
 - Drama: *All My Sons*, Arthur Miller **and** *A Doll's House*, Henrik Ibsen
 - Or**
 - Poetry: *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*, Chaucer and *Selected Poems*, Tony Harrison

Students are assessed externally in a 2.75 hour examination, in which students will be presented with an unseen prose non-fiction extract drawn from 18th century texts to the present day in relation to the topic or theme they have studied. Separated into Section A and B, in Section A of the examination students are required to write a critical analysis of the unseen spoken or written extract. In Section B, students are required to analyse language techniques and literary devices.

Unit 4: Presenting the World

Unit 4, Presenting the World, was introduced in the academic year 2009/2010 and first assessed in June 2010.

Key learning outcomes for this unit are:

- 'Show understanding of the significance of contextual factors both in their own writing and in their reading of texts;
- Use literary and linguistic approaches in their response to and interpretation of texts;
- Create, draft, edit and evaluate the effectiveness of their own texts; and
- Show evidence of independent research, including references to quotations and sources'.

To achieve these learning outcomes in this unit of independent research, students will have a free choice of texts to study from a range of writers in English and will include one text from any genre. Suggested topics for writing and substantial text are included in Appendix 5.

This unit is internally assessed, requiring the students to produce a coursework folder containing three pieces of writing: literary, non-fiction and an analytical evaluative commentary. The folder should contain no more than 2,500-3,000 words supported by no more than 500 words of evaluative commentary.

4.2.4 Assessment and grading

Assessment methods

Examiners are given guidance as to the answers they should expect to receive and the marks they should award depending upon the depth and accuracy of the candidate's answer.

Assessment objectives

Whilst the Ofqual criteria provide a range for the percentage that can be allocated to each assessment object, the specific weightings used by Edexcel are set out below in Table 8²⁶ for English Literature and in Table 9²⁷ for English Language and Literature:

²⁶ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*, p.6

²⁷ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Language and Literature (Issue 2)*, p.8

Table 8: Edexcel GCE A level English Literature assessment objective weightings

		% in AS	% in A2	% in GCE
A01	Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression	27.5%	22.5%	25%
A02	Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts	25%	32.5%	28.75%
A03	Explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers	32.5%	22.5%	27.5%
A04	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received	15%	22.5%	18.75%

Table 9: Edexcel GCE A level English Language and Literature assessment objective weightings

		% in AS	% in A2	% in GCE
A01	Select and apply relevant concepts and approaches from integrated linguistic and literary study, using appropriate terminology and accurate, coherent written expression	25%	20%	22.5%
A02	Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in a range of spoken and written texts	35%	30%	32.5%
A03	Use integrated approaches to explore relationships between texts, analysing and evaluating the significance of contextual factors in their production and reception	20%	30%	25%
A04	Demonstrate expertise and creativity in using language appropriately for a variety of purposes and audiences, drawing on insights from linguistic and literary studies	20%	20%	20%

Students are also assessed on the quality of written communication, including the following for both programmes:

- write legibly, with accurate use of spelling, grammar and punctuation in order to make the meaning clear;
- select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and to complex subject matter; and
- organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate²⁸.

The assessment objectives are stated on each examination paper, which gives the student guidance as to how they will be assessed.

Grading and grade distribution

Students are assessed in line with the recommendations laid out by the *GCSE / GCE Code of Practice* published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Students are graded as shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Edexcel GCE English Literature and English Language and Literature grading scale

AS level	AS level marks	A level	A level marks
		A*	
A	200-160	A	400-320
B	159-140	B	319-280
C	139-120	C	279-240
D	119-100	D	239-200
E	99-80	E	199-160
U	79-0	U	0-159

To receive an A* in either of the GCE A level English programmes, students need to obtain an A overall and an A* in the two A2 units²⁹.

Edexcel has published provisional grade distribution data for the home students who sat the June 2012 GCE A level in English Literature³⁰ and English Language and Literature³¹. For English Literature, there were 3533 students entered for the qualification, with 3516 (99.5%) having passed with grades A* - E while for English Language and Literature there were 3,124 students entered for the qualification, with 3,083 (98.7%) having passed with these grades

²⁸ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*, p.45

²⁹ Pearson Edexcel (n.d.) *Award of A* grade*. Available at:

<<http://www.edexcel.com/results/Pages/AwardofAgrade.aspx>> [accessed September 2012].

³⁰ Pearson Edexcel (2012) *(Provisional) GCE Advanced (including Single Awards Applied Subjects)* [pdf].

³¹ Pearson Edexcel (2012) *(Provisional) GCE Advanced (including Single Awards Applied Subjects)* [pdf].

Table 11: Grade distribution of the Edexcel GCE A level programmes in English (June 2012)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E
English Literature	345	1091	2168	3065	3450	3516
	9.8%	30.9%	61.4%	86.8%	97.7%	99.5%
English Language and Literature	137	492	1275	2254	2879	3083
	4.4%	15.7%	40.8%	72.2%	92.2%	98.7%

4.2.5 Associated outcomes (progression routes)

GCE A levels are qualifications preceding higher education and recognised by UK universities as a standard for assessing the suitability of applicants for acceptance onto undergraduate programmes. The GCE A level in English Literature or English Language and Literature prepares students for admission to undergraduate degrees in related fields, as well as preparation for higher education more broadly, or employment and further training. If students wish to use the grades obtained at GCE A level for university entrance, then it is possible for the grades to earn points in the UCAS Tariff³². The UCAS Tariff is a system by which points are allocated to specific grades in qualifications and is commonly used by many UK higher education institutions to set entrance requirements. For example, a university may state that in order to secure a place to study their Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, a student must attain a minimum of 320 UCAS Tariff points. This is equivalent to ABB in A level grades. In certain cases, an applicant may be asked to hold a specific number of points in a particular subject, for example a minimum of 80 Tariff points in A level Chemistry (grade C) in order to study that programme. Across all subjects, the GCE A level scores the following UCAS tariff points:

Table 12: Allocation of UCAS tariff points according to GCE A level grade obtained

Grade	A level	AS level
A* ³³	140	-
A	120	60
B	100	50
C	80	40
D	60	30
E	40	20

³² UCAS (n.d.) *GCE Advanced levels*. Available at: <http://www.ucas.com/students/ucas_tariff/factsheet/gcea> [accessed September 2012].

³³ The A* grade was introduced in 2010.

4.2.6 Quality Assurance

Edexcel English Literature and English Language and Literature GCE A levels appear on Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications for recognised awarding organisations. Within the minimum standards for qualifications and assessment set by Ofqual, Edexcel have developed their own internal and external quality assurance procedures to ensure standards for GCE A level are maintained by schools or colleges at Level 3 on the National Qualifications Framework. In particular, Edexcel examines whether the school or college's internal systems and processes, teaching staff, facilities and premises, and level of quality of support they give to their learners satisfies Edexcel's initial requirements for the GCE A level in English Literature or English Language and Literature. Edexcel's on-going quality assurance measures include external assessment of examinations and moderation of coursework and exams.

5. Comparative Analysis of the AP English and the GCE A Level standard

This section will compare the core components of the AP: English to the overall GCE A level standard as described in Sections 3 and 4. Reference will be made to the Ofqual GCE A level criteria and Edexcel A level programmes in English to assist in determining, as part of the Final Summary and Analysis, whether the AP: English meets the overall GCE A level standard. A summary of the Edexcel GCE A level programmes in comparison to the AP: English can be found in Appendix 6.

In conducting the comparative analysis, particularly in relation to the learning outcomes and assessment standards, it is important to bear in mind that the AP: English programme is designed to further stretch students taking the NSC. The 2010 study of the NSC made the following observation in relation to the IEB English programme:

“The IEB English Home Language examinations already provide a rigorous challenge to the linguistic capabilities of students. Comparisons revealed great similarities between both the GCE and IEB examination papers; the combination of language and literature based tasks and the emphasis on appreciating the diversity with which language can be used highlight two features common to both examinations. In this respect it would appear that the IEB English Home Language examination is certainly comparable with the AS level, whilst some comparability with the overall A level standard is also apparent.”³⁴

As such, it is acknowledged that many of the knowledge and skills detailed for the GCE AS, and to an extent the GCE A level, are already covered within the main NSC programme. The focus of the analysis will therefore be on highlighting those skills covered by the AP: English as a separate programme.

5.1 Aims

All three programmes have similar aims in encouraging students to have a wide knowledge of English and ability to respond critically to material.

As an extension of the NSC, the AP: English covers a wide range of poetry, prose, drama and films that are intended to give enthusiastic students the opportunity to broaden their knowledge. Through engaging more students with the subject, the AP: English programme aims to increase the number of students who study English at tertiary level³⁵. Preparing students for tertiary education is one of the main intentions detailed in the IEB’s 2011 *Annual Report*³⁶. This is unsurprising given that the AP: English is an extension of the NSC, which already allows access to tertiary study.

³⁴ UK NARIC (2010) *Benchmarking Analysis: The National Senior Certificate (Republic of South Africa)*, p106.

³⁵ IEB (2011) *Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General): Advanced Programme English: A subject in addition to the NSC requirements*.

³⁶ IEB (2011), *Annual Report 2011*, p. 9 <available at: <http://www.ieb.co.za/report/>> [accessed September 2012].

The Edexcel GCE AS and A level English Literature programmes are intended to broaden student's knowledge and interest in English Literature through wider reading, developing analytical skills and engaging with the context of literature. The Edexcel GCE AS and A level English Language and Literature programmes intend to broaden students' interest, knowledge and understanding in the use of linguistic and literary approaches in the interpretation of texts as well as developing their creative and communicative abilities. Whilst GCE A levels were originally designed to facilitate entry to higher education, over time they have evolved to recognise the wider skills and knowledge associated with employment³⁷.

5.2 Entry requirements

Although the GCE A level can be taken privately as a stand-alone qualification and there are no nationally set mandatory requirements, generally school and college students (who comprise the majority of entrants) are required by providers to have passed at least five GCSEs at grade C or above at the end of year 11 to progress onto AS level programmes of study. Moreover, it is typically a requirement to have achieved at least a C grade in English Language and Literature to study these subjects at GCE A level. To progress onto the A2, the second stage in the two year GCE A level programme, students must have first received at least a pass (i.e. grade E) at AS level upon completion of year 12.

Entry onto the three year NSC programme requires completion of nine years of secondary school. As an extension award designed to stretch the brightest and most enthusiastic students, the AP: English does not have any formal entrance requirements, although some schools can impose a minimum grade-related requirement or request students to choose one AP programme (AP: Mathematics or AP: English) only. As such, entrance usually depends on the individual judgement of teachers. Teachers are encouraged to enter only students who have demonstrated a strong competence and / or enthusiasm and commitment to the subject. The requirements for entry onto the AP: English therefore differ from those for the GCE A level, including the AS and A2 stages. This is due to the varying aims and purpose of the qualifications.

5.3 Duration

The full GCE A level programme is generally taken over a two year period and comprises two stages, specifically AS level and A2. While the AS level examinations are taken at the end of the first year, the A2 examinations are taken at the end of the two year programme. As noted, the AP: English programme is taken over three years (years 10-12) but in contrast to the GCE A level which is taken as a full stand-alone qualification comprising of two distinct stages, the AP: English is studied as an extension award in parallel to the NSC qualification. The AP: English examination is taken at the end of the three-year programme, usually at the same time as the NSC examinations.

The approximate number of recommended guided learning hours for the AP: English is calculated to be approximately 230 based on the two-three hour weekly tutorials, while around 180 hours of teaching hours are recommended by Ofqual for the delivery of the AS

³⁷ Ofqual (n.d.), *The Purpose of A levels*. Available at: <<http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/a-level-reform/section-3-design-rules/the-purpose-of-a-levels/>> [accessed November 2012].

level and A2 stages comprising the GCE A level qualification. In addition to the guided learning hours, students are expected to spend a considerable amount of time reading the set texts, as well as reading around the subject areas. It is expected that a significant proportion of independent learning would be required for both the GCE A level and the AP: English, although the exact amount may vary depending on the needs and interests of the individual student. The number of guided learning hours for the AP: English can therefore be considered broadly comparable to the A2, despite the fact that the awards are studied over different timeframes.

5.4 Programme content and breadth of study

In both the AP: English and the Edexcel GCE A level qualifications there are a number of options to select the themes and texts that are of interest to the individual student. For example, in the AP: English programme students can select the texts from the reading lists to address the broader themes identified for discussion in the examination. The Edexcel GCE A level English Literature may be more prescriptive in comparison, requiring that students study and apply knowledge of specific works included in the reading lists in order to answer questions on set authors or poets in the examination. Whilst the Edexcel GCE A level English Language and Literature presents prescribed reading lists for students to choose from in Units 1-3, students can choose any one text from any genre in Unit 4 and it is hoped they choose one that interests them.

Both the Edexcel GCE A level in English Literature and the AP: English cover prose, poetry and drama from a variety of traditions and periods. In the Edexcel GCE A level programme in English Literature, drama is covered in mandatory Unit 2 and in English Language and Literature covered as an optional units in Unit 2, 3 or 4, whilst it is entirely optional in the AP: English. Similarly, poetry is a key area of study in both the AP: English and the GCE A level programmes, reflected in its inclusion in the compulsory Unit 1 and Unit 3 of the Edexcel GCE A level English Literature programme and as options in Units 2, 3 or 4 of the English Language and Literature. In the AP: English, students are required to have studied at least two schools of poetry from the required list. Prose is covered in Units 1 and 3 in the Edexcel GCE A level English Literature programme, and it is also compulsory in Units 1 and 2 of the English Language and Literature programme, in the AP: English programme, two of the three questions in the examination cover prose as well as drama and poetry as an option.

One key difference in terms of breadth relates to the variety of media students can explore during the courses of study. The GCE Edexcel A level in English Literature focuses entirely on an in-depth exploration of literature, including poetry, drama and prose. The AP: English is broader in scope by comparison, offering students the opportunity to study films as well as poetry, prose and drama. AP: English students can opt to focus more intensively on the study of film instead of drama or prose, although study in all three areas is recommended. By contrast, film is covered by entirely separate GCE A level qualification, namely the GCE A level in Media Studies.

A notable difference in focus of the GCE AS and A level English Language and Literature compared with the AP: English programme is the assessment of students' written skills in Unit 2: Creating Text and Unit 4: Presenting the World. The focus of the AP: English

programme tends to be on students' ability to interpret text in order to construct and defend a well thought argument, to provide compelling reasons for their argument, and to convey clarity of thought, understanding, maturity and originality of thought. The Edexcel GCE A level English Language and Literature covers many of the AP: English key areas, such as understanding the significance of contextual factors, making critical judgements and providing evidence of independent research. However, there is notably more emphasis placed upon linguistic and literary analysis in the GCE A level programmes than in the AP: English, which has a broader focus on key themes in literature. As is evident in the AP: English programme, the Edexcel GCE A level also gives scope for the student to be self-reflective. The Edexcel GCE A level English Literature Unit 4, for example, requires students to evaluate the effectiveness of their own texts.

Reading lists

The AP: English reading list covers drama texts, novels and films. The AP: English drama text list exhibits a number of similarities with the reading list for the Edexcel GCE A level in English Literature. Both offer the opportunity to study a number of texts by celebrated and widely renowned dramatists such as William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe. Whilst it is not compulsory to study all of the books on the AP: English reading list, students are expected to be able to draw upon their knowledge of many the books they have read to answer the examination questions. By contrast, the Edexcel reading list for English Literature is largely broken down into optional subsections, where all texts within a subsection are compulsory. This enables students to answer the examination questions drawing upon their knowledge of the texts within each category. Units 1 and 2 of the Edexcel English Language and Literature programme, however, do have the breadth of the AP: English programme in that students are required to draw from a wider range of texts other than those prescribed.

Both the AP: English and Edexcel GCE A level in English Literature and English Language and Literature cover poetry from different periods and traditions, with the Edexcel GCE A levels offering a greater number of English poets while the AP: English lists a significant variety of South African poets. Similar to the GCE A level, the AP: English also includes poets from the key schools of poetry including the Metaphysicals, Romantics and the Victorians. In place of early British poets such as Chaucer, the AP: English syllabus includes South African poetry by Thomas Pringle, Guy Butler and Roy Campbell among others, reflecting its own literary traditions.

With reference to the listed novels, both sets of syllabi place emphasis on classical works of literature from pre-1900. This is evident from the coverage of prominent authors from the 19th century such as Thomas Hardy, Charles Dickens, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. Furthermore, both GCE A level and the AP: English include works of modern fiction. The AP: English includes works by Ian McEwan and Margaret Atwood while the Edexcel GCE A level in English Literature lists Michael Frayn and Khaled Hosseini among other authors.

