

ENGLISH
Advanced Higher

First edition: published March 2003

National Course Specification

ENGLISH (ADVANCED HIGHER)

COURSE NUMBER C115 13

COURSE STRUCTURE

There are three component units in the course: two mandatory 40-hour units (*English: Specialist Study* and *English: Literary Study*) and one optional 40-hour unit (to be selected from *English: Language Study*, *English: Textual Analysis*, *English: Reading the Media*, *English: Creative Writing*).

D9GT 13	<i>English: Specialist Study</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
D8VJ 13	<i>English: Literary Study</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
D8VH 13	<i>English: Language Study</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
D9GV 13	<i>English: Textual Analysis</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
D9GX 13	<i>English: Reading the Media</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
D9GW 13	<i>English: Creative Writing</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>

In common with all courses, this course includes 40 hours over and above the 120 hours for the three component units. This is for induction, extending the range of learning and teaching approaches, support, consolidation, integration of learning and preparation for external assessment. This time is an important element of the course and advice on its use is included in the course details.

Administrative Information

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National Course Specification: general information (cont)

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained at least a course award or equivalent units at Higher.

Candidates with specific communication difficulties will have equal opportunity to enter the course at an appropriate level. Wherever possible, activities and assessments within units and course assessments will be adapted to allow communication by suitable alternative means.

CORE SKILLS

This course gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete core skills for the course None

Additional core skills components for the course Written Communication Higher

For information about the automatic certification of core skills for any individual unit in this course, please refer to the general information section at the beginning of the unit.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

National Course Specification: course details

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

RATIONALE

Recognition of the personal, academic and vocational value of English study in the curriculum is widespread. Under the aegis of this subject, there are many, often quite different components, including: literature, language awareness, technical skills, media, language for life, drama, oral and aural skills. The scope of such an inclusive subject – both focus of and medium for learning – is enormous.

A determining aim of teachers and lecturers of English is to enable all candidates to develop skills of communicating and understanding. Learning and teaching take place through the spoken and the written word; to acquire and enjoy experience in language, candidates must develop language-handling skills, both receptive and productive, both oral and written.

Candidates require skills that allow them to interpret increasingly complex linguistic and literary forms and to produce increasingly sophisticated and subtle oral and written communications in styles or formats appropriate to particular contexts.

Since language is a changing and developing phenomenon and the corpus of literature is ever growing, the subject itself must evolve to accommodate such change and the constantly changing needs of language users. This involves extending rather than limiting the field and allows for study of the widest possible range of texts and the relating of contemporary products to the literary and linguistic achievements of the past.

English courses in the National Qualifications framework engage candidates in reflecting on ideas, relationships, feelings, points of view and motivations, and on how language has been used to convey these; candidates are also engaged in producing language to clarify and convey these on a personal level.

The three main broad purposes of language – informative, expressive and imaginative, each of which includes an extensive subset of purposes – inform the structure in the following ways.

Informative

Candidates will develop skills in interpreting and conveying information for transactional purposes. The need for them to develop these skills is self-evident. Effective communication in contemporary society requires both understanding and command of appropriate vocabulary, structures and styles. In order to achieve this, candidates must be able to recognise specific purposes and the needs of particular audiences.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

Expressive

Candidates will develop the ability to clarify and articulate accurately – in a wide range of personal, social, educational and vocational contexts – their own wishes, intentions, experiences, reactions, attitudes, ideas, values, and to relate these to the culture of which they are part.

Social and democratic effectiveness relies on the ability to recognise, analyse and sometimes to deploy language for persuasive purposes, in reasoned argument, as well as for such specialist uses as advertising and journalism.

Imaginative

Imaginative uses of language also have great significance for personal and linguistic development. It is an important function of education to help people develop more mature and sophisticated awareness of the potential for them of literature and the imaginative output of the media – for their intellectual growth, for their appreciation of the complexity of human motivations, actions, emotions, relationships and ideas and for their understanding and use of language as a very versatile and sensitive means of communication.

At Advanced Higher level, as at other levels, the candidate's previous attainment provides the starting point. Candidate needs are recognised in a course which acknowledges increasing maturity, and readiness to engage with more sophisticated forms and expressions of language. The course has been constructed in such a way as to enable a degree of specialisation for candidates. The course has its basis in existing good practice. Areas of study within units may be negotiated, and the opportunity to make specific choices in terms of topics and texts will encourage the further development of independence and responsibility.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

AIMS

The Advanced Higher course will fulfil the aims outlined in the subject rationale. It will enlarge the experience of candidates and extend their skills within a framework that allows them to develop their interests and enthusiasms in ways that are appropriate to their personal and vocational needs and aspirations. Whatever combination of units is taken, the resulting course and its assessment will be at a consistently advanced level. Candidates who pursue study at this level will encounter considerable academic and personal challenges. Those who achieve passes at this level will have demonstrated knowledge and skills of a high order and also considerable ability in thinking and working independently. The development of communicative competence required by the Higher course will, at Advanced Higher, be fundamental to progression; successful completion of the more advanced course will be dependent on the development of such competence to the highest levels across a range of specialist topics.

At Advanced Higher, the compulsory components, *English: Specialist Study* and *English: Literary Study*, provide opportunity for all candidates of progression from Higher; while the choice of the third unit enables candidates to pursue particular interests and strengths in a more specialised area of study.

The benefits of taking and successfully completing the Advanced Higher course are several. Candidates will

- possess an externally assessed award at a level specified as an entry qualification for various higher education courses
- gain a qualification which, for some further and higher education courses, carries a credit transfer rating allowing accelerated progression on those courses
- gain a qualification which signals an ability to demonstrate a range of high order skills across a number of sophisticated purposes
- possess a level of linguistic competence which will enable them to access other areas of the curriculum at an advanced level.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

CONTENT

The successful candidate in an Advanced Higher course in English will have achieved all outcomes in each of three units: *English: Specialist Study*, *English: Literary Study* and one other unit.

<i>English: Specialist Study</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
<i>English: Literary Study</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
<i>English: Language Study</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
<i>English: Textual Analysis</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
<i>English: Reading the Media</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
<i>English: Creative Writing</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>

The content of the three units, with the additional 40 hours, constitutes the course. The manner in which the course is organised will very much depend on numbers of candidates and the circumstances within a centre. Advice on ways of organising learning and teaching is located in the support notes that accompany each unit specification.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

For the *Literary Study* unit, the following is the list of authors and texts specified by SQA.

Drama

Candidates must study the texts specified for their chosen author.

