



Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority



GCE A level performance descriptions for English 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 literature

| | Assessment objective 1 | Assessment objective 2 | Assessment objective 3 | Assessment objective 4 |
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| Assessment objectives | Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression. | Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts. | Explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by interpretations of other readers. | Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received. |
| A/B boundary performance descriptions | Candidates characteristically: a) communicate wide knowledge and understanding of 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 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 literary texts b) communicate clear understanding of the views expressed in different interpretations or readings. | Candidates characteristically: a) communicate understanding of the relationships between literary texts and their contexts b) comment appropriately on the influence of culture, text type, literary genre or historical period on the ways in which literary texts were written and were – and are – received. |
| E/U boundary performance descriptions | Candidates characteristically: a) communicate some knowledge and understanding of 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 structure, form and 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 or points of comparison between literary texts b) show some appreciation of the views expressed in other interpretations of literary texts. | Candidates characteristically: a) communicate some understanding of context through descriptions of culture, text type, literary genre or historical period. |

A2 performance descriptions for English literature

| | Assessment objective 1 | Assessment objective 2 | Assessment objective 3 | Assessment objective 4 |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Assessment objectives | Articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology and concepts, and coherent, accurate written expression. | Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts. | Explore connections and comparisons between different literary texts, informed by the interpretations of other readers. | Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received. |
| A/B boundary performance descriptions | Candidates characteristically: a) communicate extensive knowledge and understanding of 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 critical register d) communicate content and meaning through expressive and accurate writing. | Candidates characteristically: a) identify significant aspects of structure, form and language in literary texts b) explore, through detailed critical analysis, how writers use these aspects to create meaning c) consistently make reference to specific texts and sources to support their responses. | Candidates characteristically: a) analyse and evaluate connections or points of comparison between literary texts b) engage sensitively and with different readings and interpretations demonstrating clear understanding. | Candidates characteristically: a) explore and comment on the significance of the relationships between specific literary texts and their contexts b) evaluate the influence of culture, text type, literary genre or historical period on the ways in which literary texts were written and were – and are – received. |
| E/U boundary performance descriptions | Candidates characteristically: a) communicate knowledge and some understanding of 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) identify some aspects of structure, form or language in literary texts b) comment on specific aspects with reference to how they shape meaning c) make some reference to texts to support their responses. | Candidates characteristically: a) make connections between literary texts or note comparisons b) communicate understanding of the views expressed in other interpretations or readings. | Candidates characteristically: a) comment on some of the relationships between texts and their contexts b) comment on how culture, text type, literary genre or historical period influence the reading of literary texts. |