For both the AP: English and the Edexcel GCE A level in English Literature, it is important to note that the reading lists are not exhaustive and that students are encouraged to read as widely as possible. Both the AP: English and the Edexcel GCE English Literature A level

programmes encourage students to use their knowledge of texts from their wider reading, as evidenced in the literary reflections unit in the Edexcel GCE A level and question 3 in the AP: English examination which focuses upon philosophical reflections on reading history.

In summary, in terms of the breadth of literature and the coverage of different literary periods and traditions, the AP: English and Edexcel GCE A level English Literature and English Language and Literature reading lists can be considered broadly comparable. The slight differences in emphasis evident in the reading lists are mainly tied to the distinctive literary traditions that have been established in South African and the United Kingdom, but are also associated with the slight differences in examination styles.

5.5 Modes of learning

The modes of learning are broadly similar for both the GCE A level and the AP: English qualifications. Both qualification syllabi generally advocate the use of student-centred approaches, including group-work, seminars, presentations and discussion. This range of teaching and delivery methods can be considered effective for the purposes of the programmes under review. The AP: English tutorial method of delivery also encourages close interaction between student and teacher, and facilitates opportunity for discussion and feedback.

It is worth noting that both the GCE A level and AP: English qualifications place significant emphasis upon independent study, with the AP: English being designed specifically for this purpose, with the tutorials and seminars being designed to support and act as a springboard for further study.

5.6 Associated outcomes (progression routes)

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, completion of A2 year and attainment of the required number of full GCE A levels is the usual requirement for entry into higher education. Although students who only hold AS level qualifications may also be eligible to apply for a small minority of higher education level courses, these tend to be vocational and non-academic in nature, and entrance would be granted upon institutional discretion. In this sense, the progression routes for GCE A level holders are similar for South African graduates of the NSC, who are also eligible to apply for entry into higher education.

The AP: English programme, in contrast to the GCE A level programmes in English, is generally not a prerequisite for entry onto English higher education programmes. However, given the thorough preparation it provides for higher education and its status as an extension award, students achieving a high score in the AP: English in addition to the NSC may be at an advantage when applying for entry onto higher level programmes in English. Given its focus on independent reading and study, holders of the AP: English may also experience a smoother transition to higher level study in English Language and Literature, and thus may be favoured by some admitting institutions. Likewise the GCE A levels, and in particular the A2 programmes prepare students well for the rigours of higher level study. They therefore fulfil their purpose as the *de facto* entrance requirement for English Language and Literature courses in the UK.

5.7 Learning outcomes

5.7.1 Analysing the AP: English against Ofqual learning outcomes

Literature shows the Ofqual learning outcomes that students are expected to achieve at both AS and A2 level in the study of English Literature³⁸. Table 13 indicates whether the Ofqual learning outcomes have been met by the AP: English and considers the evidence for this.

Table 13: Benchmarking AP: English learning outcomes and aims against Ofqual learning outcomes for the GCE A level English Literature

Ofqual learning outcomes for AS and A2 level English Literature	Met by AP: English	Source
Read texts in a variety of ways and respond critically and creatively	✓	Learning outcome: Using cognitive skills to design critical judgements – integrate an awareness of a multiplicity of perspectives and texts in a coherent way
Vary strategies for reading, including for detail, overview and gist depending on the texts being studied and purposes for reading them	✗	See below
Explore comparisons and contrasts between texts, establishing links and relationships	✓	Skill: Establish connections between different genres, texts, trends and contexts
Identify and consider how attitudes and values are expressed in texts	✓	Learning outcome: Establishing connections between different genres, texts, trends and contexts – demonstrate knowledge of the socio-political, economic and literary-historical conditions that inform the production of texts
Draw on their understanding of different interpretations in responding to and evaluating texts	✓	Learning outcome: Using cognitive skills to design critical judgements – integrate an awareness of a multiplicity of perspectives and texts in a coherent way
Communicate fluently, accurately and effectively their knowledge, understanding and judgement of texts	✓	Learning outcome: Structuring arguments and insights in a coherent manner using accurate textual references – write a logically structured essay, in which all aspects of the topic are analysed and explored in appropriate detail

³⁸ Ofqual (2011), *GCE AS and A Level Subject Criteria for English Literature*, p. 5 [pdf].

Use literary critical concepts and terminology with understanding and discrimination	x	See below
Make accurate reference to quotations from texts and sources	✓	Learning outcome: Structuring arguments and insights in a coherent manner using accurate textual references – select and use effectively detailed, relevant textual evidence, and acknowledge that evidence accurately
Ofqual learning outcomes for A2 level		
Synthesise and reflect upon their knowledge and understanding of a range of literary texts and ways of reading them	✓	<p>Learning outcomes: i) Establishing connections between different genres, texts, trends and contexts – display a specific understanding of genre ii) Integrate an awareness of a multiplicity of perspectives and texts in a coherent way.</p> <p>Students are expected to draw upon their knowledge of a broad range of texts in answering the examination questions, taking into consideration also different interpretations of the text.</p>
Make appropriate use of the conventions of writing in literary studies, including references to quotation and sources	✓	<p>Learning outcome: Structuring arguments and insights in a coherent manner using accurate textual references – select and use effectively detailed, relevant textual evidence, and acknowledge that evidence accurately</p> <p>Students should refer to other texts they have read and draw on wider reading to assist in answering the examination questions</p>

As the table demonstrates, many of the Ofqual learning outcomes for AS and A2 level, and those specifically for A2 level, have been met or partially met by the AP: English. Some may not have been met due to the variety of content of the English programmes, which is to be expected as the programmes place different emphasis on certain skills and competencies, and favour different study methods, genres or media over others. The learning outcomes that have been partially met or not met are described below.

Vary strategies for reading, including for detail, overview and gist depending on the texts being studied and purposes for reading them

This AS and A2 Ofqual learning outcome has not been clearly met by the learning outcomes prescribed specifically for the AP: English. While it is possible that this skill may be covered within classes, there is no explicit evidence of this skill neither within the identified learning outcomes nor within the assessment standards or examination of the AP.

Use literary critical concepts and terminology with understanding and discrimination

This AS and A2 learning outcome does not have a counterpart learning outcome or aim in the AP: English. Emphasis instead is placed upon writing well-constructed essays in the AP: English examination, with evidence of the student's personal opinion or voice being a key aspect of this. The encouragement of high level independent thinking is a concept favoured by the IEB in general, but the use of correct terminology and literary critical concepts could be incorporated into the mark scheme as a way of supporting an individual's response to the examination questions.

Table 14 shows the Ofqual learning outcomes that students are expected to achieve at both AS and A2 level English Language and Literature, as well as the learning outcomes students are expected to achieve at A2 level English Language and Literature. It also indicates whether the Ofqual learning outcomes have been met by the AP: English and the evidence for this.

Table 14: Benchmarking AP: English learning outcomes and aims against Ofqual learning outcomes for the GCE A level English Language and Literature

Ofqual learning outcomes for AS and A2 level English Language and Literature	Met by AP: English	Source
Apply integrated linguistic and literary methods and concepts in the study of spoken, written and multimodal texts	Partial	See below
Vary strategies for reading and listening according to text type and purpose for study	✗	See below
Identify and describe how meanings and effects are created and conveyed in texts	✓	Students are expected to 'draw broadly on their experience of a variety of texts', 'reflect philosophically on the texts they have studied' and demonstrate clear interpretative and analytical abilities to identify how meanings are conveyed. Assessment of this skill is also evident within the examination questions posed where students are expected to examine how a particular theme has been portrayed by the author in an extract from a

		poem/prose.
Compare and contrast texts, exploring relationships between them	✓	Skill: Apply their knowledge, compare and contrast, analyse and critique both seen and unseen texts
Use English appropriately, accurately and creatively for a variety of audiences and purposes	Partial	See below
Use a range of techniques to produce texts for different audiences and purposes, informed by wide reading and listening	Partial	See below
Make accurate reference to texts and sources	✓	<p>Skill: Draw on recommended texts as well as other texts they have encountered</p> <p>Learning outcome: Structuring arguments and insights in a coherent manner using textual references - Select and use effectively detailed, relevant textual evidence, and acknowledge that evidence accurately.</p>
Ofqual learning outcomes for A2 level		
Synthesise and reflect on their knowledge and understanding of linguistic and literary concepts and methods in the study of spoken and written texts	✓	Skill: present sophisticated, well-structure and clearly substantiated responses which synthesises their personal views in relation to the variety of texts which they have studied
Make creative connections between elements of the course as a whole	✓	<p>Learning outcome - Using cognitive skills to design critical judgements – Integrate an awareness of a multiplicity of perspectives and texts in a coherent way.</p> <p>Learning outcome - Using cognitive skills to design critical judgements – Construct an argument that is inspired by an independent voice and which reflects insight, understanding, maturity and originality of thought.</p>
Sustain informed, critical judgements about issues raised in an integrated approach to textual analysis	✓	<p>Skill: Use higher-order cognitive skills to design critical judgements.</p> <p>Learning outcome - Using cognitive skills to design critical judgements – Construct and defend a focused, sustained and engaging argument.</p>

Devise, draft edit and evaluate the effectiveness of their own texts, informed by their integrated studies	✓	Learning outcome: Using cognitive skills to design critical judgements – Construct an argument that is inspired by an independent voice and which reflects insight, understanding, maturity and originality of thought.
Make appropriate use of the conventions of writing in advanced studies in English, including references to quotations and sources	✓	Students of the AP: English learning outcome are required to write logically structured essays that construct 'arguments and insights in a coherent manner using accurate textual references' and 'select and use effectively detailed, relevant textual evidence, and acknowledge that evidence accurately'. Whilst these points make reference to the accurate recording of quotations and sources as outlined in the Ofqual learning outcome, other conventions and methodologies of written English are not expressly mentioned, only in the sense that written essays are logically structured.

The learning outcomes that have been partially met or not met are described below.

Apply integrated linguistic and literary methods and concepts in the study of spoken, written and multimodal texts

The breadth of texts in poetry, prose, drama and film covered by the AP: English programme is evidence of the study of a range of media. The guidelines for film study related essays in the examination clearly outline the need for students to be able to identify filmic techniques and concepts and the way in which these are used to create character, themes and atmosphere. Such an interpretative ability in order to understand techniques to convey themes, characters and symbolism is also required when studying written texts, though evidence of this within the learning outcomes is less explicit, as is the need (prescribed by Ofqual) to apply integrated linguistic and literary methods and concepts in the study/analysis of all text types in the AP: English examination. As such the AP: English provides partial, rather than full coverage of this GCE A level learning outcome.

Vary strategies for reading and listening according to text type and purpose for study

While it could be argued that the AP: English programme requires students to study different text types, the need to apply varied strategies for reading and listening in accordance with the purpose of study is not clear as it is neither an identified learning outcome of the AP nor evidenced within the wider programme specifications. Coverage of this Ofqual learning

outcome by the AP: English programme in its own capacity (as separate to the NSC) could therefore not be suitably demonstrated.

Use English appropriately, accurately and creatively for a variety of audiences and purposes

Students of the AP: English are expected to be able to use English appropriately, accurately and creatively in order to convey clarity of thought in their essay responses. This skill is a clear component of both the learning outcomes prescribed for students and required of them within the final examination. Where the AP: English programme differs from the Ofqual learning outcome, however, is in evidencing the range of audiences and purposes for whom students must write. Unlike the Ofqual learning outcome, there is no identifiable learning outcome relating to the production of texts for different audiences or purposes explicitly referenced in the AP: English programme. As the AP: English examination consists of three essay questions asking students to analyse and evaluate extracts or draw on their wider reading history to provide comment on a quotation or literary extract, it could be argued that the focus of the AP: English programme is on the use of the student's own voice rather than for a range of audiences. By contrast the Ofqual learning outcome requires that students demonstrate an ability to tailor their writing to different readers or contexts. It is important to note that although prescribed as a GCE A level learning outcome, no evidence of this skill was found in sample papers for exemplar GCE A level papers.

Use a range of techniques to produce texts for different audiences and purposes, informed by wide reading and listening

Similar to the learning outcome above, the AP: English programme learning and assessment places emphasis on the student's development of a strong personal voice. The AP: English programme consults a broad variety of texts from a range of years and genres, which form part of the non-exhaustive list of texts students are expected to read. Students are required to make connections, arguments and judgements between them, demonstrating a wide skill-set in reading and listening, yet the AP: English learning outcomes do not expressly request students' ability to write their own texts for different audiences or purposes.

5.7.2 Analysis of the AP: English against Edexcel learning outcomes

The following tables list the learning outcomes for the Edexcel GCE A level English Literature and the Edexcel GCE A level English Language and Literature respectively, indicating whether the overall learning outcomes of the Edexcel programmes are met by the AP: English. Edexcel's programmes have been designed in order to meet the learning outcome criteria set out by Ofqual, and therefore demonstrate how programmes can be adapted to ensure students are given the opportunity to acquire the required skills.

Table 15: Benchmarking AP: English learning outcomes and aims against Edexcel learning outcomes for the GCE A level English Literature – AS and A2 learning outcomes

Edexcel Learning Outcomes for AS and A2 level	Met by AP: English	Source
Use their detailed knowledge and understanding of individual works of literature to explore relationships between texts and to appreciate the significance of culture and contextual influences upon readers and writers	✓	Learning outcome: Establishing connections between different genres, texts, trends and contexts
Show knowledge and understanding of a range of literary texts and include at least two examples of each of the genres of prose, poetry and drama across the course as a whole	Partial	See below
Experience a wide range of reading in poetry, prose and drama that must include at least one play by Shakespeare, work by at least one author writing between 1300 and 1800, at least one work first published or performed after 1990 and, at Advanced Subsidiary, work by at least one author published between 1800 and 1945	Partial	See below

Show knowledge and understanding of a range of literary texts and include at least two examples of each of the genres of prose, poetry and drama across the course as a whole

This learning outcome is partially met by the AP: English. The reading list contains a broad variety of texts from a wide range of genres and years, which form the basis of the material that students are expected to read. The Edexcel learning outcomes for GCE AS and A level state that two examples of prose, poetry and drama must be studied throughout the course; totalling six examples. These genres are also covered by the AP: English programme and include the additional genre of film. Students must study poetry, as well as at least two pieces from the other options, indicating that it is possible that one component of prose or drama may not be covered. Whilst students are expected to study examples from each genre to ensure they are sufficiently prepared, not all genres form a compulsory part of the AP: English examination and consequently only partial coverage of the Ofqual learning outcome can be confirmed.

Experience a wide range of reading in poetry, prose and drama that must include at least one play by Shakespeare, work by at least one author writing between 1300 and 1800, at least one work first published or performed after 1990 and, at Advanced Subsidiary, work by at least one author published between 1800 and 1945

Students studying towards the AP: English must cover a range of texts from the 17th to the 21st century, whilst students studying towards the Edexcel GCE A level English Literature cover texts ranging from 1300 to 1945. Whilst the ranges differ, both sets of qualifications involve the study of a broad variety of texts encompassing different eras, traditions and events. Studying some of Shakespeare's works, as a key author in British literature, is a compulsory component of the Edexcel programme. Students studying the AP: English can cover some of Shakespeare's plays, as demonstrated by the recommended reading list (see Appendix 2), but this is not a compulsory requirement. Similarly, the AP: English contains a number of texts specific to South Africa, such as the protest poetry.

The choice of literature is evidently influenced by the culture in each country. Differences in the texts studied are not indicative of the level of the award and an examination of the reading lists show that students studying towards the AP: English are recommended to read as broad a variety of texts as those students preparing for the Edexcel GCE A level English Literature. The focus on having a broader knowledge of a variety of texts could be seen as a way of ensuring that students have an awareness of many of the major schools of literature and would leave students in good stead for studying further works of literature at tertiary level.

Some of Edexcel's learning outcomes refer specifically to the AS level component of the programme. Table 16 indicates whether they have been met by the AP: English.