Bridie	<i>The Anatomist, Mr Bolfry</i>
Byrne	<i>The Slab Boys Trilogy</i>
Chekhov	<i>The Cherry Orchard, Uncle Vanya</i>
Glover	<i>The Straw Chair, Bondagers</i>
Lindsay	<i>Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis</i>
Lochhead	<i>Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off, Dracula</i>
McLellan	<i>Jamie the Saxt, The Flowers o Edinburgh</i>
Pinter	<i>The Caretaker, The Homecoming</i>
Shakespeare	<i>Hamlet, King Lear</i>
Shaw	<i>Major Barbara, Saint Joan</i>
Stoppard	<i>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, Arcadia</i>
Williams	<i>The Glass Menagerie, A Streetcar Named Desire</i>

Poetry

Candidates must study a selection of poems by their chosen author.

Chaucer	<i>The General Prologue, The Pardoner's Prologue and Tale</i> and any one other Canterbury Tale
Coleridge	A representative selection
Donne and the metaphysical poets	A representative selection
Duffy	A representative selection
Dunbar	A representative selection
Dunn	A representative selection
Fergusson	A representative selection
Heaney	A representative selection
Hopkins	A representative selection
Morgan	A representative selection
Plath	A representative selection
The Scottish Ballads	A representative selection

A precise definition of 'a representative selection' is not possible, but what is required is a substantial study of the work of the poet(s) concerned. The nature and extent of the study should be balanced with the demands made by the study of other genres. The absence of specific titles is designed to allow for flexibility of choice and for variations in the availability of texts. Candidates will be expected to be familiar with a broad range of poems covering aspects of theme, style and, where appropriate, 'period' that adequately reflects the distinctive achievement of the poet(s) selected. They will also be expected to comment in depth on particular aspects or areas of the poet's work and to offer detailed textual evidence in support of such comment.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

Prose fiction

Candidates must study the texts specified for their chosen author.

Achebe	<i>Things Fall Apart, A Man of the People</i>
Austen	<i>Emma, Persuasion</i>
Dickens	<i>Bleak House, Great Expectations</i>
Forster	<i>Howards End, A Passage to India</i>
Galloway	<i>The Trick is to Keep Breathing, Foreign Parts</i>
Gray	<i>Lanark, Poor Things</i>
Gunn	<i>Highland River, The Silver Darlings</i>
Hardy	<i>Tess of the d'Urbervilles, The Mayor of Casterbridge</i>
Hogg	<i>The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner,</i> a selection of short stories
Joyce	<i>A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Dubliners</i>
Spark	<i>The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, The Girls of Slender Means</i>
Stevenson	<i>The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde,</i> <i>Weir of Hermiston</i>

Prose non-fiction

Candidates must study **two** specified texts selected from **one** of the following groups:

Autobiography

Angelou	<i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i>
Brittain	<i>The Testament of Youth</i>
Daiches	<i>Two Worlds</i>
Gosse	<i>Father and Son</i>
Jung Chang	<i>Wild Swans</i>
Miller	<i>My Schools and Schoolmasters</i>
Muir (Edwin)	<i>An Autobiography</i>
Muir (Willa)	<i>Belonging</i>
Spark	<i>Curriculum Vitae</i>

Travel Writing or Writing about Scotland

Boswell	<i>The Journal of a Tour of the Hebrides</i>
Chatwin	<i>In Patagonia</i>
Gibbon	<i>Essays in A Scots Hairst</i>
Greene	<i>The Lawless Roads</i>
Mackay Brown	<i>An Orkney Tapestry</i>
Muir	<i>Scottish Journey</i>
Raban	<i>Coasting</i>
Rush	<i>A Twelvemonth and a Day</i>
Twain	<i>Life on the Mississippi</i>

The list of specified authors and texts may be changed from time to time. The list of dramatists will always include Shakespeare.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

ASSESSMENT

The award of Advanced Higher English will be based on a combination of internal and external assessment. To gain the award, candidates must pass internal unit assessment in all three of the component units which constitute the course they have chosen; and they must pass external course assessment related to these units. External course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment for the course award.

In relation to *English: Specialist Study*, one of the two mandatory component units of the course, candidates will be subject to the following external assessment requirements:

- **by 30 April**, candidates will be required to submit to SQA, as a mandatory component of course assessment, a dissertation on their chosen topic, authenticated as having been produced in a manner that satisfies the evidence requirements of the unit.

In relation to the following units, candidates will be subject to external assessment under examination conditions:

English: Literary Study (mandatory)

English: Language Study

English: Textual Analysis

English: Reading the Media.

Candidates will be allowed **1 hour 30 minutes** under examination conditions in which to answer **one question** in relation to each of the units they have studied.

No access to text(s) will be permitted except in instances where access to text(s) is deemed necessary or appropriate. In such instances, relevant text(s) will be provided as part of the external examination paper.

Candidates who have studied *English: Textual Analysis* will be required to answer one unseen question from a choice of four unseen questions, each on text(s) from a different literary genre (prose fiction, prose non-fiction, poetry, drama).

Candidates who have studied the other units listed above (*English: Literary Study*, *English: Language Study*, *English: Reading the Media*) will be required to answer one unseen question from a range of unseen questions comprising:

- for *English: Language Study* and *English: Reading the Media*, two questions specific to each of the topics/categories specified for study by SQA
- for *English: Literary Study*, one question specific to each of the authors/groupings of texts specified for study by SQA.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

In relation to the remaining unit (*English: Creative Writing*), candidates will be subject to the following external assessment requirements:

- by the date of the examination, candidates who have studied *English: Creative Writing* will be required to submit to SQA, as a component of course assessment, a folio comprising two pieces of creative writing in different genres, authenticated as having been produced in a manner that satisfies the evidence requirements of the unit. The folio must be submitted to the invigilator in the centre on the day of the examination, before the examination begins. The invigilator will arrange to send the folio to SQA.

The Specialist Study dissertation will carry a weighting of **40%**.

Each of the other components of assessment will carry a weighting of **30%**.

Authors, texts and topics that are central to the work of candidates in *English: Specialist Study* may not be used in any other parts of external course assessment.

Candidates will be required to record on their external examination answer booklet(s)/folio flyleaf

- Specialist Study texts and topics.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY OF EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

The following table summarises the nature of the external assessment requirements as they relate to each of the units at Advanced Higher.

