



Qualifications and  
Curriculum Authority



# GCE A level performance descriptions for English language and literature

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## Introduction

Performance descriptions have been created for all GCE subjects. They describe the learning outcomes and levels of attainment likely to be demonstrated by a representative candidate performing at the A/B and E/U boundaries for AS and A2.

In practice most candidates will show uneven profiles across the attainments listed, with strengths in some areas compensating in the award process for weaknesses or omissions elsewhere. Performance descriptions illustrate expectations at the A/B and E/U boundaries of the AS and A2 as a whole; they have not been written at unit level.

Grade A/B and E/U boundaries should be set using professional judgement. The judgement should reflect the quality of candidates' work, informed by the available technical and statistical evidence. Performance descriptions are designed to assist examiners in exercising their professional judgement. They should be interpreted and applied in the context of individual specifications and their associated units. However, performance descriptions are not designed to define the content of specifications and units.

The requirement for all AS and A level specifications to assess candidates' quality of written communication will be met through one or more of the assessment objectives.

The performance descriptions have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

## AS performance descriptions for English language and literature

	<b>Assessment objective 1</b>	<b>Assessment objective 2</b>	<b>Assessment objective 3</b>	<b>Assessment objective 4</b>
<b>Assessment objectives</b>	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 a range of spoken and written texts.	Use integrated approaches to explore relationships between texts, analysing and evaluating the significance of contextual factors in their production and reception.	Demonstrate expertise and creativity in using language appropriately for a variety of purposes and audiences, drawing on insights from linguistic and literary studies.
<b>A/B boundary performance descriptions</b>	Candidates characteristically: a) communicate wide knowledge and understanding of linguistic and literary texts b) present relevant responses, using appropriate terminology to support informed interpretations c) structure and organise their writing well d) communicate content and meaning through expressive and accurate writing.	Candidates characteristically: a) identify relevant aspects of linguistic approach, structure, form and language in literary texts b) explore, through critical analysis, how writers use specific aspects to shape meaning c) generally use specific references to texts to support their responses.	Candidates characteristically: a) explore connections and points of comparison between texts and the contexts that have shaped them b) communicate clear understanding of the views expressed in different interpretations or readings c) communicate a clear understanding of issues and concepts relating to language in use.	Candidates characteristically: a) write effectively in a form and style matched to audience, purpose and genre b) select and order relevant content in creative ways c) identify where and suggest how linguistic and literary features are used in their writing to create specific effects.
<b>E/U boundary performance descriptions</b>	Candidates characteristically: a) communicate some knowledge and understanding of linguistic and literary texts b) make some use of appropriate terminology or examples to support interpretations c) communicate meaning using straightforward language.	Candidates characteristically: a) identify some aspects of linguistic approach, structure, form, or language b) describe some aspects with reference to how they shape meaning c) make some related references to texts to support their responses.	Candidates characteristically: a) identify some connections and points of comparison between texts and the contexts that have shaped them b) show some appreciation of the views expressed in other interpretations of texts c) reflect some understanding of issues relating to language in use.	Candidates characteristically: a) demonstrate some ability to write in a form or style matched to audience or purpose b) order content in creative ways c) identify where some linguistic and literary features are used in their writing to create effects.

## A2 performance descriptions for English language and literature

	Assessment objective 1	Assessment objective 2	Assessment objective 3	Assessment objective 4
<b>Assessment objectives</b>	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 a range of spoken and written texts.	Use integrated approaches to explore relationships between texts, analysing and evaluating the significance of contextual factors in their production and reception.	Demonstrate expertise and creativity in using language appropriately for a variety of purposes and audiences, drawing on insights from linguistic and literary studies.
<b>A/B boundary performance descriptions</b>	Candidates characteristically: a) communicate extensive knowledge and understanding of linguistic and literary texts b) create and sustain well-organised and coherent arguments, using appropriate terminology to support informed interpretations c) structure and organise their writing using an appropriate register d) communicate content and meaning through expressive and accurate writing.	Candidates characteristically: a) communicate relevant understanding of linguistic approaches, structure, form and language in a range of spoken and written texts b) explore, through detailed analysis, how writers use these aspects to create meaning c) consistently make reference to texts and sources to support their responses.	Candidates characteristically: a) analyse and evaluate connections or points of comparison between texts and the contexts that have shaped them b) engage sensitively and with understanding with different readings and interpretations of texts c) communicate an informed understanding of issues and concepts relating to language in use.	Candidates characteristically: a) write effectively in a form and style matched to audience and purpose b) manipulate complex relevant content in creative ways c) identify where and explain how key linguistic and literary features are used in their writing to create specific effects.
<b>E/U boundary performance descriptions</b>	Candidates characteristically: a) communicate knowledge and some understanding of linguistic and literary texts b) present responses making some use of appropriate terminology and examples to support interpretations c) communicate content and meaning using straightforward language accurately.	Candidates characteristically: a) communicate some understanding of linguistic approaches or of structure, form and language in spoken and written texts b) comment on specific aspects with reference to how they shape meaning c) make some reference to authorities, texts or sources to support their responses.	Candidates characteristically: a) make connections between texts and the contexts that have shaped them b) communicate understanding of the views expressed in other interpretations or readings of texts c) communicate an understanding of issues relating to language in use.	Candidates characteristically: a) demonstrate some ability to write in a form and style matched to audience or purpose b) manipulate relevant content in creative ways c) identify where key linguistic and literary features are used in their writing to create specific effects.