Table 16: Benchmarking AP: English learning outcomes and aims against Edexcel learning outcomes for the GCE A level English Literature – AS learning outcomes

Edexcel Learning Outcomes for AS level	Met by AP: English	Source
Knowledge and understanding of the functions and effects of structure, form and language in text	✓	Whilst this is potentially covered in more depth at the NSC level, students are expected to be able to interpret text, understanding for example how different language and form are employed and the impact or effect this has.
Knowledge and understanding of some of the ways in which individual texts are interpreted by different readers	✓	Learning outcome: Using cognitive skills to design critical judgements – integrate an awareness of a multiplicity of perspectives and texts in a coherent way
Knowledge and understanding of some of the ways in which texts relate to one another and to the contexts in which they are written and	✓	Learning outcome: Establishing connections between different genres, texts, trends and contexts –

read		demonstrate knowledge of the socio-political, economic and literary-historical conditions that inform the production of texts
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In addition to the learning outcomes that refer to AS level and AS and A2 level, some of Edexcel's learning outcomes refer specifically to the A2 level component of the programme. Table 17 indicates whether these outcomes are met by the AP: English:

Table 17: Benchmarking AP: English learning outcomes and aims against Edexcel learning outcomes for the GCE A level English Literature – A2 learning outcomes

Edexcel Learning Outcomes for A2 level	Met by AP: English	Source
Knowledge and understanding of the significance of the ways in which writers use and adapt language, form and structure in texts	✗	See below
Knowledge and understanding of the significance of the interpretation of texts by different readers, including over time	Partial	See below
Knowledge and understanding of the significance of how texts relate to literary traditions, movements and genres	✓	<p>As part of the preparation for the poetry question in the examination, students must study a range of poetry from different traditions, including the Metaphysicals and the Romantics, as well as South African Protest Poetry</p> <p>The prose, drama and film texts encompass a number of genres, such as those depicting satire, tragedy, drama and comedy.</p>
Knowledge and understanding of the significance of the cultural and contextual influence upon readers and writers	✓	<p>Learning outcome: Establishing connections between different genres, texts, trends and contexts – demonstrate knowledge of the socio-political, economic and literary-historical conditions that inform the production of texts</p> <p>As part of the poetry examination, students are expected to study South African Protest Poetry and so knowledge of the context within which the poems were written would</p>

		be essential to understand them.
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Knowledge and understanding of the significance of the ways in which writers use and adapt language, form and structure in texts

Whilst students of the AP: English should have an awareness of how language, form and structure are used in text and therefore meet this requirement in the context of the Edexcel GCE AS level³⁹, this similarly-focussed A2 learning outcome is a development on the AS learning outcome requiring a more in-depth understanding of the significance of these literary techniques. This depth is not as evident within the AP: English programme, which focuses considerably more on the students' ability to use their reading and analytical skills to construct a sufficiently well-argued essay. This is not indicative of a difference in level but rather that the focus of the AP: English programme combines language and literature while the focus of the A level programme is primarily on literature and close textual analysis.

Knowledge and understanding of the significance of the interpretation of texts by different readers, including over time

This learning outcome is partially met by the AP: English. AP: English students are required to show an awareness of how different texts can be interpreted, as indicated by the learning outcome 'using cognitive skills to design critical judgements – integrate an awareness of a multiplicity of perspectives and texts in a coherent way'. However, there is no specific reference to how one text could be interpreted differently over time even though students would need to have read texts from different contexts and eras.

Whilst the two learning outcomes that have not been fully met indicate that the content of the programmes vary, differences in focuses of programmes such as this are inevitable and would not automatically indicate that the AP: English is of a lower academic level than the GCE A level. It is important to bear in mind that as an extension of the NSC, some of the learning outcomes of the GCE A level English Literature may have already been met by English studied as part of the NSC and will not be covered by the AP: English.

Table 18: Benchmarking AP English learning outcomes and aims against Edexcel AS and A2 learning outcomes for English Language and Literature

Edexcel learning outcomes for AS and A2 level English Language and Literature	Met by AP: English	Source
Show knowledge and understanding of a range of spoken and written texts from different times, including at least two substantial texts from one of the genres of prose fiction, poetry and drama and at least one other substantial written text	✓	Students must study poetry, as well as at least two pieces from prose, drama and film. Learners are encouraged to engage with as many of the choices on offer as possible.

³⁹ Knowledge and understanding of the functions and effects of structure, form and language in text.

		The reading list contains a broad variety of texts from a range of years and genres, which students are expected to read as well as additional material.
Show knowledge and understanding of some of the key constituents of language and how they function in combination to make meaning in spoken and written English	x	See below
Show knowledge and understanding of how variations in language, form and context shape and change meanings in speech and writing	✓	Students must demonstrate understanding of how language and form shape meaning as part of the wider interpretative abilities they are required to demonstrate within the AP: English.
Show knowledge and understanding of some of the ways in which individual texts are interpreted by different readers or listeners	Partial	See below
Show knowledge and understanding of some analytical and creative approaches to the critical study of texts, drawing on linguistic and literary methodologies and concepts	✓	<p>Students are expected to demonstrate their analytical and interpretative ability within the final examination.</p> <p>The specific requirement to draw on linguistic/literary methods is more evident within the film study component of the programme rather than all text types. As such, interpretation of what constitutes a similar skill-set across more 'traditional' literature could benefit from being more explicitly evidenced within programme specifications to ensure this learning outcome is assessed on a level-playing-field for all learners.</p>
Edexcel learning outcomes for A2 level		
Show deeper knowledge and understanding of a wider range of spoken and written texts from different times, including at least two further texts from a genre (prose fiction, poetry, drama) not studied at Advanced Subsidiary, and at least one other substantial written text	Partial	See below
Show deeper knowledge and understanding of the significance of contextual factors in the production and reception of texts	✓	Learning outcome: Establishing connections between different genres, texts, trends and contexts –

		demonstrate knowledge of the socio-economic and literary-historical conditions that inform the production of texts.
Show deeper knowledge and understanding of how to apply linguistic and literary methodologies and concepts to inform their responses to and interpretations of texts	x	See below

Show knowledge and understanding of some of the ways in which individual texts are interpreted by different readers or listeners

Students should be aware both of the different contexts in which texts have been produced and be aware of a multiplicity of perspectives in the interpretation of literary texts, demonstrating awareness of different interpretations of text but ultimately placing more emphasis on the students' own interpretation of the text than within the Edexcel programme, thus providing partial coverage of this learning outcome.

Show deeper knowledge and understanding of a wider range of spoken and written texts from different times, including at least two further texts from a genre (prose fiction, poetry, drama) not studied at Advanced Subsidiary, and at least one other substantial written text

The Edexcel learning outcome is partially met by the AP: English programme because the breadth of study (minimum of 37 poems and at least two pieces from prose, drama and film) meets Edexcel's range of spoken and written texts. Although hard to quantify Edexcel's requirement for 'deeper knowledge and understanding', the AP: English learning outcomes in Grades 11 and 12 do not progress in their description from Grade 10.

Show deeper knowledge and understanding of how to apply linguistic and literary methodologies and concepts to inform their responses to and interpretations of texts

The Edexcel learning outcome is not met by the AP: English programme because AP: English learning outcomes do not consider the application of linguistic and literary methodologies in the approach taken by students' to produce an argued response or critical judgement.

AP: English learning outcome recommendations:

- Consider the methodological processes / strategies (linguistic and literary) students undertake in their evaluation, analysis and criticism of different text forms.
- Consider key constituents of the English language.
- Consider a wider range of English language conventions than just referencing quotations and sources.
- As an extension of the requirements of the NSC, students' should have a continued appreciation and understanding of the impact of texts on different audiences for different purposes.

- Learning outcome descriptors should show progression in Grades 11 and 12 or if they remain the same, then variation in the depth and breadth of coverage within those learning outcomes should be explicitly evidenced and documented to ensure the interpretation of what constitutes progression is standardised for all.

5.8 Assessment

5.8.1 Assessment methods

Assessment methods refer to the range of methods used to evaluate a learner's achievement in a course, unit or module⁴⁰. These may include, as appropriate, a range of written, oral, laboratory, project or portfolio assessments, and may take the form of a formative or summative assessment. This analysis focuses purely on the summative assessment of Edexcel GCE A level candidates in comparison to their South African peers undertaking the AP: English. Such assessments allow the relevant awarding body to judge whether the learner has achieved the learning outcomes of the course unit or module, and determine the overall achievement of the learner.

The Edexcel GCE A level in English Literature is split into two units at A2 level: Unit 3, 'interpretations of prose and poetry', and Unit 4, 'reflections in literary study' (Units 1 and 2 form the precursory Edexcel GCE AS level). Assessment of these two units is based on a combination of examination, which is fully externally assessed, and coursework, which is internally assessed and subject to external moderation. The examination is 2.75 hours in duration and is based on Unit 3. It comprises questions on unprepared prose or poetry as well as an analytical essay based on at least two prepared texts (from a choice of six) which must include at least one text published after 1990 and both prose and poetry. Coursework, based on Unit 4, requires students to complete a 2500-3000 word essay encompassing an extended study, or two shorter studies, or a creative response to a commentary.

Formal assessment for the AP: English is in the form of one three-hour examination taken at the end of the three-year programme in Grade 12. The examination comprises three questions, requiring students to refer to prepared prose, drama or film materials, compare two schools of poetry, and reflect philosophically on their reading history.

In order to determine whether the assessment methods applied to the AP: English are of the same rigour as those employed to the Edexcel GCE A2, it is important to consider whether the AP examination meets the assessment objectives as are covered by the A2's combination of examination and coursework. This comparison of assessment objectives is conducted in Table 19.

⁴⁰ Lokhoff et al., (2010), *Tuning Education Structures in Europe: A guide to formulating degree programme profiles*. Available at <<http://core-project.eu/documents/Tuning%20G%20Formulating%20Degree%20PR4.pdf>>.

Table 19: Benchmarking AP: English examination coverage against the Edexcel GCE A2 English Literature assessment objectives

Edexcel GCE A2 English Literature assessment objectives		Met by AP: English	Source
AO1	Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression	✓	<p>The following AP: English examination question provides an example of how the assessment objective has been met. It requires candidates to write an essay-style response to the quotation, incorporating their knowledge of a range of appropriate literary texts.</p> <p><i>"We fought back, with light The endless night You imposed on our existence ..."</i></p> <p><i>[Lines from Dzekashu MacViban's poem, 'Existence']</i></p> <p><i>Show how this poem illustrates the diverse natures of power and powerlessness as they exist in a range of texts you have studied.</i></p> <p><i>You might, for example, want to compare how a character in one of the plays you studied, abuses his power while a character in one of your novels is at the brunt of a community's abuse of her choices; or you might want to explore how certain values in one of your studied texts are positioned as powerful and valuable while other values are demeaned or rejected.'</i></p>
AO2	Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts	Partial	See below
AO3	Explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers	Partial	See below
AO4	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received	✓	<p>The following AP: English examination question provides an example of how the assessment objective has been met. It requires candidates to explore issues of poets' particular periods and therefore demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which the literary texts are written and received.</p>

			<p><i>“Literature is news that stays news.”</i></p> <p><i>[Ezra Pound (1885 – 1972), American poet: ABC of Reading]</i></p> <p><i>Critically discuss how the two schools of poetry you have studied reflect Pound's opinion in the quotation above.</i></p> <p><i>In your response you should explore why issues of the poets' particular periods are relevant to a contemporary audience, and how poets ensure that these issues remain relevant’</i></p>
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Evidence that the AP: English examination covers Edexcel GCE A2 assessment objectives AO2 and AO3 could not be found. This does not necessarily mean, however, that the curriculum does not cover these aspects at all, as described below.

Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts

In relation to AO2, whilst the AP: English examination requires that students explore how certain themes are conveyed, neither the questions themselves or the marking guidelines indicate a need to sufficiently address language and form within the answer. Though students undertaking the programme should possess such skills already, inclusion within the marking guidelines may help ensure these skills are uniformly assessed.

Explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers

Similarly with regard to AO3 there is some coverage, as the AP: English assessment standards require that students incorporate a multiplicity of perspectives in their answers. It is only in the investigation of examination papers where there is no evidence that such skills must be demonstrated.

By extending the scope of the study to consider whether the AP: English examination covered the assessment objectives for English Language and Literature, some of these issues were resolved (see Table 20).

Table 20: Benchmarking AP: English examination coverage against the Edexcel GCE A2 English Language and Literature assessment objectives

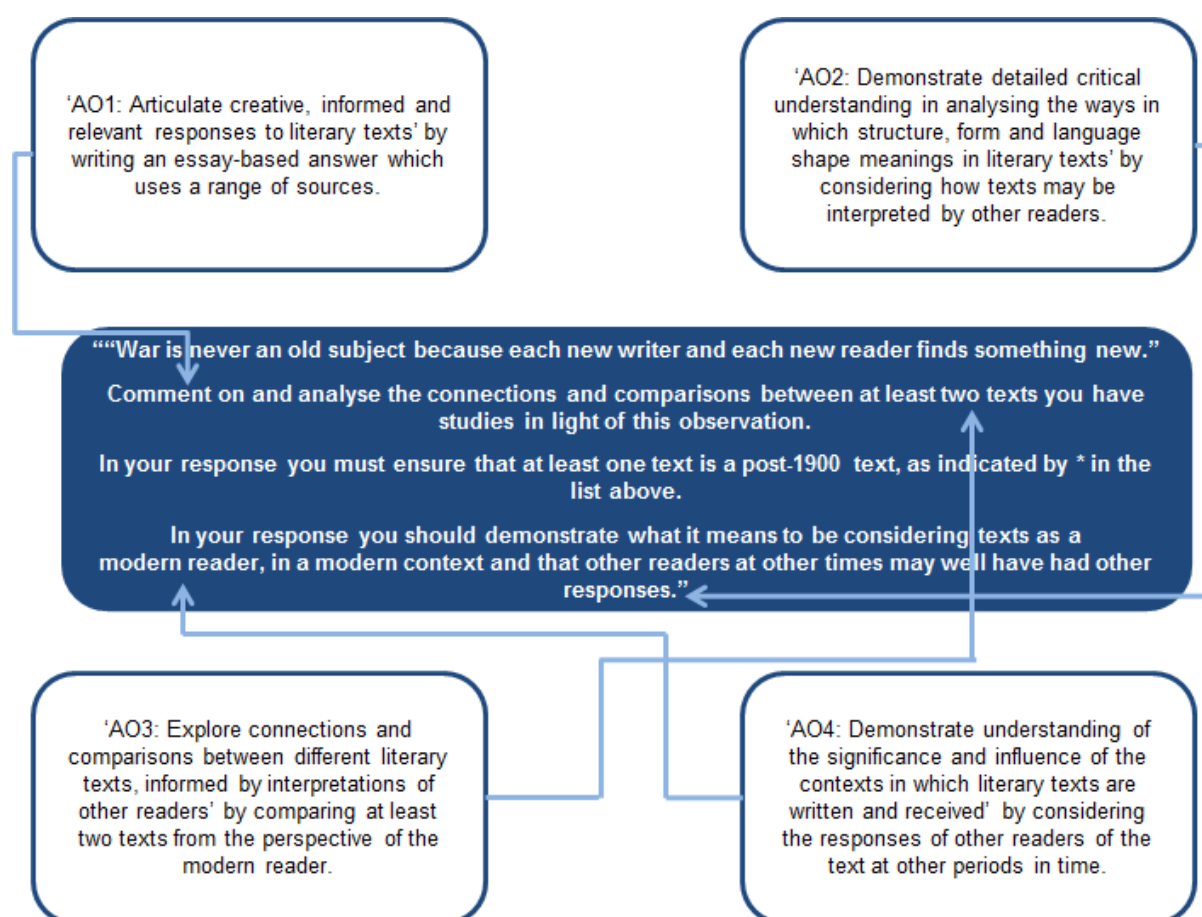
Edexcel GCE A2 English Language and Literature assessment objectives		Met by AP: English	Source
AO1	Select and apply relevant concepts and approaches from integrated linguistic and literary study, using appropriate terminology and accurate, coherent, written expression	✓	<p>The following AP: English examination question provides an example of how the assessment objective has been met. It requires candidates to select and apply relevant concepts from the texts they have studied.</p> <p><i>"We fought back, with light The endless night You imposed on our existence ..."</i></p> <p><i>[Lines from Dzekashu MacViban's poem, 'Existence']</i></p> <p><i>Show how this poem illustrates the diverse natures of power and powerlessness as they exist in a range of texts you have studied.</i></p> <p><i>You might, for example, want to compare how a character in one of the plays you studied, abuses his power while a character in one of your novels is at the brunt of a community's abuse of her choices; or you might want to explore how certain values in one of your studied texts are positioned as powerful and valuable while other values are demeaned or rejected.'</i></p>
AO2	Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in a range of spoken and written texts	Partial	<p>The following AP: English examination question extract provides an example of how the assessment objective has been partially met. It requires candidates to examine how poems achieve a purpose through structure, language and meaning.</p> <p><i>'Your response should not just discuss the ways in which your studied poets could be described as 'legislators of the world', but also how their poems achieve this purpose.'</i></p>
AO3	Use integrated approaches to explore relationships between texts, analysing and evaluating the significance of contextual factors in their production and creation	✓	<p>The following AP: English examination question provides an example of how the assessment objective has been met. It requires candidates to explore issues of a range of poets from particular periods and therefore demonstrate understanding of the significance of contextual factors in the production and creation of poems.</p> <p><i>"Literature is news that stays news."</i></p> <p><i>[Ezra Pound (1885 – 1972), American poet: ABC of Reading]</i></p> <p><i>Critically discuss how the two schools of poetry you have studied reflect Pound's opinion in the quotation above.</i></p> <p><i>In your response you should explore why issues of</i></p>

			<i>the poets' particular periods are relevant to a contemporary audience, and how poets ensure that these issues remain relevant'</i>
AO4	Demonstrate expertise and creativity in using language appropriately for a variety of purposes and audiences, drawing on insights from linguistic and literary studies	✓	<p>The following AP: English examination question provides an example of how the assessment objective has been met. It requires candidates to draw from insights from the literary extract and demonstrate their ability to creatively compose an argument to justify their point of view.</p> <p><i>'Consider all you have read for the Advanced Programme English course as well as your own extended reading. In Reif Larsen's novel, The Collected Works of TS Spivet, one of the characters is a Grade 7 teacher, Mr Stenpock.</i></p> <p><i>"Mr Stenpock was a tricky creature. A single glance would confirm this when one took in both the Scotch tape securing one hinge of his outdated bifocals and the fact that Mr Stenpock always wore a noisy leather jacket while teaching, a fashion statement that tried (and yet failed) to say, 'Children, I probably do things after school that you are not ready to know about just yet'. I have since coined the term Stenpock*."</i></p> <p><i>*Glossary: Stenpock n. Any adult who insists on staying within the confines of his or her job title and harbours no passion for the offbeat or the incredible.</i></p> <p><i>If everyone was a Stenpock, we would still be in the Middle Ages.</i></p> <p><i>Consider the extent to which the texts that made the greatest impact on you were anchored by people, and their ideas that could not be described as being 'Stenpock'.'</i></p>

Despite there being greater similarities when considering the AP: English examination in the context of GCE A level English Language and Literature assessment objectives, there was still no indication of full coverage across all elements. Whilst these skills may not receive specific attention in the AP: English examination questions, they have been shown to be covered by the course, its content, and the assessment standards. This therefore suggests that the assessment methods used in the AP: English cover, to some extent, those used in GCE A2 level. In order to address such discrepancy between what is implicitly demanded of students and what is explicitly asked of them, it might be recommended that the AP: English more explicitly specify the skills it is asking students to exhibit in its examination questions. This recommendation would specifically target identified benchmark assessment standards which are not currently met. Ways in which this could be facilitated might be to ensure AP: English candidates are better aware of the range of assessment criteria covered by the examination, or to phrase examination questions so as to more directly ask for demonstration of assessment criteria.