English: Specialist Study (mandatory)	Candidates will submit • by 30 April for assessment • a dissertation on their chosen topic • authenticated as having been produced in a manner that satisfies the evidence requirements of the unit.
English: Literary Study (mandatory)	Candidates will answer • within one and a half hours under examination conditions without access to the texts • one unseen question from a range of unseen questions • requiring knowledge of previously studied literary texts.
English: Language Study	Candidates will answer • within one and a half hours under examination conditions without access to text(s) • one unseen question from a range of unseen questions • requiring knowledge of previously studied aspects of language.
English: Textual Analysis	Candidates will answer • within one and a half hours under examination conditions • one unseen question from a choice of four unseen questions • dealing with previously unseen texts from different genres.
English: Reading the Media	Candidates will answer • within one and a half hours under examination conditions without access to the text(s) • one unseen question from a range of unseen questions • requiring knowledge of previously studied media texts.
English: Creative Writing	Candidates will submit • by the date of the examination for assessment • a folio comprising two pieces of creative writing in different genres • authenticated as having been produced in a manner that satisfies the evidence requirements of the unit.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

Guidance on grading

Guidance on grading for the course is offered in terms of additional qualities that candidates may display **beyond Grade C**. For those criteria that are key areas in the grading beyond C, quality performance is described at Grade A. These descriptions constitute **Indicators of Excellence**. Grade A performance will be characterised by overall high quality showing evidence of **at least four** of the Indicators of Excellence across **at least two** of the categories listed in the Performance Criteria and Indicators of Excellence tables for each outcome.

Where the overall quality of a piece of work goes beyond Grade C, but falls short of Grade A, it will attain Grade B. Instruments of assessment, specimen papers and graded exemplars of candidate work will make clear **how** Indicators of Excellence may be used to arrive at estimate grades.

At all levels of English courses, further explanation of terms used in the Performance Criteria and Indicators of Excellence tables for internal and external assessment is offered through support materials. These include exemplars of candidates' work and commentaries on how Performance Criteria and Indicators of Excellence have or have not been achieved.

In the component units of the course, candidates will have the opportunity to achieve at levels beyond those required to demonstrate competence for each of the unit outcomes. This attainment should be recorded and used to contribute towards course estimates and to provide evidence for appeals. Additional details are provided, where appropriate, with the exemplar assessment materials.

On successful completion of the course, candidates will have demonstrated additional qualities and skills, not least of which is the ability to research and write a dissertation (Specialist Study). This is a major element of the Advanced Higher English course and, combined with the demands of sitting an examination and/or producing a folio of work, provides a considerable test for candidates who have chosen to pursue English study at this level.

Note

Performance Criteria at Advanced Higher should be viewed in the light of the evidence requirements and support notes provided in the unit specifications. These take account of the fact that, at this level, the complexity of the tasks and the nature and volume of materials demand advanced skills from candidates, the majority of whom will previously have achieved Higher.

ADVANCED HIGHER EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Specialist Study

GRADE C Performance Criteria	GRADE A Indicators of Excellence <i>At least 4 bullet points from at least two categories.</i>
Understanding The dissertation takes a relevant and thoughtful approach to the stated topic and demonstrates secure understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the texts or of the linguistic or media field of study. Analysis The dissertation makes relevant and thoughtful critical/analytical comment and demonstrates secure handling of literary, linguistic or media concepts, techniques, forms, usages. Evaluation Judgements made are relevant, thoughtful and securely based on detailed evidence drawn from primary and, where appropriate, secondary sources. Expression Structure, style and language, including the use of appropriate critical/analytical terminology, are consistently accurate and effective in developing a relevant argument	Understanding • A thorough exploration is made of the implications of the stated topic. • Sustained insight is revealed into key elements, central concerns and significant details of the texts or of the linguistic or media field of study. Analysis • A full and satisfying range of critical/analytical comment is offered. • Literary, linguistic or media concepts, techniques, forms, usages are handled with skill and precision. Evaluation • Perceptive and incisive judgements are made. • Deployment of evidence drawn from primary and, where appropriate, secondary sources is skilful and precise. Expression • Structure, style and language, including the use of appropriate critical/analytical terminology, are skilfully deployed to develop a pertinent and sharply focused argument.

ADVANCED HIGHER EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Literary Study

GRADE C Performance Criteria	GRADE A Indicators of Excellence
Understanding The response takes a relevant and thoughtful approach to the prescribed task and demonstrates secure understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the text(s). Analysis The response makes relevant and thoughtful critical comment and demonstrates secure handling of literary/linguistic concepts, techniques, forms. Evaluation Judgements made are relevant, thoughtful and securely based on detailed evidence drawn from the text(s). Expression Structure, style and language, including the use of appropriate critical terminology, are consistently accurate and effective in developing a relevant argument.	<i>At least 4 bullet points from at least two categories.</i> Understanding • A thorough exploration is made of the implications of the prescribed task. • Sustained insight is revealed into key elements, central concerns and significant details of the text(s). Analysis • A full and satisfying range of critical comment is offered. • Literary/linguistic concepts, techniques, forms are handled with skill and precision. Evaluation • Perceptive and incisive judgements are made. • Deployment of evidence drawn from the text(s) is skilful and precise. Expression • Structure, style and language, including the use of appropriate critical terminology, are skilfully deployed to develop a pertinent and sharply focused argument.

ADVANCED HIGHER EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Language Study

GRADE C Performance Criteria	GRADE A Indicators of Excellence <i>At least 4 bullet points from at least two categories.</i>
Understanding The response takes a relevant and thoughtful approach to the prescribed task and demonstrates secure understanding of key elements of language study. Analysis The response makes relevant and thoughtful analytical comment and demonstrates secure handling of linguistic concepts, forms, usages. Evaluation Judgements made are relevant, thoughtful and securely based on detailed evidence drawn from a range of sources and contexts. Expression Structure, style and language, including the use of appropriate analytical terminology, are consistently accurate and effective in developing a relevant argument.	Understanding • A thorough exploration is made of the implications of the prescribed task. • Sustained insight is revealed into key elements of language study. Analysis • A full and satisfying range of analytical comment is offered. • Linguistic concepts, forms, usages are handled with skill and precision. Evaluation • Perceptive and incisive judgements are made. • Deployment of evidence drawn from a range of sources and contexts is skilful and precise. Expression • Structure, style and language, including the use of appropriate analytical terminology, are skilfully deployed to develop a pertinent and sharply focused argument.

ADVANCED HIGHER EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Textual Analysis

GRADE C Performance Criteria	GRADE A Indicators of Excellence <i>At least 4 bullet points from at least two categories.</i>
Understanding The response takes a relevant and thoughtful approach to the prescribed task and demonstrates secure understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the text(s). Analysis The response makes relevant and thoughtful critical comment and demonstrates secure handling of literary/linguistic concepts, techniques, forms. Evaluation Judgements made are relevant, thoughtful and securely based on detailed evidence drawn from the text(s).	Understanding • A thorough exploration is made of the implications of the prescribed task. • Sustained insight is revealed into key elements, central concerns and significant details of the text(s). Analysis • A full and satisfying range of critical comment is offered. • Literary/linguistic concepts, techniques, forms are handled with skill and precision. Evaluation • Perceptive and incisive judgements are made. • Deployment of evidence drawn from the text(s) is skilful and precise.