For example, the Edexcel GCE A2 examination paper lists at the end its assessment objectives and the weighting of marks allocated to each, ensuring that the assessment objectives for candidates are transparent. The Edexcel GCE A2 examination is also more explicit in asking candidates to demonstrate specific skills. This is shown in the example examination question below⁴¹.

Figure 2: Matching Edexcel GCE English Literature A level assessment criteria to a sample examination question



5.8.2 Weighting

Weighting refers to the gravitas that is placed on certain methods of assessment and questions in terms of how much they contribute towards an overall grade. The reason behind weighting assessment methods and criteria is to reflect the relative importance or difficulty of that aspect of the course, unit or module.

The two methods used to assess students in the Edexcel GCE English Literature and English Language and Literature A2 level contribute different weightings towards the final grade achieved. Assessment of Unit 3, the examination, carries the majority marks (100),

⁴¹ Edexcel (2007), *Sample Assessment Materials, September 2007: English literature*.

and accounts for 60% of the final A2 grade. The assessment of Unit 4 through coursework carries a maximum of 80 marks and accounts for 40% of the final A2 grade.

The grade achieved by students of an AP: English rests solely on their performance in their final three-hour examination. The structure of the examination consists of three questions, each of which is allocated an equal number of marks.

Both qualifications require students to write essay-style answers. The achievement of higher marks is geared towards answers which analyse and evaluate sources and those which demonstrate the candidate's skill and ability to think independently and critically. For these reasons, the discrepancy in weighting between the two qualifications does not give reason to suggest that they are of different standards.

In considering the AP: English's comparability to the GCE A level, however, it is interesting to note the different examination situations faced by candidates. In the Edexcel GCE English Literature paper, for example, students are given a choice of examination questions to answer. This allows candidates to work towards their strengths and allows them a degree of flexibility in their choice of question. The incorporation of a coursework element to assessment also removes some of the pressure to perform under examination conditions. In the AP: English paper, however, all three questions set by the IEB are compulsory and the full weighting of their overall mark is based on their performance under examination conditions. It could be argued that this could limit a candidate and narrow the opportunity for them to display their skills. However, it could also be argued that the current format of the IEB examination may help ensure comparability between questions and reduce the risk of an individual making a bad choice that exists when students have the freedom to choose which questions to answer. In a review of research into the reliability of examinations, Wilmot, Wood and Murphy (1996) recommend that where choice is offered, examination boards should ensure that the different questions are equal in the skills which are being assessed and the level of difficulty to which they are being assessed⁴², as with the case of Edexcel in the delivery and assessment of the GCE English Literature.

5.8.3 Assessment criteria and rigour

Assessment criteria specify the practical skills and knowledge a learner must demonstrate for the learning outcomes of a course, unit or module to be achieved. They often provide descriptions of what the learner is expected to do and at what level, which help determine the extent to which assessment criteria have been met. Students should be aware of assessment criteria through a range of sources from the beginning of their course of study⁴³.

Ofqual prescribes four assessment objectives, each of which is given a different weighting depending on the Unit in which it is taken. Within upper and lower parameters, the allocation of these weightings is left at the discretion of the examination bodies. The Edexcel GCE English Literature and English Language and Literature A2 level assessment criteria

⁴² Wilmot, J., Wood, R. and Murphy, R. (1996). *A review of research into the reliability of examinations*.

⁴³ Lokhoff et al., (2010), *Tuning Education Structures in Europe: A guide to formulating degree programme profiles* and City & Guilds (2012), *Bringing Clarity to the QCF: Glossary of Terms*.

complies with the assessment objectives prescribed by Ofqual, and the weighting given to each of these is demonstrated below in Table 21 and Table 22.

Table 21: Edexcel relationship of assessment objectives to units in English Literature

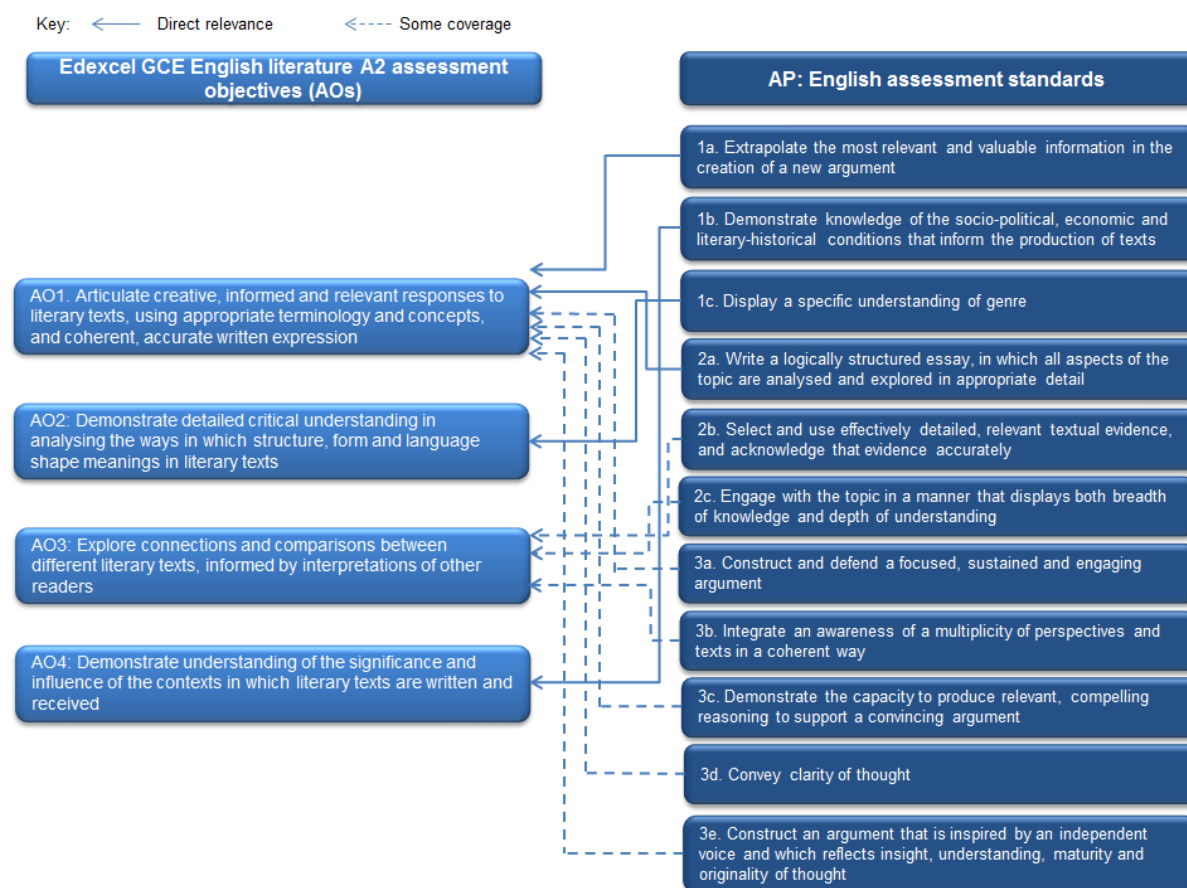
Assessment objective		% weighting in A2	% weighting in Unit 3	% weighting in Unit 4
AO1	Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression	22.5%	10%	12.5%
AO2	Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts	32.5%	20%	12.5%
AO3	Explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers	22.5%	10%	12.5%
AO4	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received	22.5%	10%	12.5%

Table 22: Edexcel relationship of assessment objectives to units in English Language and Literature

Assessment objectives		% weighting in A2	% weighting in Unit 3	% weighting in Unit 4
AO1	Select and apply relevant concepts and approaches from integrated linguistic and literary study, using appropriate terminology and accurate, coherent written expression	20%	10%	10%
AO2	Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in a range of spoken and written texts	30%	20%	10%
AO3	Use integrated approaches to explore relationships between texts, analysing and evaluating the significance of contextual factors in their production and reception	30%	20%	10%
AO4	Demonstrate expertise and creativity in using language appropriately for a variety of purposes and audiences, drawing on insights from linguistic and literary studies	20%	N/A	20%

Figure 3 shows an initial analysis of the AP: English assessment standards benchmarked against the Edexcel GCE A2 English Literature assessment objectives. The purpose of this exercise was to identify where there was the most correlation.

Figure 3: Benchmarking AP: English assessment standards against Edexcel GCE A2 English Literature assessment objectives



The AP: English assessment standards which correlate with the UK benchmark were: Extrapolate the most relevant and valuable information in the creation of a new argument (meeting AO1); demonstrate knowledge of the socio-political, economic and literary-historical conditions that inform the production of texts (meeting AO4); display a specific understanding of genre (meeting AO2); and write a logically structured essay, in which all aspects of the topic are analysed and explored in appropriate detail (meeting AO1).

None of the AP: English assessment standards directly address the GCE A level English Literature objective AO3, which is aimed to encourage students to explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers. However, three AP: English assessment standards (2b, 2c and 3b) show some correlation to AO3, and in combination suggest partial coverage of the Edexcel GCE A level English Literature assessment objectives by requiring students to refer to a broad range of texts and perspectives in their answers, and to exhibit a broader knowledge than the texts themselves.

The majority of AP: English assessment standards (six out of 11) cover aspects relating to the Edexcel GCE programme AO1, Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to

literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression. This, in connection with the qualification's overall scope to 'engender a passion for literature as well as providing learners with the opportunity to demonstrate their personal voice'⁴⁴, demonstrates that the AP: English puts a far greater focus on English language, and the ability to structure and develop critical argument than does the A2. In this sense, the AP: English does not show clear alignment with the Edexcel GCE English Literature A2 in terms of assessment criteria.

This could be due to the integration of a wider range of sources to the AP: English, including drama and film, and thereby broadening the scope of the qualification away from the traditional literary focus of the Edexcel GCE A2.

The identified disparity between the qualifications is related to their assessment criteria content, and not their assessment criteria standards, meaning that their overall comparability to GCE A2 level standard should not be dismissed at this stage. The evidence of the AP: English's leaning towards assessing the use of language of its students suggests that it might be more appropriate to compare its assessment criteria to that of the Edexcel GCE A2 level English Language and Literature.

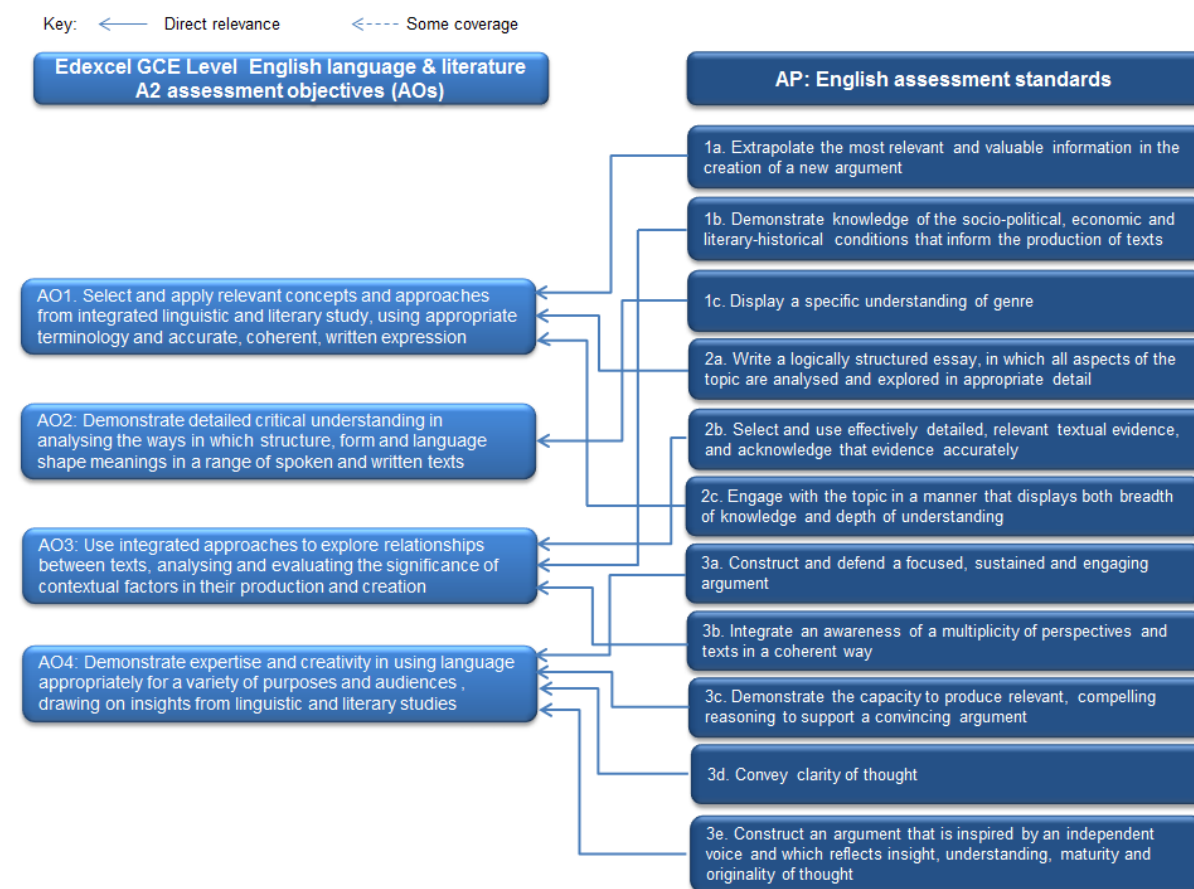
In line with this, a benchmarking analysis of the AP: English compared to the Edexcel GCE A2 level English Language and Literature is shown in Figure 4. This shows far greater correlation between the assessment criteria of the qualification, therefore suggesting that the standard of the AP: English may be comparable to overall GCE A2 level, as demonstrated in Table 23.

Although the GCE A2 English Language and Literature assessment objectives do not vary substantially from its English Literature counterpart, subtle differences in wording remove the emphasis from textual analysis and place it instead on linguistic skill, thereby suggesting closer alignment with the AP: English's assessment standards. Consequently, far more evidence of alignment of standards between the two qualifications was observed.

This shows that there is a clear relationship between the standards associated with the expected achievement of an Edexcel GCE English Language and Literature A2 level student and an AP: English student.

⁴⁴ IEB (2011) *Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General): Advanced Programme English: A subject in addition to the NSC requirements*, p. 3.

Figure 4: Benchmarking AP: English assessment standards against Edexcel GCE A2 English Language and Literature assessment objectives



5.8.3.1 Summary of benchmarking assessment criteria

Table 23 summarises the comparability of assessment criteria across the Edexcel GCE English Literature A2, the Edexcel GCE English Language and Literature A2, and the AP: English.

Table 23: Benchmarking of assessment criteria

Edexcel GCE A2 English Literature objectives	Met by AP: English	Edexcel GCE A2 English Language and Literature objectives	Met by AP: English
Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression	✓	Select and apply relevant concepts and approaches from integrated linguistic and literary study, using appropriate terminology and accurate, coherent, written expression	✓
Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts	Partial	Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in a range of spoken and written texts	Partial
Explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers	Partial	Use integrated approaches to explore relationships between texts, analysing and evaluating the significance of contextual factors in their production and creation	✓
Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received	Partial	Demonstrate expertise and creativity in using language appropriately for a variety of purposes and audiences, drawing on insights from linguistic and literary studies	✓

The analysis suggests that in terms of standard, the AP: English could be considered comparable to the overall level of an English Edexcel GCE A level qualification because it fully meets all but one of the benchmark's assessment criteria. In the single area where assessment criteria are not fully met, there is still general coverage of the area: the AP: English requires a candidate to display a 'specific understanding of genre', where the Edexcel GCE English Language and Literature breaks this down into the requirement to understand a genre's basic components of structure, form and language.

Given the greater similarity between the assessment objectives of Edexcel GCE A2 English Language and Literature, it followed that the benchmarking of grading between the two systems be conducted on this rather than the English Literature qualification.

5.8.4 Grading

Grading systems refer to the structures used to assess students' level of attainment. Performance or competence descriptors are used to outline the level of learning that a candidate should exhibit in order to achieve different levels within the grading system.

There are two primary ways of conducting grading system comparisons across countries. The first is to consider the grading distribution within a system. This considers the number and distance (in terms of marks) between each grade, as well as the proportion of students performing at each of the level.

Table 24 illustrates this for the Edexcel GCE English Language and Literature A2 level and for the AP: English. The grading boundaries are evenly distributed across the qualifications, with 10 percentage points separating each grade (with the exception of the very lowest grade boundaries).

Table 24: Grade distribution of the Edexcel GCE English Language and Literature compared to the AP: English

% attainment	Edexcel GCE English Language and Literature A2 level ⁴⁵		AP: English ⁴⁶	
	Grade	Percentage distribution	Grade	Percentage distribution
80-100	A* / A	13.3%	7	22.7%
70-79	B	25.8%	6	22.7%
60-69	C	33.5%	5	25.2%
50-59	D	19.5%	4	14.3%
40-49	E	6.8%	3	11.8%
30-39	U	1.1%	2	1.7%
00-29			1	1.6%

In considering a comparison based on grade distribution, it is important to recognise the impact that entry requirements may have on attainment. AP: English is taken as an extension course alongside the school system's first exit qualification, the NSC. The system differs from that in England, Northern Ireland and Wales where a GCSE in the subject is usually required as a prerequisite to taking it at AS (AS), and then A2 level⁴⁷. Especially when a grade requirement is placed on GCSE or AS attainment, the system can be seen to incorporate a filter, whereby students who do not attain a specific grade in the earlier stages of education are not able to study towards the A2 level qualification. The presence of such a filter limits the validity of grading distribution comparison, because it means the two systems start on different planes of comparison.

The second way to conduct a meaningful comparison of grading systems is to compare the performance or competence descriptors associated with specific grades.

Figure 5 and Figure 6 illustrate the similarities and differences across grading bands between the Edexcel GCE English Language and Literature A2 and the AP: English. Within

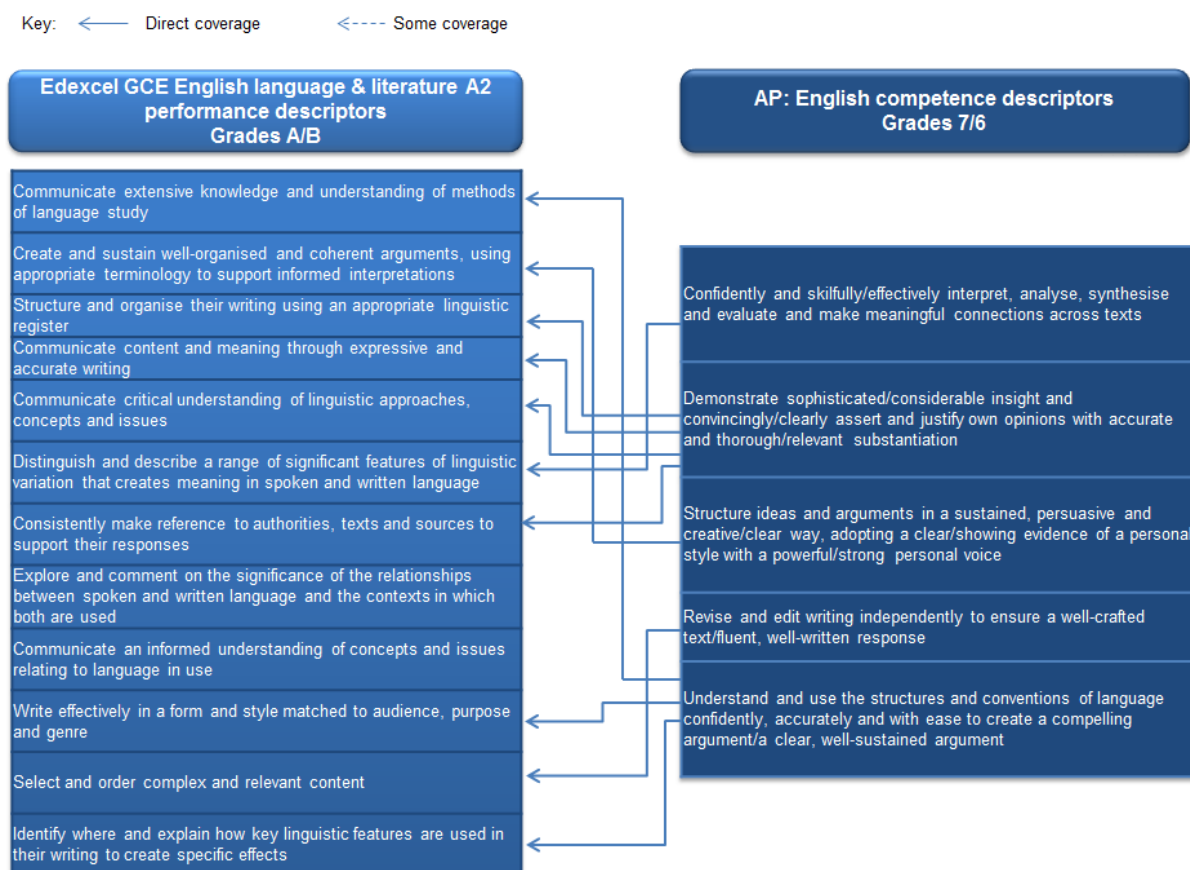
⁴⁵ Pearson Edexcel (2012) (*Provisional*) *GCE Advanced (including Single Awards Applied Subjects)* [pdf].

⁴⁶ IEB (2012) *Annual Report 2012*. Available at: <<http://www.ieb.co.za/report/#/1/>> [accessed November 2012].

⁴⁷ Typically, students may be expected to gain five A*-C grades in their GCSEs to progress to further study. According to the Department for Education (DfE), in 2012 approximately 58.9% of GCSE candidates achieved this standard, thereby filtering out low achieving students.

the top grade boundaries, there is clear evidence that a high achieving AP: English student will show many of the same characteristics as a high achieving Edexcel GCE A2 student.

Figure 5: Benchmarking the highest grade boundaries for the AP: English competence descriptors against Edexcel GCE English Language and Literature A2 performance descriptors



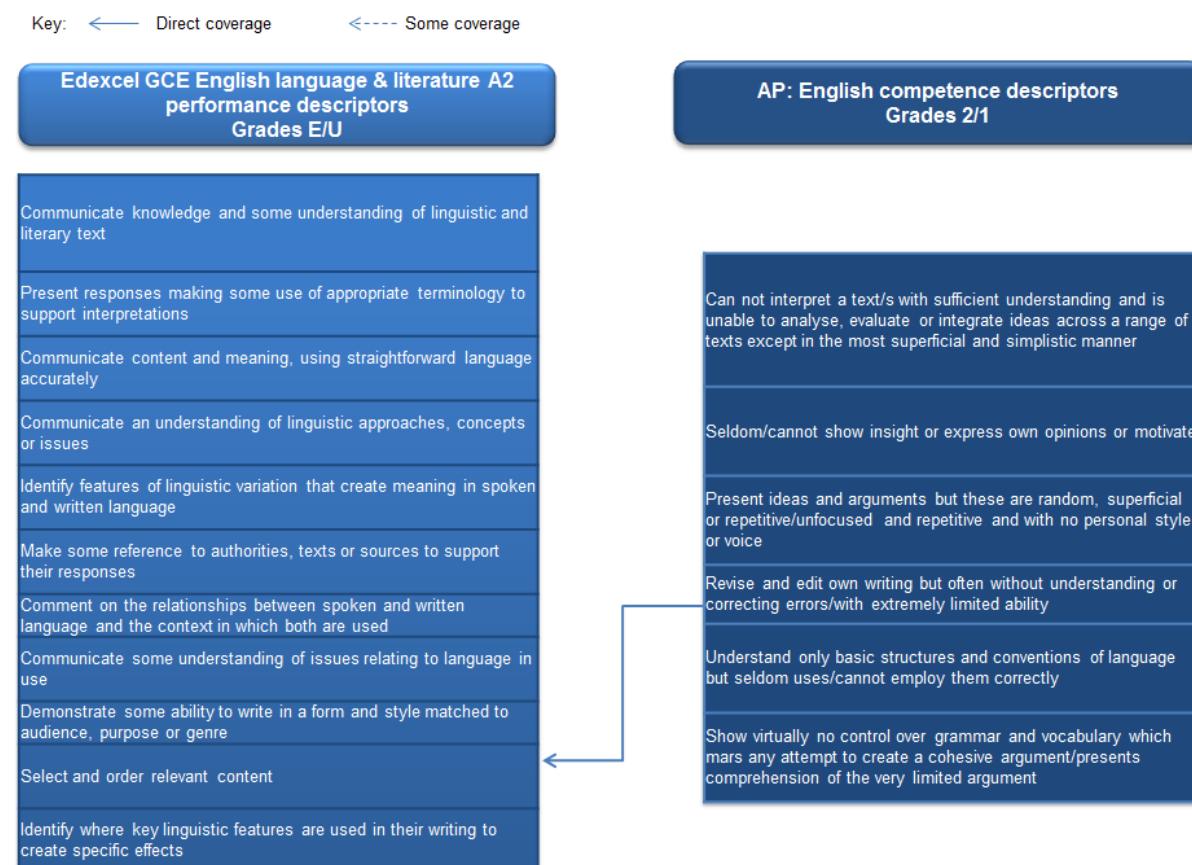
Comparing the lower grading boundaries was difficult due to the two systems' approaches to student achievement at such a level. The IEB's assessment of lower grades tends to focus on what students cannot do in comparison to the highest achieving students, whereas Edexcel's approach uses the lowest graded students' competencies as a baseline from which achievement of higher grades is measured upwards through so called 'can do' statements. This could be the result of overarching differences in education system ideologies in the two countries, whereby South Africa takes a top-down approach to grade allocation, and the UK takes a bottom-up approach. As a consequence of this, the lowest grading boundaries of qualifications across systems were not comparable (demonstrated in Figure 6).

Associated with this, observations were made on the application of the marking scheme in the AP: English examination. These revealed a stark difference between on the one hand, highly graded papers being very positively marked and on the other hand, lower graded papers receiving more critical marking⁴⁸, reflecting what a student cannot do. As such it is difficult to ascertain from the descriptors what constitutes the minimum acceptable level of

⁴⁸ This analysis was based on the careful review of 16 sample examination papers covering the spectrum of grading boundaries and provided to UK NARIC by the IEB.

achievement. On the basis that the nature of the AP: English examination is essay-based and its marking is therefore qualitative, it may be valuable to incorporate more ‘can do’ statements within the lower achievement levels, and the application of the marking scheme to them, so that it seeks to award credit for the skills a student can demonstrate rather than those they cannot.

Figure 6: Benchmarking the lowest grade boundaries for the AP: English competence descriptors against Edexcel GCE English Language and Literature A2 performance descriptors



It is clear that grading in the two countries' systems address the relevant assessment objectives or standards laid out by the awarding bodies. This intra-awarding body relationship is arguably more important than examination of the relationships across their grading systems, because it ensures that grading directly addresses the intended outcomes of the qualification. To clarify, in considering the rigour of the grading system it is more important to consider whether the grading systems in the Edexcel GCE English Language and Literature A2 level and the AP: English address their associated assessment objectives, and thereby analyse them internally, than it is to consider whether the grading systems are comparable across the qualifications, and thereby analyse them externally. Since it has been established that the assessment criteria across qualifications are of a similar standard, it can therefore be deduced that the associated grading systems, which address the assessment criteria, demonstrate comparable rigour.

5.9 Quality assurance

5.9.1 Overarching responsibility for school education

Overarching responsibility for school education in the UK lies with the Department for Education (DfE), responsible for setting national policies, regulations and curriculum requirements.

Similarly in South Africa, overall responsibility for school education also sits at a central level with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) which oversees primary and secondary education across the country as a whole and is implemented in nine provincial departments each with its own education department and mix of state, private and independent schools⁴⁹. Formed in 2009 as a result of the division of the former National Department of Education into the DBE and Department of Higher Education and Training, DBE is responsible for providing a national framework for school policy although administrative responsibility lies with the provinces and locally elected school governing bodies⁵⁰.

As described in the 2010 benchmarking analysis of the NSC⁵¹, other key players in the development, application and interpretation of the NSC qualification and assessments include Umalusi, Higher Education South Africa (HESA) and the IEB.

5.9.2 Monitoring provision

Standards of education in schools in England are monitored by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), an independent and impartial regulator of education services that care for children, young people and learners of all ages who work to government legislation⁵². Reporting directly to Parliament, Ofsted carry out hundreds of inspection visits at education providers each week, focusing on the quality of the education by observing practices.

In South Africa, the government gazetted *The National Policy on Whole-School evaluation*, Vol. 433 No. 22512 (July 2001) which introduced a monitoring and evaluation process for assessing quality standards and performance in schools. Whole-school evaluation is quoted as being the cornerstone of the quality-assurance system in schools in South Africa⁵³ and the conscious use of the term 'whole-school evaluation' over the word 'inspected' and 'supervisors' instead of 'inspectors' (as used by Ofsted in England) was to reflect the process of school self-evaluation (in addition to external evaluation) and the support, development and guidance provided by the trained evaluators.

⁴⁹ Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West, Northern Cape and Western Cape.

⁵⁰ Province of the Eastern Cape Education (n.d.) *Schools*. Available at: <<http://www.ecdoe.gov.za/schools>> [accessed October 2012].

⁵¹ UK NARIC (2010) *Benchmarking Analysis: The National Senior Certificate (Republic of South Africa)*.

⁵² Ofsted (n.d.) *Who we are and what we do*. Available at: <<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/about-us>> [accessed October 2012].

⁵³ Department of Education (2001), *The National Policy on Whole-School Evaluation* [pdf].

Criteria for schools wishing to offer the AP: English is not specifically mentioned by the IEB in the information provided on their website⁵⁴, although there are general criteria for schools registering with the IEB who wish to write the NSC. South African schools must also be accredited by Umalusi, or at least undergoing evaluation by Umalusi for the IEB to provisionally accept them.

5.9.3 Responsibility for standards setting and curriculum development

The responsibility for overall standards setting in the UK lies with the DfE. The DfE sets national curriculum requirements and attainment level descriptors in general (GCSEs, A- and AS levels, Functional Skills and Projects) and for each subject. It also sets curricula for vocational qualifications offered by state schools which include maintained schools, academies and Free Schools⁵⁵. These standards are regulated by Ofqual, which is the independent examination regulator overseeing qualifications, examinations and testing in England.

In South Africa, the DBE is specifically responsible for curriculum development, implementation and monitoring from Foundation Phase learning (Grade R) to Grade 12 (the exiting year from senior secondary education). The DBE's National Curriculum Statements have undergone reviews in 2000 and 2009 since their initial implementation in 1995 (*Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002)*, *National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (2002)*). Within the National Curriculum Statement framework is the National Protocol for Assessment, which standardises recording and reporting in schools (Grades R-12) and provides a regulatory framework for the management of school assessment records⁵⁶.