ADVANCED HIGHER EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Reading the Media

GRADE C Performance Criteria	GRADE A Indicators of Excellence <i>At least 4 bullet points from at least two categories.</i>
Understanding The response takes a relevant and thoughtful approach to the prescribed task and demonstrates secure understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the text(s). Analysis The response makes relevant and thoughtful critical comment and demonstrates secure handling of media concepts, techniques, forms. Evaluation Judgements made are relevant, thoughtful and securely based on detailed evidence drawn from the text(s). Expression Structure, style and language, including the use of appropriate critical terminology, are consistently accurate and effective in developing a relevant argument.	Understanding • A thorough exploration is made of the implications of the prescribed task. • Sustained insight is revealed into the key elements, central concerns and significant details of the text(s). Analysis • A full and satisfying range of critical comment is offered. • Media concepts, techniques, forms are handled with skill and precision. Evaluation • Perceptive and incisive judgements are made. • Deployment of evidence drawn from the text(s) is skilful and precise. Expression • Structure, style and language, including the use of appropriate critical terminology, are skilfully deployed to develop a pertinent and sharply focused argument.

ADVANCED HIGHER EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Creative Writing

GRADE C Performance Criteria	GRADE A Indicators of Excellence <i>At least 4 bullet points from at least two categories.</i>
Content The central thematic concern emerges in a way that reveals thoughtfulness, insight, imagination. Structure The structure of the chosen form is exploited to achieve desired effects. Stance/tone/mood The stance adopted by the writer in relation to the reader and to the material is clear and appropriate; tone or mood is controlled and deliberate. Expression Style and language, including the use of techniques relevant to the genre, are deployed to achieve desired effects.	Content • The central thematic concern emerges in a way that reveals a high degree of thoughtfulness, insight, imagination. Structure • Skilful shaping and sequencing contributes significantly to impact. • The potential of the chosen form is exploited with a high degree of skill and imagination. Stance/Tone/Mood • A distinctive authorial voice emerges. • Tone or mood is skilfully created and sustained. Expression • Techniques relevant to the genre are deployed with resourcefulness and subtlety. • Style and language are consistently deployed with skill and originality.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

SPECIAL NEEDS

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT English: Specialist Study (Advanced Higher)

NUMBER D9GT 13

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

The English: Specialist Study unit is concerned principally with extending the critical and analytical skills of candidates through the independent study of approved aspects of language or literature or media or some combination of these.

The content of the unit comprises:

- the development of investigative and analytical skills in the fields of language, literature, media
- the development of the organisational and presentational skills required in the production of a dissertation.

OUTCOME

Make an independent study of and produce a dissertation on an aspect or aspects of language or literature or media or some combination of these.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained:

- a Higher course award in English.

Administrative Information

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT English: Specialist Study (Advanced Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher.

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this unit.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT English: Specialist Study (Advanced Higher)

OUTCOME

Make an independent study of and produce a dissertation on an aspect or aspects of language or literature or media or some combination of these.

Performance criteria

Understanding

A relevant and thoughtful approach is taken to the stated topic and secure understanding is demonstrated of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the texts or of the linguistic or media field of study.

Analysis

Relevant and thoughtful critical/analytical comment is made and secure handling of literary, linguistic or media concepts, techniques, forms, usages is demonstrated.

Evaluation

Judgements made are relevant, thoughtful and securely based on detailed evidence drawn from primary and, where appropriate, secondary sources.

Expression

Structure, style and language, including the use of critical/analytical terminology, are consistently accurate and effective in developing a relevant argument.

Evidence requirements

The chosen topic and the materials on which it is based must be deemed by the centre to be suitable for independent study (of appropriate quality, personally selected by candidates, not the subject of teaching in this unit or of teaching or assessment in other units of this course or other courses).

Candidates must produce an extended piece of writing in the form of a dissertation on their chosen topic.

The dissertation must be between 3500 and 4500 words in length, including quotations but excluding mandatory footnotes and bibliography.

The dissertation must be unassisted and produced under a system of supervision which guarantees authenticity through a process requiring candidates to submit the following at appropriate stages:

- draft title and proposals
- outline plan
- first draft
- final submission.

Draft materials must be retained as evidence of authenticity.

Candidates must meet all of the performance criteria in one dissertation.

National Unit Specification: support notes: summary

UNIT English: Specialist Study (Advanced Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Content

In response to a chosen topic, candidates will:

- select, study, analyse and respond to texts of their own choice drawn from literature or the media
- **or**
- identify, investigate and analyse an appropriate linguistic topic
- **or**
- research an area which combines some of the above fields of study.

Activities

Candidates will engage in a variety of activities such as those outlined for other Units, but with greater emphasis on independent study. Independent study in relation to this unit will demand a high degree of initiative and responsibility on the part of candidates:

- in selecting appropriate materials for study
- in formulating relevant tasks or topics
- in accessing and researching primary and secondary sources
- in managing time and meeting deadlines
- in developing a range of communication and production skills.

Outcome

Make an independent study of and produce a dissertation on an aspect or aspects of language or literature or media or some combination of these.

Assessment

Candidates will produce a dissertation on their chosen topic in accordance with the evidence requirements of the unit.

Note

Authors, texts and topics that are the subject of teaching, study or assessment in other units of the English course or in the units of other courses must not be used for assessment purposes in this unit.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Specialist Study (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

The summary table gives indication of content and context. While the focus of the Specialist Study will be on extending critical and analytical skills in the study of language, literature, media, opportunities will arise for integrating related skills that will be developed in other units of the course.

Several broad fields of study are open to candidates, for example:

- literature
- local literature and folklore
- literature and language
- language studies
- media studies.

Candidates should select a topic that will enable them to offer a full exposition and discussion of a particular aspect of their chosen field of study. For example, a literary theme might be pursued through the works of a single author, or works of several authors, or over a historical period; a language topic might focus on language acquisition, the dialect of a specific locality, the language of specialist groups; a media topic might be related to the study of language or of literature.

Studies of the works of a single author or single works by two or more authors should avoid a serial treatment in which each work is left isolated from the other(s). Studies that involve the collection and analysis of data and information should be presented in discursive form.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Specialist Study (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

The demands of this substantial study – a mandatory component of the course – require close attention. The candidate must demonstrate the ability to:

- select a suitable topic
- adopt a personal stance towards the topic
- devise, structure and sustain an argument
- select evidence from primary and secondary sources to support an argument
- employ the literary, linguistic or media concepts and terminology appropriate to the exposition of the topic.

The first stage in the process is the selection by the candidate of texts or topics for study and the formulation of a brief descriptive statement of what the candidate proposes to study. This proposal must be submitted to the teacher/lecturer for approval in order to ensure that the proposed materials are appropriate to an English course and worthy of study at this level, and that the study itself is manageable.