Further amendments to the National Curriculum Statement came into effect in January 2012, which resulted in a single comprehensive Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAP) document for each subject in Grades R-12 to replace Subject Statements, Learning Programme Guidelines (LPGs) and Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAGs). Although approved by the Members of the Executive Council (CEM), CAPs are still subject to promulgation in the *Government Gazette* but are currently published to support planning and implementation⁵⁷.

5.9.4 Marking and moderation procedures

Methods of assessing GCE A levels in England, Wales and Northern Ireland involve a combination of coursework and examinations. Coursework usually involves a piece of independent work that may take the form of written research reports, essays, dissertations or experiments. Although not part of the final examination assessment, coursework contributes

⁵⁴ IEB (n.d.), *Advanced Programme Courses*. Available at <http://www.ieb.co.za/School/advancedprogrammecourses.php> [accessed September 2012].

⁵⁵ Department for Education (n.d.), *The school curriculum*. Available at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum> [accessed October 2012].

⁵⁶ Department of Education (2005) *The National Protocol on Assessment for Schools in the General and Further Education and Training Band (Grades R-12)* [pdf] [accessed November 2012].

⁵⁷ Department for Basic Education (n.d.), *FET Curriculum Assessment policy documents*. Available at: <http://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/CurriculumAssessmentPolicyStatements/CAPSFETPhase/tabid/420/Default.aspx> [accessed October 2012].

approximately 30% to the overall grade of the GCE A level (notwithstanding subject variations).

Coursework is internally assessed in schools by teachers who meet to discuss standardisation procedures⁵⁸, although a sample of individuals' coursework is requested by the awarding bodies for moderation purposes.

Methods of assessing the AP: English in South Africa are outlined in the *Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General) Advanced Programme English A subject in addition to the NSC requirements* (2011). Marking guidelines for use by examiners and sub-examiners for the AP: English are set by the IEB. As with GCE A levels in England, each examiner or sub-examiner is required to attend rigorous standardisation meetings prior to marking scripts to ensure results are fairly interpreted. Specific mark allocations are omitted from the guidelines because the IEB acknowledge that there could be different views between examiners about some matters of emphasis or detail.

The process of moderation involves a panel consisting of an IEB examiner and an internal moderator who moderate the AP: English programme papers prior to further 'assessment' by Umalusi subject experts. Once Umalusi subject experts approve the papers, they are distributed to the provinces which are responsible for organising the examination assessment. Post examination moderation and quality assurance in Grade 12 is conducted by Umalusi through moderation of the examination marking and establishment of the standardisation process⁵⁹.

5.9.5 Summary

Analysis of the different quality assurance procedures in South Africa reflects a broadly similar framework to that of the UK by the way legislation and curriculum is developed centrally, separate authorities exist for quality assurance enforcement and numerous assessment bodies are accredited to deliver examination assessments to set conditions. Although contextual differences do exist, the quality assurance and accreditation procedures in South Africa are in place to ensure credibility of qualifications across the country and between provincial departments. The IEB, an assessment body accredited by Umalusi, confirms that its AP: English course is an accredited qualification recognised by Umalusi and so therefore the standard of the programme remains robust.

⁵⁸ Standardisation is a process used to mitigate the effect of matters that may affect assessment other than the learners' knowledge and aptitude of the learners' performance.

⁵⁹ UK NARIC (2010) *Benchmarking Analysis: The National Senior Certificate (Republic of South Africa)*.

6. Final Summary and Analysis

The overarching aim of this project was to fully understand and analyse the AP: English programme in the context of a widely recognised standard in secondary education, specifically, the GCE A level as regulated and maintained by Ofqual in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In order to achieve this, in-depth primary analyses of the core components of the AP: English and the GCE A level were undertaken (including an examination of the aims, design, content, learning outcomes, assessment criteria and quality assurance mechanism), and supported by analysis of supplementary evidence including examination papers and marking guidelines. The standard of the GCE A level was used as the overall benchmark. To aid in-depth investigation of key characteristics of the qualifications, analysis was conducted against the following: Ofqual criteria for English Literature and English Language and Literature; and Edexcel GCE A level criteria for English Literature and English Language and Literature. A balanced assessment of all relevant qualification components was undertaken to ensure that the AP: English was benchmarked in a fair and appropriate manner. The subsections below summarise the analysis and highlight key observations from the report.

6.1 Aims, design⁶⁰ and content and breadth of study

Evidence suggested that, broadly, the GCE A level aims for English Literature and English Language and Literature were fully met by the AP: English programme, and that the design and content and breadth of study were partially met. When considering the aims and content of the AP: English in comparison to the GCE A levels in English Literature and English Language and Literature, similarities were observed across the programmes' aims, duration, modes of learning, progression routes, and reading lists. Differences were observed across the programmes' entry requirements and content and breadth of study.

The differences in content and breadth of study of the AP: English programme when compared to the Edexcel GCE A level English Literature and English Language and Literature did not necessarily imply incomparability because the expected outcomes, i.e. the skills outlined in the GCE A level learning outcomes, could be achieved through a variety of study methods and study texts. It is also important to recognise that in the context of this study the Edexcel programme was referenced as an indication of how GCE A level criteria have been applied and put into practice, so a direct comparability between the content of the programmes would not necessarily be a significant factor in determining the comparability of the level of the AP: English. Moreover, variations in content are inevitable for programmes such as English, as many factors determine course content, such as cultural traditions which may influence the choice of texts, and the skills favoured by the awarding body or country of origin. Nevertheless, there is close correlation between the level and depth of skills required.

⁶⁰ In this context 'design' encompasses the qualification elements of entry requirements, duration, modes of learning and progression routes.

6.2 Learning outcomes

Evidence suggested that the GCE A level learning outcomes for English Literature and English Language and Literature were largely met by the AP: English programme. Any variations largely reflect the content differences between the programmes as clear coverage of almost all A level skills are evident within the AP: English learning outcomes. In particular both qualifications develop students' ability to construct comprehensive and convincing arguments both responding to an extract and drawing on their wider reading, requiring them to demonstrate the impact of varying contexts on the way in which texts are produced and read.

6.3 Assessment

Evidence suggested that, broadly, the GCE A level criteria for assessment for English Literature and English Language and Literature were fully met by the AP: English programme. Consideration of assessment included comparative analysis of the programmes' relative assessment methods, weighting, assessment criteria and grading.

In terms of assessment methods used for the AP: English, it was found that there were differences in the style of assessment used for the AP: English and the GCE A levels in English Literature and English Language and Literature. In the GCE A level programmes, assessment constitutes a combination of coursework and examinations split over the two year study period, whereas the assessment of the AP: English is based solely upon a three-hour examination at the conclusion of the three-year programme.

It was also identified that the nature and structure of questions used in the AP: English examinations are similar to those used in GCE A level programmes, requiring a similar demonstration of skills. One difference noted though was the element of choice provided in the examination papers with the GCE A level giving students a choice of questions, whereas the AP: English questions are all compulsory. It could be suggested that giving students a choice of question enables them the flexibility to demonstrate their knowledge and skills to the best of their ability, but by making all questions compulsory, this flexibility is removed. Either way, however, students must ensure they are thoroughly prepared for the examination in terms of both content and examination technique.

One of the main differences identified between the different programmes' assessment procedures was the assessment criteria used in grading students' performance. Within the AP: English assessment criteria, it was observed that grading took a top-down approach in contrast to the GCE A level's bottom-up approach to identifying relevant skills. It was suggested that a focus on the skills students can demonstrate, rather than those they cannot, might facilitate an assessment process more aligned with the GCE A level. Implementation would make students more aware of the skills they should be able to demonstrate to meet certain levels and also assessors more aware of the skills they are looking for.

6.4 Quality assurance

Evidence suggested that the GCE A level quality assurance mechanisms and procedures for English Literature and English Language and Literature were fully met by the AP: English programme. The examination of the AP: English quality assurance procedures in comparison to those used for GCE A levels found that the programmes had undergone a similarly rigorous degree of quality assurance. Both programmes use a combination of internal and external quality assurance practices and both awarding bodies are nationally recognised and accredited.

6.5 Overall comparability

In light of a thorough examination of the criteria used for benchmarking qualifications, UK NARIC can confirm that the IEB AP: English is considered comparable to the overall GCE A level standard. The GCE A level standard sits at Level 3 on the QCF in the UK, which is the same level as the GCE AS level. Evidently, as both qualifications sit at the same level, there are only small differences between the two. It is important to note that this conclusion is based on the overall comparability of the educational level of the AP: English as being comparable to the educational level of the GCE A level, rather than direct equivalence to a specific GCE A level programme.

This assessment is based upon a balanced evaluation of key criteria, including aims, design, content and breadth of study, learning outcomes, assessment criteria and quality assurance.

A level core components	Met by AP English?
Aims	Sufficiently Met
Design:	
Entry requirements	Not met
Duration	Sufficiently Met
Modes of learning	Sufficiently Met
Associated outcomes (progression routes)	Sufficiently Met
Programme content and breadth of study	Partially Met
Learning outcomes	Sufficiently Met
Assessment	Sufficiently Met
Quality assurance	Sufficiently Met

Although some differences have been identified, upon completion of the AP: English, students can be expected to have achieved a similar depth of knowledge and skill as GCE A level students. Clear similarities have been identified between the educational levels of the two programmes, the complexity of the materials studied and the overall demand of the examinations. Although students are tested on different skills, there is no indication that one qualification represents a higher level of attainment than the other. This is underlined by the

fact that both qualifications are considered to provide a sufficiently rigorous foundation for tertiary study, resulting in the following overall comparability statement:

Independent Programme	Examinations	Board	Comparability
Advanced Programme English			Is considered comparable to the overall GCE A level standard

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Appendix 1: Texts Studied During the AP: English

- Poetry
 - The Metaphysicals; 17th century
 - Death Be Not Proud – John Donne
 - The Flea – John Donne
 - The Ecstasy – John Donne
 - To his Coy Mistress – Andrew Marvell
 - The Collar – George Herbert
 - The Romantics; 1800-1840
 - London – William Blake
 - The little Black Boy – William Blake
 - The Lamb – William Blake
 - The Tyger – William Blake
 - Sunflower – William Blake
 - Ozymandias – Percy Bysshe Shelley
 - The Mask of Anarchy – Percy Bysshe Shelley
 - The Victorians; 18-1900
 - Mariana – Alfred Lord Tennyson
 - Ulysses – Alfred Lord Tennyson
 - The Ruined Maid – Thomas Hardy
 - A Forsaken Garden – Algernon Charles Swinburne
 - Carrion Comfort – Gerard Manley Hopkins
 - Modernists; late 19th-early 20th century
 - The Wasteland – Thomas Stearns Eliot
 - The Second Coming – William Butler Yeats
 - The Garden – Ezra Pound
 - Musee des Beaux Arts – Wystan Hugh Auden
 - anyone lived in a pretty how town – e.e. Cummings
 - Early South African Poetry; 19th century
 - Makanna's Gathering – Thomas Pringle
 - The Serf – Roy Campbell
 - It is better to be together – Ruth Miller
 - A dead tree full of live birds – Lionel Abrahams
 - Cape Coloured batman – Guy Butler
 - South African Protest Poetry; 1948-1990
 - The Child who was Shot Dead by Soldiers at Nyanga – Ingrid Jonker
 - My brothers in the streets – Mongane Serote
 - They call you mister steve biko now you're dead – Shabbir Banoobhai
 - From the underground – Peter Horn
 - Motho ke Motho ka Batho Babang – Jeremy Cronin

- 21st Century South African Poetry. 2000-onwards

- Prose
 - The Scarlet Letter - Nathaniel Hawthorne - 1850
 - Hard Times - Charles Dickens - 1854
 - Wuthering Heights - Emily Bronte - 1847
 - Disgrace - J.M. Coetzee - 1999
 - Solar - Ian McEwan - 2010
 - Cat's Eye - Margaret Atwood - 1988
 - Jude the Obscure - Thomas Hardy - 1895
 - Mrs Dalloway - Virginia Woolf - 1925
 - A Fine Balance - Rohinton Mistry - 1995
 - The Great Gatsby - F. Scott Fitzgerald - 1925
 - Anthills of the Savannah - Chinua Achebe - 1987

- Drama
 - A Streetcar named Desire - Tennessee Williams - 1947
 - Boesman and Lena - Athol Fugard - 1965
 - Dr Faustus - Christopher Marlowe - 1604
 - Death of a Salesman - Arthur Miller - 1949
 - Othello - William Shakespeare - 1604
 - King Lear - William Shakespeare - 1606
 - The Tempest - William Shakespeare - 1611
 - A Doll's House - Henrik Ibsen - 1879
 - Top Girls - Caryl Churchill - 1982
 - Saturday Night at the Palace - Paul Slabolepszy & Bill Flynn - 1982

- Film
 - Breaker Morant - Bruce Beresford - 1980
 - Tsotsi - Gavin Hood - 2005
 - Revolutionary Road - Sam Mendes - 2008
 - The Last Station - Michael Hoffman - 2009
 - Psycho - Alfred Hitchcock - 1960
 - Bicycle Thieves - Vittorio de Sica - 1948
 - Muriel's Wedding - P.J. Hogan - 1994
 - On the Waterfront - Elia Kazan - 1954
 - The Last King of Scotland - Kevin Macdonald - 2006

Appendix 2: The Ofqual A Level

Ofqual's July 2011 publication of *Criteria for GCE AS and A-level Qualifications* set out the guidelines for the content, assessment and reporting of GCE A levels that form the basis for the development and accreditation of the award. Previously the criteria were published within The Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2004)⁶¹.

As of 2011, the guidelines on the content of GCE AS and A levels include information on the titling and subject matter⁶².

The titles of the GCE AS and A levels must:

- where relevant subject criteria exist, correspond to the titles used in the relevant subject criteria published by the regulators; and
- where relevant subject criteria do not exist, be sufficiently broad to cover different specifications in the same subject area.

The subject matter of GCE AS and A levels must:

- state which aspects / options must be taken to meet the requirements of the respective countries, where statutory requirements differ in England, Wales and Northern Ireland;
- include optional units only if these:
 - demand additional skills, knowledge and / or understanding
 - extend the core content within a specialist context and / or introduce links to another subject area.
- identify opportunities to generate evidence for the assessment of the skills improving own learning and performance, problem solving and working with others;
- for AS qualifications:
 - provide an appropriate balance of knowledge, skills and understanding to match the first half of the full A level course of study
 - enable candidates to be assessed, normally by means of two assessment units which, taken together, will have a total weight of 50 per cent of the A level
 - include assessment units that will be weighted within the range of 15-35 per cent of the full A level
 - for double award specifications, enable candidates to be assessed normally by means of four assessment units which, taken together, will have a total weight of 50 per cent of the A level double award
- for A2 assessments that will be combined with AS assessments to lead to the award of a full A level:
 - provide an appropriate balance of knowledge, skills and understanding to match the second half of a full A level course of study

⁶¹ Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2004), *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* [pdf] [accessed September 2012].

⁶² Ofqual (2011) *Criteria for GCE AS and A-level Qualifications* [pdf] [accessed October 2012].

- enable candidates to be assessed, normally by means of two assessment units which, taken together, will have a total weight of 50 per cent of the full A level
- include assessment units that will be weighted within the range of 15-35 per cent of the full A level
- enable candidates undertaking double-award specifications to be assessed by means of four assessment units which, taken together, will have a total weight of 50 per cent of the A level double award

Assessment

There are twelve assessment arrangements for GCE AS and A level accorded to by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) that can broadly be described as requiring an approach that provides variety, clarity, connectivity, comparability and appropriateness.

Appendix 2, Table 1: Criteria for GCE A level Qualifications

Criteria for GCE AS and A-level Qualifications (2011)	
Assessment	
1	Offer candidates the opportunity to be assessed either (in stages) during the course or at the end of the course;
2	Normally include only one component of assessment (internal assessment may involve more than one task, while external assessment may, for example, involve listening, reading and writing aspects. In each case, there will be one awarding process per unit);
3	Not exceed a maximum examining time for external assessments of three hours at AS and four hours at A2, unless otherwise agreed in the subject criteria;
4	Set out the relationship between the assessment objectives and the assessment components;
5	Show the proportion of marks allocated to each assessment objective (or group of assessment objectives) and to each assessment unit;
6	Show which assessment objectives will include the assessment of written communication;
7	Include sufficient synoptic assessment at A2 to test the candidates' understanding of the connections between the different elements of the subject and their holistic understanding of the subject;
8	Include A2 assessments that provide appropriate demand and; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ use a variety of stems in questions ○ ensure connectivity between sections of questions ○ use a wide range of question types and tasks to address different skills;
9	Be comparable for all candidates, even where there are optional assessment units or optional examination questions;
10	Include extended writing in all subjects (except where agreed with the regulators as inappropriate) and must be in accordance with the regulations that apply to the quality of

	written communication;
11	Allow resits of an assessment unit with best result coming towards the qualification.
12	Use internal assessment only where it is the soundest method of assessing specific skills within the assessment objectives, and in accordance with the regulations.