The study should explore a limited area and examine it in detail with appropriate supporting evidence.

In preparing the dissertation, candidates will engage in a range of activities that includes:

- negotiating a study programme
- meeting deadlines for the submission of work
- establishing regular opportunities for consultation
- studying the source materials to locate appropriate information
- comparing aspects of source materials
- applying a knowledge of appropriate critical and analytical approaches
- acquiring an awareness of contexts – literary, historical, cultural, ideological, for example
- deploying evidence from secondary source
- drafting, editing and redrafting
- presenting collated and revised material in an appropriate form.

While candidates should be encouraged to consult secondary sources, they should be warned against excessive derivativeness and of the dangers of plagiarism.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Specialist Study (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON THE PRODUCTION OF THE DISSERTATION

Clearly, production of the dissertation will vary from candidate to candidate and from centre to centre.

The following is offered as an exemplar of good practice.

Teachers/lecturers should

- brief candidates on the nature of the task at the outset
- illustrate the wide range of texts and topics available
- discuss with candidates their individual and personal interests
- guide candidates towards consultation with librarians or other teachers/lecturers and towards use of databanks
- give practical help with final choice and location of texts and with the wording of topics and titles
- provide regular opportunities for consultation and support
- make clear to candidates the procedures that must apply in order to meet deadlines and evidence requirements
- record the progress of candidates at different stages in the production of the dissertation in order to assure themselves of the authenticity of the work.

Candidates should:

- write, type or word-process their dissertations on one side of A4 paper only
- use italics or underlining to indicate the titles of texts
- set in from the margin all quotations of more than one line so that they are clearly distinguishable from the text of the dissertation
- use footnotes and page references where appropriate to identify quotations from and references to primary sources
- use footnotes and page references at all times to identify and acknowledge quotations from, references to and information/ideas gleaned from secondary sources
- provide an accurate bibliography
- give footnote and bibliography references in the following form:
D. Gifford and D. McMillan, *A History of Scottish Women's Writing*, EUP, 1997.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Specialist Study (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

In order to achieve the unit outcome, the dissertation which candidates are required to produce **must** meet:

- all of the evidence requirements
- all of the performance criteria.

Selection of texts and topics

It should be noted that texts and topics:

- must be personally selected by candidates (under the guidance of teachers/lecturers)
- must be accepted by centres as suitable choices
- must not be the subject of teaching
- must not be the subject of teaching or assessment in other units of the Advanced Higher English course or in other units or courses.

LENGTH

The dissertation which candidates produce as evidence of attainment in the English: Specialist Study unit must be between 3500 and 4500 words in length, excluding footnotes and bibliography but including quotations. In order to achieve consistency in this area, teachers/lecturers and candidates should note that 4500 words (including quotations) is the maximum length permissible. Dissertations which exceed this will disqualify candidates from achieving the outcome and consequently the unit. Where the dissertation is submitted for external course assessment, candidates will be required to indicate the number of words used on the Dissertation Flyleaf.

AUTHENTICATION

Candidates will be required to sign a declaration that the dissertations they submit are their own work, and teachers/lecturers responsible for the supervision of candidates will also be required to indicate that, to the best of their knowledge, the dissertations submitted are the candidates' own work. Teachers/lecturers should retain evidence of submission at outline and draft stages to support authentication.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT English: Literary Study (Advanced Higher)

NUMBER D8VJ 13

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

The English: Literary Study unit is concerned principally with extending the critical reading skills of candidates through the study of a range of literary texts. Candidates will study a substantial number and variety of texts selected from the list of authors and texts specified by SQA.

The content of the unit comprises:

- knowledge of the various ways by which meaning is created
- understanding of critical concepts and approaches.

What distinguishes the study of literature at Advanced Higher level from that at Higher is the greater number and variety of texts studied, the greater depth to which these are studied and the emphasis on comparison, contrast and generalisation.

OUTCOME

Respond critically to seen literary texts.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained:

- a Higher course award in English.

Administrative Information

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT English: Literary Study (Advanced Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher.

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this unit.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT English: Literary Study (Advanced Higher)

OUTCOME

Respond critically to seen literary text(s).

Performance criteria

Understanding

The response takes a relevant and thoughtful approach to the prescribed task and demonstrates secure understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the text(s).

Analysis

The response makes relevant and thoughtful critical comment and demonstrates secure handling of literary/linguistic concepts, techniques, forms.

Evaluation

Judgements made are relevant, thoughtful and securely based on detailed evidence drawn from the text(s).

Expression

Structure, style and language, including the use of critical terminology, are consistently accurate and effective in developing a relevant argument.

Evidence requirements

Candidates must produce one critical essay.

The essay must be written:

- without assistance
- under supervision
- within the centre
- in response to an unseen question
- on text(s) from a genre selected from the list of authors and texts specified by SQA.

Critical essays on poetry (Chaucer excepted) must deal with at least three poems. Essays on other genres may deal with one or more than one text.

Candidates must:

- have access to relevant text(s) during the writing of the critical essay
- meet all of the performance criteria in the critical essay.

Authors, texts and topics that are the subject of teaching, study or assessment in other units of the English course or in the units of other courses must not be used for assessment purposes in this unit.

The list of authors and texts specified by SQA is given in the Course Arrangements.

National Unit Specification: support notes: summary

UNIT English: Literary Study (Advanced Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Content

Candidates will study and respond to texts (selected from the list of authors and texts specified by SQA) in at least two of the following categories:

- drama
- poetry
- prose fiction
- prose non-fiction.

Activities

Candidates will engage in a variety of language activities such as:

- exploratory reading of texts
- re-readings
- note-making and ‘marking the text’
- identifying, analysing and discussing key features of texts
- exploring critical concepts through reading, discussion and direct teaching
- developing awareness of the relationships between text and context (literary, linguistic, historical, ideological, for example)
- participating in tutorials, seminars and reading workshops
- exploring the insights and judgements of others
- formulating and presenting critical ideas in discussion papers and essays
- witnessing performances.

Outcome

Respond critically to seen literary text(s).

Assessment

Candidates must produce one critical essay in accordance with the evidence requirements of the unit.

Note

Authors, texts and topics that are the subject of teaching, study or assessment in other units of the English course or in the units of other courses must not be used for assessment purposes in this unit.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Literary Study (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

The summary table gives indication of content and context. While the focus of study in this unit will be on extending and strengthening skills in reading and responding critically to literature, opportunities will arise for integrating related skills – in linguistic and textual analysis, for example.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

This unit offers clear extension of work already undertaken in English: Literary Study at Higher. There are, however, significant differences.

- Candidates must select text(s) from a list of specified authors/titles. This has the merit – and the added difficulty – of requiring candidates to develop awareness and understanding of the work of an **author** or a **group of texts** (as distinct from the study of a single text). Related to this are other demands – the exploration of cultural, historical and linguistic dimensions in literature; the recognition of literary traditions; the consultation and use of critical commentaries; some understanding of the function and purposes of literature.
- Candidates will, in all probability, find themselves in much smaller teaching groups and in more flexible and varied learning/teaching contexts. Direct, teacher/lecturer-led guidance and instruction will still have a place, but there will be greater emphasis on independent study, on supported self-study, on interaction with tutors and fellow candidates in tutorial groups, seminar groups and reading workshops in which views and insights are exchanged. Candidates will require to take greater responsibility for their own learning and progress.
- There will be a larger volume of work to be undertaken and more demanding study of more complex texts and their interrelationships.

In all of this, candidates should be encouraged to read as widely as possible within and beyond the list of specified authors and texts in pursuit of their own interests and enthusiasms – for the intrinsic value to be gained from breadth of reading, for the enrichment and comparative insights such breadth will bring to the study of their selected texts and, not least, for the possibilities such reading will offer in terms of their decisions about dissertation texts and topics.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Literary Study (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

In order to achieve the unit outcome, the critical essay which candidates are required to produce **must** meet:

- all of the evidence requirements
- all of the performance criteria.

As assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process, candidates should undertake a number of activities for formative purposes.

In summative assessment, care must be taken in question design. Questions must create a framework within which candidates have opportunity to demonstrate coverage of all of the performance criteria. In particular, there must be opportunity to demonstrate competence in the analysis of literary text(s).

SPECIAL NEEDS

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

National unit specification: general information

UNIT English: Language Study (Advanced Higher)

NUMBER D8VH 13

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

The English: Language Study unit is concerned principally with developing the skills of linguistic analysis through the study of a range of contemporary or historical forms of English or Scots as used by different people for different purposes. Candidates will study a substantial number and variety of aspects of English or Scots related to topics specified by SQA.

The content of the unit comprises:

- knowledge of the various ways by which meaning is communicated in Modern English or in Scots: phonology, spelling, vocabulary/lexis, grammatical structures, semantics
- understanding of the concepts and approaches required for linguistic analysis.

What distinguishes the study of English or Scottish language at Advanced Higher level from that at Higher is the greater range of contexts and concepts studied, the greater depth to which these are studied and the greater emphasis on comparison, contrast and generalisation.

OUTCOME

Describe and analyse key aspects of English or Scottish language.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained:

- a Higher course award in English.

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Advanced Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher.

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this unit.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT English: Language Study (Advanced Higher)

OUTCOME

Describe and analyse key aspects of English or Scottish language.

Performance criteria

Understanding

The response takes a relevant and thoughtful approach to the prescribed task and demonstrates secure understanding of key elements of language study.

Analysis

The response makes relevant and thoughtful analytical comment and demonstrates secure handling of linguistic concepts, forms, usages.

Evaluation

Judgements made are relevant, thoughtful and securely based on detailed evidence drawn from a range of sources and contexts.

Expression

Structure, style and language, including the use of appropriate analytical terminology, are consistently accurate and effective in developing a relevant argument.

Evidence requirements

Candidates must produce one essay/analytical report.

The essay/analytical report must involve analysis of text.

The essay/analytical report must be written:

- without assistance
- under supervision
- within the centre
- in response to an unseen question
- on a language topic selected from the list of language topics specified by SQA.

Candidates must:

- have access to relevant text(s) during the writing of the essay/analytical report
- meet all of the performance criteria in the essay/analytical report.

Authors, texts and topics that are the subject of teaching, study or assessment in other units of the English course or in the units of other courses must not be used for assessment purposes in this unit.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Advanced Higher)

The following is the list of language topics specified by SQA:

- the use of English or Scots in a particular geographical area (to be chosen by the candidate in collaboration with the teacher/lecturer)
- variations in the use of English related to social class
- variations in the use of English related to gender
- the linguistic characteristics of informal conversation
- the linguistic characteristics of political communication
- the linguistic characteristics of tabloid journalism.

The following is the list of Scottish language topics specified by SQA:

- the linguistic characteristics of Scots as used in informal conversation
- variations in the use of Scots among older and younger people
- uses of Scots in the media
- uses of Scots in contemporary literature
- uses of Scots in specialised fields.

The list of specified topics may be changed from time to time.

National Unit Specification: support notes: summary

UNIT English: Language Study (Advanced Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Content

As relevant to the language topic chosen, candidates will study linguistic concepts, forms and usages, such as:

- historical aspects of English language
- the sounds and spelling of Modern English
- the forms of Modern English
- the vocabulary of Modern English
- variations in contemporary usage of English or Scots
- the origins and sources of contemporary Scots
- the sounds and spelling of Scots
- the forms of Scots
- the vocabulary of Scots
- the linguistic features of Scottish oral traditions
- social influences on Scots.

Activities

Candidates will engage in a variety of language activities such as:

- analysing and describing textual materials and discourses, both historical and contemporary
- consulting reference materials, including dictionaries, glossaries and thesauruses
- using linguistic concepts, terminology and techniques in the study of aspects of English or Scottish language.

Outcome

Describe and analyse key aspects of English or Scottish language.

Assessment

Candidates will produce one essay/analytical report in accordance with the evidence requirements of the unit.

Note

Authors, texts and topics that are the subject of teaching, study or assessment in other units of the English course or in the units of other courses must not be used for assessment purposes in this unit.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Language Study (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

The summary table gives indication of content and context. While the focus of study in this unit will be on the skills of linguistic analysis, opportunities will arise for integrating related skills – in textual analysis and critical appreciation, for example – which will be developed in other units.

As relevant to the selected topic, work in this unit will be informed by (and be dependent upon) the acquisition of knowledge about:

- the sounds and spellings of Modern English or of Scots (phonology and orthography). Candidates will learn about the basic components of the sound system, typical patterns of intonation/stress and the main characteristics of English or Scots spelling.
- the syntactic structure of Modern English or of Scots. Candidates should be familiar with concepts such as number, gender, tense and aspect (the manner in which the verbal action is experienced or regarded, for example, completed or in progress). They should recognise how these are expressed through the syntax and morphology of English or Scots. At the same time, concepts such as subject, object, agent, instrument, for example, will also be used in the study, together with sentence and clause structure (including subordination and co-ordination).
- the vocabulary of Modern English or of Scots. Vocabulary study will include word formation, neologisms, meaning change, semantic fields, historical influences, loan words.

Understanding and fluent use of linguistic terminology and description are key aspects of the work in this unit.