Reporting

The arrangements for the grading and reporting of GCEs are included in the 2011 Ofqual publication *Criteria for GCE AS and A-level Qualifications*. The arrangements include a five-grade scale from A to E (where A is the highest) for AS level and a six-grade scale from A* to E (where A* is the highest) for GCE A level. The A* grade for GCE A level was introduced during the 2008 revision of the AS / A2 structure. For both GCE levels, where attainment is insufficient to lead to the award, the AS / A level is considered Unclassified or U.

Figure 7: Grade scale for Ofqual GCE AS and A levels

	<u>AS level</u>	<u>A level</u>
Sufficient attainment	<div> A B C D E </div>	<div> A* A B C D E </div>
Insufficient attainment	<div>U</div>	<div>U</div>

Figure 8: Grade scale for Ofqual GCE AS and A level double awards

	<u>AS level</u> <u>Double Award</u>	<u>A level</u> <u>Double Award</u>
Sufficient attainment	<div>AA</div> <div>AB</div> <div>BB</div> <div>BC</div> <div>CC</div> <div>CD</div> <div>DD</div> <div>DE</div> <div>EE</div>	<div>A*A*</div> <div>AA*</div> <div>AA</div> <div>AB</div> <div>BB</div> <div>BC</div> <div>CC</div> <div>CD</div> <div>DD</div> <div>DE</div> <div>EE</div>
Insufficient attainment	U	U

The GCE AS and A level grades awarded should match performance descriptors published by the regulators. If performance descriptors do not exist, the GCE AS and A level grades should match performance descriptions for AS and A2 levels at the grade boundaries of A and B, and E and U⁶³.

GCE AS and A levels sit within level 3 of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). As stated in the Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework 2008:

'Achievement at level 3 reflects the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to complete tasks and address problems that, while well defined, have a measure of complexity. It includes taking responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures as well as exercising autonomy and judgement within limited parameters. It also reflects awareness of different perspectives or approaches within an area of study or work'.

The QCF level 3 descriptors⁶⁴ pertaining to knowledge and understanding, application and action, and autonomy and accountability are listed below in Appendix 2, Table 2.

⁶³ Ofqual (2011) *Criteria for GCE AS and A-level Qualifications* [pdf] [accessed October 2012].

⁶⁴ Ofqual (2011) *Criteria for GCE AS and A-level Qualifications* [pdf] [accessed October 2012].

Appendix 2, Table 2: QCF level 3 descriptors

Summary	Knowledge and understanding	Application and action	Autonomy and accountability
<p>1. Identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to complete tasks and address problems that, while well defined, have a measure of complexity.</p> <p>2. Take responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures as well as exercising judgement within limited parameters.</p> <p>3. Awareness of different perspectives or approaches within an area of study or work.</p>	<p>1. Use factual, procedural and theoretical understanding to complete tasks and address problems that while well defined, may be complete and non-routine.</p> <p>2. Interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas</p> <p>3. Be aware of the nature of the area of study or work.</p> <p>4. Have awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.</p>	<p>1. Address problems that, while well defined, may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>2. Identify select and use appropriate skills, methods and procedures.</p> <p>3. Use appropriate investigation to inform actions. Review how effective methods and actions have been.</p>	<p>1. Take responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures, including where relevant, responsibility for supervising or guiding others.</p> <p>2. Exercise autonomy and judgement within limited parameters.</p>

Ofqual GCE AS and A Level subject criteria for English Literature

Further to the general criteria for GCE AS and A levels, Ofqual also sets out criteria specific to the different subjects offered at these levels.

The objectives for the GCE AS and A level English Literature seek to enable students to foster an interest in literature and encourage them to enjoy all aspects of literary studies throughout the programme. During the AS and A2 years, students are encouraged to:

- 'Read widely and independently both set texts and others that they have selected for themselves';
- Engage creatively with a substantial body of texts and ways of responding to them;
- Develop and effectively apply their knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation in speech and writing;
- Explore the contexts of the texts they are reading and others' interpretations of them; and
- Deepen their understanding of the changing traditions of literature in English.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Ofqual (2011), *GCE AS and A Level Subject Criteria for English Literature*, p. 3 [accessed October 2012]

They do so through studying a variety of texts including at least two pieces of poetry, prose and drama, building upon the skills and competencies gained through studying English Literature at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level. At GCE A level, students are expected to develop their analytical skills through evaluating or comparing various genres of literary texts, studying 12 texts throughout the course that meet the following criteria:

- 'At least one play by Shakespeare;
- Work by at least one author writing between 1300 and 1800;
- At least one work first published or performed after 1990; and
- At AS, work by at least one author published between 1800 and 1945'⁶⁶

Students are required to have extensive knowledge of these texts in order to examine the relationships that could exist between them, as well as an understanding of how the culture and context of the texts could have influenced the writer and the readers. The texts selected should be of a high quality and substantial, but also should be clearly grouped together. The selection could involve a translated text, provided it has had a marked influence on the development of English literature.

Skills and competences

The required knowledge and understanding that students should be able to demonstrate varies between AS and A2 level and are conveyed to the student through the differing specifications for what is to be covered during that year. At AS level, the programme specifications should include:

- 'The functions and effects of structure, form and language in texts;
- Some of the ways in which individual texts are interpreted by different readers; and
- Some of the ways in which texts relate to one another and to the contexts in which they are written and read.'⁶⁷

At A2 level, the programme specifications should include:

- 'The ways in which writers use and adapt language, form and structure in texts;
- The interpretation of texts by different readers, including over time;
- How texts relate to literary traditions, movements and genres; and
- The cultural and contextual influences on readers and writers'⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Ofqual (2011), *GCE AS and A Level Subject Criteria for English Literature*, p. 4 [accessed October 2012]

⁶⁷ Ofqual (2011), *GCE AS and A Level Subject Criteria for English Literature*, p. 4 [accessed October 2012]

⁶⁸ Ofqual (2011), *GCE AS and A Level Subject Criteria for English Literature*, pp. 4-5 [accessed October 2012]

By meeting the specifications of the AS and A2 programme, students should be able to:

- 'Read texts in a variety of ways and respond critically and creatively;
- Vary strategies for reading, including for detail, overview and gist depending on the texts being studied and purposes for reading them;
- Explore comparisons and contrasts between texts, establishing links and relationships;
- Identify and consider how attitudes and values are expressed in texts;
- Draw on their understanding of different interpretations in responding to and evaluating texts;
- Draw on their understanding of different interpretations in responding to and evaluating texts;
- Communicate fluently, accurately and effectively their knowledge, understanding and judgement of texts;
- Use literary critical concepts and terminology with understanding and discrimination; and
- Make accurate reference to quotations from texts and sources.'⁶⁹

Whilst the skills listed above result from meeting the specifications of the GCE AS and A2 level programme, at A2 level there are some additional skills students are expected to be able to demonstrate. These include:

- 'Synthesise and reflect upon their knowledge and understanding of a range of literary texts and ways of reading them; and
- Make appropriate use of the conventions of writing in literary studies, including references to quotation and sources.'⁷⁰

By examining the differences between the learning outcomes achieved at GCE AS and A level and the learning outcomes achieved at A2 level only, it can be surmised that the main differences between the two levels are the ability to be able to use acquired knowledge to interpret texts and to do so in an appropriate manner.

Assessment objectives

Students must demonstrate a number of required competences at each level. These are called assessment objectives and carry different weightings depending on whether they are required as part of the AS or A2 units. They can be demonstrated in Appendix 2, Table 3⁷¹:

⁶⁹ Ofqual (2011), *GCE AS and A Level Subject Criteria for English Literature*, p. 5 [accessed October 2012]

⁷⁰ Ofqual (2011), *GCE AS and A Level Subject Criteria for English Literature*, p. 5 [accessed October 2012]

⁷¹ Edexcel (2010) *Specification: GCE English Literature (Issue 3)*, p. 6

Appendix 2, Table 3: Ofqual GCE AS, A2 and A level assessment objectives

Assessment Objectives		Weighting		
		AS level	A2 level	A level
A01	Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression	15 - 35%	15 - 35%	15 - 35%
A02	Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts	15 - 35%	15 - 35%	15 - 35%
A03	Explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers	15 - 35%	15 - 35%	15 - 35%
A04	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received	15 - 35%	15 - 35%	15 - 35%

Assessment methods

Students are assessed using internal and external assessment methods, including coursework that is assessed internally, and examinations that are assessed externally. Each unit must consist of between 15 and 40 per cent of internal assessment and 60 and 85 per cent of external assessment. A maximum of 40 per cent of the AS and of the A2 can be assessed internally.

The way students will be assessed by internal assessment must be clearly specified, including:

- 'The specific skills to be assessed;
- Setting of tasks;
- Extent of supervision in carrying out of tasks;
- Conditions under which assessment takes place;
- Marking of the assessment and internal standardising procedures;
- Any moderation process.'⁷²

At A2 level students are expected to draw together skills and knowledge gained through studying a variety of texts and they are examined in this through synoptic assessment, where they must explore the contextual and cultural aspects of texts when describing their interpretation.

Students are required to use the appropriate terminology and form necessary for their response when answering questions or completing coursework. Students are also assessed

⁷² Ofqual (2011), *GCE AS and A Level Subject Criteria for English Literature*, p. 5 [accessed October 2012]

based on the coherence of their argument and that they have used spelling, punctuation and grammar correctly.

Ofqual also list the requirements for the resources students are allowed to use in examinations. Where the assessment requires an open-book examination, the text must not contain any annotations or information providers either by the publisher, student or any other party.

Appendix 3: Texts Studied During the Edexcel GCE A level English Literature

Students will study a selection of texts from the lists below:

Poetry

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'anyone lived in a pretty how town' – e e Cummings • 'O little one, this longing is the pits' - Marilyn Hacker • 'O lurcher-loving collier, black as night' – W H Auden • 'Sweet-safe-Houses' – Emily Dickinson • from <i>Aurora Leigh</i>, Book I – Elizabeth Barrett Browning • from <i>Fears in Solitude</i> - S T Coleridge • from <i>Four Quartets: Little Gidding</i> – T S Eliot • from <i>In Memoriam</i> – Alfred, Lord Tennyson • from <i>Meditations in Time of Civil War</i> – W B Yeats • from <i>On a Raised Beach</i> – Hugh MacDiarmid • from <i>The Knight's Tale</i> - Geoffrey Chaucer • from <i>The Prelude</i> – William Wordsworth • from <i>Trollope's Journal</i> - Elizabeth Bishop • <i>A Coat</i> – W B Yeats • <i>A Dialogue of Friendship Multiplied</i> - Katherine Philips • <i>A Drover</i> - Padraic Colum • <i>A Hymn to God the Father</i> - John Donne • <i>A Letter to her Husband</i> - Anne Bradstreet • <i>A Nocturnal Upon St Lucy's Day</i> - John Donne | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Priest...Addresses His Somnolent Mistress</i> - Peter Didsbury • <i>A Refusal to Mourn the Death...of a Child...</i> - Dylan Thomas • <i>A Song (Ask me no more)</i> - Thomas Carew • <i>A Survey</i> - William Stafford • <i>A Valediction of Weeping</i> - John Donne • <i>A Wish</i> – Samuel Rogers • <i>Adultery</i> - Carol Ann Duffy • <i>After Reading in a Letter Proposals for Building a Cottage</i> – John Clare • <i>Against Coupling</i> - Fleur Adcock • <i>Alfred Corning Clarke</i> - Robert Lowell • <i>American Football</i> - Harold Pinter • <i>Another Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries</i> - Hugh MacDiarmid • <i>Another Woman</i> - Imtiaz Dharker • <i>As the Team's Head-Brass</i> – Edward Thomas • <i>At Grass</i> - Philip Larkin • <i>At Home</i> – Christina Rossetti • <i>At the Round Earth's Imagined Corners</i> - John Donne • <i>August 1914</i> - Isaac Rosenberg • <i>August 6, 1945</i> - Alison Fell • <i>Aunt Julia</i> – Norman MacCaig • <i>Autobiography</i> – Louis MacNeice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Baby Song</i> - Thom Gunn • <i>Badly-Chosen Lover</i> - Rosemary Tonks • <i>Ballad of the Bread Man</i> - Charles Causley • <i>Batter my Heart</i> - John Donne • <i>Beeny Cliff</i> – Thomas Hardy • <i>Behold the Lilies of the Field</i> - Anthony Hecht • <i>Being a Wife</i> - Selima Hill • <i>Bermudas</i> - Andrew Marvell • <i>Binsey Poplars</i> - Gerard Manley Hopkins • <i>Birches</i> - Robert Frost • <i>Black March</i> - Stevie Smith • <i>Break of Day in the Trenches</i> - Isaac Rosenberg • <i>Builders</i> – Ruth Padel • <i>Cambodia</i> - James Fenton • <i>Channel Firing</i> - Thomas Hardy • <i>Cock-Crow</i> - Edward Thomas • <i>Coming</i> - Heather McHugh • <i>Conscientious Objector</i> - E St Vincent Millay • <i>Cotswold Ways</i> – Ivor Gurney • <i>Crossing the Water</i> - Sylvia Plath • <i>CV</i> – Simon Armitage • <i>Death in Leamington</i> - John Betjeman • <i>Desert Places</i> - Robert Frost • <i>Digging</i> – Edward Thomas • <i>Dirge</i> - Kenneth Fearing |
|--|---|--|

- *Dover Beach* – Matthew Arnold
- *Dream Songs 4, 62* - John Berryman
- *Dulce et Decorum Est* - Wilfred Owen
- *Ecstasy* - Sharon Olds
- *Elegy: To his Mistress Going to Bed* - John Dunne
- *Emergency Kit: Poems for Strange Times* – ed. Jo Shapcott and Matthew Sweeney
- *End of Another Home Holiday* – D H Lawrence
- *Epic* – Patrick Kavanagh
- *Epitaph on a Tyrant* - W H Auden
- *Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries* - Hugh MacDiarmid
- *Especially when the October wind* – Dylan Thomas
- *Essential Serbo-Croat* - Ken Smith
- *Facing It* - Yusef Komunyakaa
- *Father* – Elaine Feinstein
- *Felix Randal* – Gerard Manley Hopkins
- *Field Day* – W R Rogers
- *From a Conversation During Divorce* - Carol Rumens
- *Frost at Midnight* – Samuel Taylor Coleridge
- *Futility* - Wilfred Owen
- *Going, Going* – Philip Larkin
- *Hay-making* – Gillian Clarke
- *Henry by Night* - John Berryman
- *Here to Eternity* – ed. Andrew Motion
- *Himalayan Balsam* – Anne Stevenson
- *Home is so Sad* – Philip Larkin
- *Home-thoughts, from Abroad* – Robert Browning

- *House on a Cliff* – Louis MacNeice
- *How the old Mountains drip with Sunset* - Emily Dickinson
- *How to Kill* - Keith Douglas
- *Hydromaniac* - Rosemary Tonks
- *I Remember, I Remember* – Thomas Hood
- *Iago Prytherch* - R S Thomas
- *In Memoriam (Easter 1915)* - Edward Thomas
- *In Memory of W B Yeats* – W H Auden
- *In Time of 'The Breaking of Nations'* - Thomas Hardy
- *Infant Joy* – William Blake
- *Interruption to a Journey* - Norman MacCaig
- *It Was All Very Tidy* - Robert Graves
- *It's Work* – Benjamin Zephaniah
- *John Mouldy* - Walkter de la Mare
- *Landscape* – Michael Longley
- *Landscapes* - T S Eliot
- *Legion* – David Harsent
- *Lollocks* - Robert Graves
- *Lore* - R S Thomas
- *Love (III) (Love Bade me Welcome)* - George Herbert
- *Love in a Life* – Robert Browning
- *Mariana* – Alfred, Lord Tennyson
- *Maura* - Thomas Lynch
- *MCMXIV* - Philip Larkin
- *Men against Trees* – Christopher Reid
- *Metaphysical Poetry* – ed. C Burrow and C Ricks
- *Miners* – Wilfred Owen
- *Money* – C H Sisson
- *Mouse's Nest* - John Clare