Study of each selected topic will require, at least to some degree, comparison of the chosen aspect of language use with these characteristics of standard English or of Scots.

Points of likely interest related to the specified topics are as follows.

The use of English in a particular geographical area

The area selected might be one where a British English dialect is used. The focus could alternatively be on a form of "overseas" English (for example, in the USA or Australia) or on a "new" English, such as a Pidgin or Creole language.

The study should describe, analyse and demonstrate major phonological, lexical/semantic and syntactic differences between the form of English studied and standard English, taking account, where relevant, of historical factors such as vocabulary sources, for example:

- the influence of Scandinavian or French on Modern English
- the influence of European languages on American English
- the influence of Aboriginal words on Australian English.

The use of Scots in a particular geographical area

The area selected might be any one from the diverse range of Scots-speaking areas, for example, the Northern Isles, the North East of Scotland, West Central Scotland, Mid Central Scotland, East Scotland, the Scottish Borders, Galloway.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Advanced Higher)

The study should describe, analyse and demonstrate the major phonological, lexical/semantic and syntactic characteristics of Scots usage in the area, taking account, where relevant, of historical factors such as vocabulary sources, for example:

- Old Northumbrian
- Scandinavian
- French.

Variations in the use of English related to social class

The focus here will be on differences between the language use of people in two different social categories. The study should demonstrate major phonological, lexical/semantic and syntactic differences, taking account, where relevant, of historical, social and educational factors relating to each group.

Possible areas of study might include:

- language use by proprietors/managers and workers in relation to jobs
- "working class" and "middle class" language as represented in radio/TV programmes
- differences in the spoken and written language use of people living in two geographical areas occupied (mainly) by different social classes.

Care should be taken in this study to ensure that comparisons between contrasting patterns of language use should be descriptive and analytic rather than value-laden or critical of one or other type of usage.

Variations in the use of English related to gender

Possible areas for study here might include, for example, differences between men's and women's use of language:

- at work
- in academic debate
- in same-sex social groups
- in mixed social groups

(according to their differing purposes: for example, demonstration of knowledge, leadership, goal-relatedness as against negotiation, sharing of feelings/views, search for consensus).

Relevant points of comparison could include:

- communication aims (for example, clarity, forcefulness, convincing argument, as against support or persuasion)
- type of vocabulary and influences on it from, for example, men's/women's cultural interests (semantic fields)
- tone and intonation in oral interaction
- types of sentence structure used (for example, use of statements/questions, simple/complex sentences).

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Advanced Higher)

The linguistic characteristics of informal conversation

This study should describe, analyse and demonstrate phonological, lexical/semantic and syntactic characteristics of oral interaction in **informal** conversation between pairs of participants and in groups of three or four (ie not formally planned discussions). There should be a particular focus on the nature of the interaction and the means of sustaining it and taking it forward. Issues might include, for example:

- the extent to which conversations have social purposes, and how these are achieved
- strategies for clarifying understanding of what someone else has said
- agreement with and reinforcement of others' contributions
- introduction of new ideas on the same topic
- introduction of new topics
- overall structure of conversation
- linguistic indicators of relationships among participants.

The linguistic characteristics of political communication

This study will describe, analyse and demonstrate phonological, lexical/semantic, syntactic and structural characteristics of political communication. Imagery, vocabulary, semantic fields, rhetorical devices, orientation to audience and tone are likely to be key issues for investigation and analysis..

The linguistic characteristics of tabloid journalism

This study will describe, analyse and demonstrate lexical/semantic, syntactic and structural characteristics of news reporting, editorials and features in the tabloid press, referring to at least two newspapers. Possible areas for study might include, for example:

- attitudes to and expectations of readership, as evidenced in language use
- use of headlines and sub-heads
- use of puns/jokes
- economy of style
- use of pictures with text.

The linguistic characteristics of Scots as used in informal conversation

This study should describe, analyse and demonstrate Scots phonology, vocabulary and syntax in **informal** conversation between pairs of participants and in groups of three or four. Issues for consideration might include, for example:

- use of Scots terms and concepts
- use of Scots syntax (for example, to express negatives or past tenses)
- use of Scots phonological characteristics (such as the glottal stop, fricatives).

Variations in the use of Scots among older and younger people

This study should describe, analyse and demonstrate the use of Scots phonology, vocabulary and syntax in these groups with reference to social and educational factors which have influenced them. Issues for consideration might include, for example:

- oral traditions in the past and today
- new vocabulary and structures in Scots language in recent times.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Advanced Higher)

Uses of Scots in the media

This study should describe, analyse and demonstrate phonological, lexical/semantic and syntactic characteristics of the Scots used in at least two media categories. Possible areas for study might include, for example:

- the use of Scots in advertising (for example, in advertisements with a Scottish theme or target audience)
- the use of Scots in journalism
- the use of Scots in television or radio soap operas or dramas or in films
- the use of Scots in current affairs broadcasts or in sports reporting.

Uses of Scots in contemporary literature

This study should describe, analyse and demonstrate the density of Scots vocabulary, grammatical forms, syntax and forms of spelling in the work of at least two authors.

Uses of Scots in specialised fields

The study should describe, analyse and demonstrate the use of Scots phonology, vocabulary, grammatical forms and syntax in at least two specialised fields, taking account, where appropriate, of historical factors. Possible specialised fields might include, for example, the law, the building trade, cookery, the fishing industry, education, agriculture, the church.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

This unit offers clear extension of work already undertaken in English at Higher. There are, however, significant differences.

- Candidates must select topics from a specified list. This has the merit – and the added difficulty – of requiring candidates to develop awareness and understanding of key aspects of language related to the cultural and social dimensions of their own lives.
- Candidates will, in all probability, find themselves in much smaller teaching groups and in more flexible and varied learning/teaching contexts. Direct, teacher/lecturer-led guidance and instruction will still have a place, but there will be greater emphasis on independent study, on supported self-study, on interaction with tutors and fellow candidates in tutorial groups, seminar groups and workshops in which views and insights are exchanged. Candidates will require to take greater responsibility for their own learning and progress.
- There will be a larger volume of work to be undertaken and more demanding study of more complex language topics.
- Activities will include analysis of a range of primary texts and materials (print texts, media texts, audiotapes, videotapes, textbooks, other informational materials)
- Access will be required to a selection of appropriate grammar books and dictionaries, introductory materials on phonology and syntax, a general history of the English or Scottish language, along with a range of resources to illustrate regional, social and functional variations in language use.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

In order to achieve the unit outcome, the essay/analytical report which candidates are required to produce **must** meet:

- all of the evidence requirements
- all of the performance criteria.

As assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process, candidates should undertake a number of activities for formative purposes.