- *Mushrooms* - Sylvia Plath
- *My Beloved Compares Herself to a Pint of Stout* - Paul Durcan
- *My father played the melodeon'* - Patrick Kavanagh
- *My Second Marriage to My First Husband* - Alice Fulton
- *My Shoes* - Charles Simic
- *My Triumph lasted till the Drums* - Emily Dickinson
- *Nutting* - William Wordsworth
- *On Being Asked for a War Poem* - W B Yeats
- *On Being Asked...Against the War in Vietnam* - Hayden Carruth
- *On the Grasshopper and Cricket* – John Keats
- *On the Move* – Thom Gunn
- *One Flesh* – Elizabeth Jennings
- *Onions* - William Matthews
- *Orinda to Lucasia* - Katherine Philips
- *Orkney Interior* – Ian Hamilton Finlay
- *Overlooking the River Stour* – Thomas Hardy
- *Parent of Children* – Robert Graves
- *Penelope* - Dorothy Parker
- *Photograph of Haymaker, 1890* – Molly Holden
- *Piana* - D H Lawrence
- *Ploughing on Sunday* - Wallace Stevens
- *Poem in October* – Dylan Thomas
- *Popular Geography* – Miriam Waddington
- *Rapture* – Carol Ann Duffy

- *Raymond of the Rooftops* - Paul Durcan
- *Redemption* - George Herbert
- *Rooms* – Charlotte Mew
- *Routine Day Sonnet* - A K Ramanujan
- *Ruins of a Great House* – Dereck Walcott
- *Scotland Small?* - Hugh MacDiarmid
- *Seaman, 1941* - Molly Holden
- *September 1, 1939* - W H Auden
- *Shearing at Castlereagh* – A B ('Banjo') Paterson
- *Six Young Men* - Ted Hughes
- *Small Female Skull* - Carol Ann Duffy
- *Song (Go, and catch a falling star)* - John Dunne
- *Song: To Lucasta, Going to the Wars* - Richard Lovelace
- *Sophoclean* - Seamus Heaney
- *Spilt Milk* - Sarah Maguire
- *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* - Robert Frost
- *Suicide in the Trenches* - Siegfried Sassoon
- *Summer Farm* – Norman MacCaig
- *The Apparition* - John Dunne
- *The Applicant* - Sylvia Plath
- *The Artist* - William Carlos Williams
- *The Ballad of Rudolph Reed* - Gwendolyn Brooks
- *The Bight* - Elizabeth Bishop
- *The Blacksmiths* - Anon
- *The Bricklayer's Lunch Hour* – Allen Ginsberg
- *The Buffalo Skinners* - Anon
- *The Candle Indoors* – Gerard Manley Hopkins

- *The Carpenter's Son* – A E Housman
- *The Chimney Sweeper* – William Blake
- *The Collar* - George Herbert
- *The Definition of Love* - Andrew Marvell
- *The Ecstasy of St Saviour's Avenue* - Neil Rollinson
- *The Flea* - John Dunne
- *The Flood* - John Clare
- *The Forge* – Seamus Heaney
- *The General* - Siegfried Sassoon
- *The Geranium* - Theodore Roethke
- *The Good Morrow* - John Dunne
- *The Great Palaces of Versailles* – Rita Dove
- *The Hill Wife* – Robert Frist
- *The Horses* - Edwin Muir
- *The House* – Matthew Sweeney
- *The House* – Robert Minninnick
- *The House of Hospitalities* - Thomas Hardy
- *The Lake Isle of Innisfree* – W B Yeats
- *The Listeners* – Walter de la Mare
- *The New House* – Edward Thomas
- *The Nymph Complaining...Death of her Fawn* - Andrew Marvell
- *The Old Familiar Faces* – Charles Lamb
- *The Ox-Tamer* - Walt Whitman
- *The Pulley* - George Herbert
- *The Self-Unseeing* – Thomas Hardy
- *The Sheep Child* - James Dickey

- *The Solitary Reaper* – William Wordsworth
- *The Sun Rising* - John Donne
- *The Sunlight on the Garden* – Louis MacNeice
- *The Sweetness of England* – Elizabeth Barrett Browning
- *The Toys* – Coventry Patmore
- *The Trees are Down* – Charlotte Mew
- *The Wanderer* - W H Auden
- *The War against the Trees* – Stanley Kunitz
- *The Way Through the Woods* – Rudyard Kipling
- *The Wife A-Lost* – William Barnes
- *The Wind at the Door* – William Barnes
- *The World* - Henry Vaughan
- *This Compost* – Walt Whitman
- *This Dead Relationship* - Katherine Pierpoint
- *Thoughts After Ruskin* – Elma Mitchell
- *To a Friend Whose Work Has Come to Nothing* – W B Yeats
- *To a Lady that Desired I Would Love Her* - Thomas Carew
- *To Autumn* – John Keats
- *To His Coy Mistress* - Andrew Marvell
- *To My Excellent Lucasia, on Our Friendship* - Katherine Philips
- *To My Mistress Sitting by a River's Side* - Thomas Carew
- *To My Mother* – George Barker
- *Toads* – Philip Larkin
- *Toads Revisited* – Philip Larkin
- *Tractor* – Ted Hughes

- *Two Songs* - Adrienne Rich
- *Unprofitableness* - Henry Vaughan
- *Vietnam* - Clarence Major
- *View of a Pig* – Ted Hughes
- *Welsh Landscape* – R S Thomas
- *What is that Sound* - W H Auden
- *What Were They Like?* - Denise Levertov
- *When a Beautiful Woman Gets of the Jutiapa Bus* - Belle Waring
- *Woman's Constancy* - John Dunne
- *Working* – Tony Harrison
- *You will be hearing from us shortly* – U A Fanthorpe

Prose

- *A Clockwork Orange* - Anthony Burgess
- *Behind the Scenes at the Museum* – Kate Atkinson
- *Brighton Rock* - Graham Greene
- *Brunizem* - Sujata Bhatt
- *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* - Louis De Bernieres
- *Great Expectations* – Charles Dickens
- *Howards End* - E M Forster
- *Jayne Eyre* - Charlotte Bronte
- *Lies of Silence* - Brian Moore
- *Life of Pi* – Yann Martel
- *Pride and Prejudice* - Jane Austen
- *Reef* – Romesh Gunsekera

- *Small Island* – Andrea Levy
- *Spies* – Michael Frayn
- *Taking Off Emily Dickinson's Clothes* – Billy Collins
- *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* - Thomas Hardy
- *The Canterbury Tales* – Geoffrey Chaucer
- *The Color Purple* - Alice Walker
- *The Fat Black Woman's Poems* – Grace Nichols
- *The Final Passage* – Caryl Phillips
- *The French Lieutenant's Woman* - John Fowles
- *The Ghost Road* – Pat Barker
- *The Great Gatsby* - F Scott Fitzgerald
- *The Kite Runner* – Khaled Hosseini
- *The Magic Toyshop* - Angela Carter
- *The Remains of the Day* - Kazuo Ishiguro
- *The Scarlet Letter* - Nathaniel Hawthorne
- *The Shooting Party* - Isabel Colegate
- *the terrorist at my table* – Imtiaz Dharker
- *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale* – Geoffrey Chaucer
- *The Yellow Wallpaper* - Charlotte Perkins Gilman
- *Wide Sargasso Sea* - Jean Rhys
- *Wuthering Heights* - Emily Bronte

Appendix 4: Examples of study for coursework from Edexcel English Language and Literature Unit 2

Entrapment

- Selected prose text
 - *The Collector*, John Fowles
- Suggested drama or poetry text
 - W H Auden: *The Secret Agent*, *O What Is That Sound*, *Refugee Blues*, *There Will Be No Peace*, *Epilogue*
- Suggested wider reading
 - Diaries and accounts of hostages, newspaper/magazine articles and reports e.g. kidnapping of Beirut hostages John McCarthy and Brian Keenan

Dystopia

- Selected prose text
 - *The Handmaid's Tale*, Margaret Atwood
- Suggested drama or poetry text
 - *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, Dario Fo
- Suggested wider reading
 - Related films eg *The Children of Men*, 1984, reading newspaper articles, reviews, authors' blogs.

Women's Lives

- Selected prose text
 - *The Well of Loneliness*, Radclyffe Hall
- Suggested drama or poetry text
 - *A Taste of Honey*, Shelagh Delaney
- Or
 - A selection of individual poems featuring women's lives e.g. 'The Emulation', Sarah Egerton, 'Warming Her Pearls', Carol Ann Duffy, 'To His Coy Mistress', Andrew Marvell, 'Not in My House', U A Fanthorpe.
- Suggested wider reading
 - *Baghdad Burning: Girl Blog from Iraq*

Gothic and Supernatural

- Selected prose text
 - *Dracula*, Bram Stoker
- Suggested drama or poetry text
 - *Agamemnon: The Fall of the House of Usher*, Steven Berkoff

Or

- *The Raven and other Favourite Poems*, Edgar Allan Poe
- Suggested wider reading
 - Scripts of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

Journeys and Pilgrimages

- Selected prose text
 - *Cloud Atlas*, David Mitchell
- Selected drama or poetry text
 - *Our Country's Good*, Timberlake Wertenbaker

Or

- *The General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer
- Suggested wider reading
 - *In Xandau*, William Dalrymple

Appendix 5: Suggested topics for Edexcel English Language and Literature Unit 4

- Caught in the Dilemma of Duty: *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini
 - Suggested reading and research
 - *On the Road to Kandahar*, Jason Burke
 - Journalism over time
 - Witness testimony
 - Historical references
 - Contemporary accounts

- The Impact of War on the Individual: Poems chosen from *101 Poems Against War*, Paul Keegan and Matthew Hollis
 - Suggested reading and research
 - *War Stories*, Jeremy Bowen
 - Journalism over time
 - Letters
 - Editorials
 - Witness testimony
 - Documentaries
 - Historical references

- A Personal Moment: *Once in a House on Fire*, Andrea Ashworth
 - Suggested reading and research:
 - *All of These People*, Fergal Keane
 - *In the Blood*, Andrew Motion
 - Letters
 - Features
 - Witness testimony
 - Documentaries
 - Contemporary accounts

- Celebration: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, William Shakespeare
 - Suggested reading and research
 - Letters
 - Features
 - Editorials
 - Witness testimony
 - Web pages
 - Historical references
 - Contemporary accounts

Appendix 6: Summary of Edexcel GCE A level programmes and the AP English

Evaluation Criteria	Edexcel GCE A level in English Literature	Edexcel GCE A level in English Language and Literature	AP: English
Aims of the programme	<p>The key aims of the programme are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read widely and independently set texts and others that they have selected for themselves • engage creatively with a substantial body of texts and ways of responding to them • develop and effectively apply their knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation in speech and writing • explore the contexts of the texts they are reading and others' interpretations of them • deepen their understanding of the changing traditions of literature in English. 	<p>The key aims of the programme are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use integrated linguistic and literary approaches in their reading and interpretation of texts • engage creatively and independently with a wide range of spoken, written and multimodal texts, exploring the relationships between texts • undertake independent and sustained studies to develop their skills as producers and interpreters of language. 	<p>The key aims of the programme are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish connections between different genres, texts, trends and contexts; • structure arguments and insights in a coherent manner using accurate textual references; • use higher-order cognitive skills to design critical judgements; • draw on the recommended texts as well as other texts they have encountered; • draw broadly on their experience of a variety of texts; • apply their knowledge, compare and contrast, analyse and critique both seen and unseen texts; • reflect philosophically on the texts they have studied; • present sophisticated, well-structured and clearly substantiated responses which synthesise their personal views in relation to the variety of texts which they have studied
Programme Outcomes	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use their detailed knowledge and understanding of individual works of 	<p>At Advanced Subsidiary, students will be able to show knowledge and understanding of:</p>	<p>The learning outcomes are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing connections between different genres, texts, trends and

	<p>literature to explore relationships between texts and to appreciate the significance of culture and contextual influences upon readers and writers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show knowledge and understanding of a range of literary texts and include at least two examples of each of the genres of prose, poetry and drama across the course as a whole • experience a wide range of reading in poetry, prose and drama that must include at least one play by Shakespeare, work by at least one author writing between 1300 and 1800, at least one work first published or performed after 1990 and, at Advanced Subsidiary, work by at least one author published between 1800 and 1945 • at Advanced Subsidiary, show knowledge and understanding of: the functions and effects of structure, form and language in text; some of the ways in which individual texts are interpreted by different readers; and some of the ways in which texts relate to one another and to the contexts in which they are written and read • at A2, show knowledge and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a range of spoken and written texts from different times, including at least two substantial texts from one of the genres of prose fiction, poetry and drama and at least one other substantial written text • some of the key constituents of language and how they function in combination to make meaning in spoken and written English • how variations in language, form and context shape and change meanings in speech and writing • some of the ways in which individual texts are interpreted by different readers or listeners • some analytical and creative approaches to the critical study of texts, drawing on linguistic and literary methodologies and concepts <p>At A2, students are required to show deeper knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a wider range of spoken and written texts from different times, including at least two 	<p>contexts;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structuring arguments and insights in a coherent manner using accurate textual references; • using higher-order cognitive skills to design critical judgements;
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	<p>understanding of the significance of: the ways in which writers use and adapt language, form and structure in texts; the interpretation of texts by different readers, including over time; how texts relate to literary traditions, movements and genres; and the cultural and contextual influence upon readers and writers.</p>	<p>further texts from a genre (prose fiction, poetry, drama) not studied at Advanced Subsidiary, and at least one other substantial written text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the significance of contextual factors in the production and reception of texts how to apply linguistic and literary methodologies and concepts to inform their responses to and interpretations of texts 	
Programme Modules	<p>In order to attain the full GCSE A level, students must take all units comprising AS and A2.</p> <p>AS Level Units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 1: Explorations in Poetry and Prose (100 marks) Unit 2: Explorations in Drama (80 marks) <p>A2 Units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 3: Interpretations of Poetry and Prose (100 marks) Unit 4: Reflections in Literary Studies (80 marks) 	<p>In order to attain the full GCSE A level, students must take all units comprising AS and A2.</p> <p>AS Level Units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 1: Exploring Voices in Speech and Writing (100 marks) Unit 2: Creating Texts (80 marks) <p>A2 Units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 3: Varieties in Language and Literature (100 marks) Unit 4: Presenting the World (80 marks) 	<p>The AP is not a modular qualification, it is assessed upon completion of the programme. Three questions are required on four main areas: film, poetry, prose and drama. Students must study poetry, and then choose two from prose, film and drama.</p>
Mode of	Combination of seminars, group work,	Combination of seminars, group work,	The course is taught via two-three hour weekly

Learning	discussion and presentations. Coursework is an important element, comprising 40% of the overall programme.	discussion and presentations. Coursework is an important element, comprising 40% of the overall programme.	tutorials, independent and wider reading is encouraged during the course of study. The tutorials are designed to engage students and educators around central issues in the text to which they have been exposed.
Entry Requirements	Typically, attainment of at least 5 GCSE passes grades A*-C including English literature and language.	Typically, attainment of at least 5 GCSE passes grades A*-C including English literature and language.	The AP: English is designed as an extension and challenge for learners who demonstrate ability in, or enthusiasm for, English. There are no identifiable specifications for entry to the AP: English in terms of previous attainment in the General Education and Training Certificate awarded to successful candidates on completion of Grade 9, other than students be of above-average ability in the subject area, and show a passion and interest for it.
Qualification Progression	Upon completion of A2 and award of the full GCE A Level, students can apply to study higher education programmes in English and English Literature. Entry may be dependent upon grades achieved.	Upon completion of A2 and award of the full GCE A Level, students can apply to study further education, training or employment, such as media, education, law, public and voluntary sectors.	Students can progress onto tertiary programmes in English upon completion. The NSC is the standard entrance requirement, however completion of the AP: English may be considered an advantage.
Assessment	Units 1 and 3 are assessed by external written examination. Units 2 and 4 are assessed by analytical essay of between 2500 and 3000 words completed as coursework, the assessment of the coursework element is conducted internally. Grades are awarded on an A-E scale, grade U constitutes a failure.	Units 1 and 3 are assessed by external written examination. Units 2 and 4 are assessed by analytical essay of between 2000 and 3000 words (plus 500-1000 word commentary) completed as coursework, the assessment of the coursework element is conducted internally. Grades are awarded on an A-E scale, grade U constitutes a failure.	Assessment is conducted via one three examination with three questions. There is a choice between poetry, prose and drama. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first question focuses on the theme of power and powerlessness • The second question focuses on two of the following: prose, drama or film • The third question focuses on a quotation or a visual stimulus upon which students are expected to reflect

			<p>philosophically in relation to their reading history</p> <p>Grading is conducted on a 1-100 scale for each question and on a 1-7 scale to summarise performance on the overall qualification.</p>
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