In summative assessment, care must be taken in question design. Questions must create a framework within which candidates have opportunity to demonstrate coverage of all of the performance criteria. In particular, there must be opportunity to demonstrate competence in linguistic analysis.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT English: Textual Analysis (Advanced Higher)

NUMBER D9GV 13

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

The English: Textual Analysis unit is concerned principally with the development of the interpretative, analytical and evaluative skills required to respond critically to unseen literary texts. Candidates will study a substantial number and variety of texts in a range of literary genres.

The content of the unit comprises:

- knowledge of the various ways by which meaning is created
- understanding of critical concepts and approaches.

What distinguishes this kind of study at Advanced Higher from that at Higher is the greater number and variety of texts studied, the greater depth to which these are studied, and the requirement for the application of more advanced skills and concepts.

OUTCOME

Respond critically to unseen literary text(s).

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained:

- a Higher course award in English.

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT English: Textual Analysis (Advanced Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher.

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this unit.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT English: Textual Analysis (Advanced Higher)

OUTCOME

Respond critically to unseen literary text(s).

Performance criteria

Understanding

The response is relevant and thoughtful and demonstrates secure understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the text(s).

Analysis

The response makes relevant and thoughtful critical comment and demonstrates secure handling of literary/linguistic concepts, techniques, forms.

Evaluation

Judgements made are relevant, thoughtful and securely based on detailed evidence drawn from the text(s).

Evidence requirements

The candidate must produce one critical analysis.

The analysis must be written:

- without assistance
- under supervision
- within the centre
- in response to an unseen question
- on text(s) from a genre selected from the list of genres specified by SQA:
prose fiction, prose non-fiction, poetry, drama.

Candidates must:

- have access to relevant text(s) during the writing of the critical analysis
- meet all of the performance criteria in the critical analysis.

Texts for summative assessment must not be drawn from the work of authors studied by candidates in other units of the English course or in the units of other courses.

If more than one text is set for analysis, some form of comparison – based on thematic and/or technical links – must be made.

National Unit Specification: support notes: summary

UNIT English: Textual Analysis (Advanced Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Content Candidates will study and respond to a range of texts in at least two of the following genres: • prose fiction • prose non-fiction • poetry • drama.
Activities Candidates will engage in a variety of language activities such as: • exploratory reading of texts • re-readings • note-making and ‘marking the text’ • identifying, analysing and discussing key features of texts • exploring critical concepts through reading, discussion and direct teaching • developing awareness of the relationships between text and context (literary, linguistic, historical, ideological, for example) • participating in tutorials, seminars and reading workshops • evaluating the insights and judgements of others • formulating and presenting critical ideas in discussion papers and essays.
Outcome Respond critically to unseen literary text(s).
Assessment Candidates must produce one critical analysis in accordance with the evidence requirements of the unit.
Note Authors, texts and topics that are the subject of teaching, study or assessment in other units of the English course or in the units of other courses must not be used for assessment purposes in this unit.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Textual Analysis (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

The summary table gives indication of content and context. While the focus of study in this unit will be on strengthening the skills candidates require to interpret, analyse and evaluate unseen literary texts, opportunities will arise for integrating related skills – in literary appreciation and linguistic analysis, for example.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

This unit offers clear extension of work already undertaken in English: Literary Study.

The unit offers choice in the selection of texts for analysis. Coverage of a range of texts from different periods and traditions is recommended, as is coverage of all four of the specified genres. Although summative assessments must be based on unseen texts, it is clearly desirable for candidates to begin their progress towards this from the analysis of seen texts.

Candidates will require guidance (and often direct teaching) about the aims and purposes of the discipline of Textual Analysis so that the activities they engage in and the work they produce may be informed by

- an understanding of a range of critical concepts
- an awareness of how meaning is created as reader interacts with text
- an appreciation of relationships that may exist between text and context (literary, linguistic, historical, ideological, for example).

Although direct guidance and instruction will have its place, work of the kind required in this unit may be best undertaken in the interactive context of joint exploration of texts.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Textual Analysis (Advanced Higher)

As they engage in textual analysis, candidates should become increasingly confident in their ability to:

- understand what they have read
- describe and comment on the range and functions of language employed in the text
- analyse the effects of literary devices employed in the text
- evaluate the contribution that language and literary/linguistic devices make to the creation of meaning
- show that they have an appropriate repertoire of interpretative, analytical and evaluative skills.

In deploying these skills of textual analysis, candidates must have a confident grasp of a range of literary/linguistic terms and concepts:

- genre
- form
- structure
- stance
- tone
- mood
- voice
- persona
- word-choice
- imagery
- symbolism
- rhetorical devices
- dialogue
- theme
- setting
- characterisation
- techniques specific to prose fiction, prose non-fiction, poetry, drama.

The list is not exhaustive, but it does imply that rigorous textual analysis cannot take place without a suitable vocabulary.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

In order to achieve the unit outcome, the critical analysis which candidates are required to produce **must** meet:

- all of the evidence requirements
- all of the performance criteria.

As assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process, candidates should undertake a number of activities for formative purposes.

In summative assessment, care must be taken in question design. Questions must create a framework within which the candidate has opportunity to demonstrate coverage of all of the performance criteria. In particular, there must be opportunity to demonstrate competence in the analysis of literary text(s).

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Textual Analysis (Advanced Higher)

SPECIAL NEEDS

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	English: Reading the Media (Advanced Higher)
NUMBER	D9GX 13
COURSE	English (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

The English and Communication: Reading the Media unit is concerned principally with extending the skills of candidates in reading and responding to media texts. Candidates will study a substantial number and variety of texts in at least two of the media categories specified by SQA.

The content of the unit comprises:

- knowledge of the various ways by which meaning is created in media texts
- understanding of critical/analytical concepts and approaches to reading the media.

What distinguishes the study of media texts at Advanced Higher from that at Higher is the greater number and variety of texts studied, the greater depth to which they are studied and the emphasis on comparison, contrast and generalisation.

OUTCOME

Respond critically to seen media text(s).

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained at least a Higher course award in English or in Media Studies.

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT English: Reading the Media (Advanced Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher.

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this unit.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

Unit English: Reading the Media (Advanced Higher)

OUTCOME

Respond critically to seen media text(s).

Performance criteria

Understanding

The response takes a relevant and thoughtful approach to the prescribed task and demonstrates secure understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the text(s).

Analysis

The response makes relevant and thoughtful critical comment and demonstrates secure handling of media concepts, techniques, forms.

Evaluation

Judgements made are relevant, thoughtful and securely based on detailed evidence drawn from the text(s).

Expression

Structure, style and language, including the use of appropriate critical terminology, are consistently accurate and effective in developing a relevant argument.

Evidence requirements

Candidates must produce one critical essay.

The essay must be written:

- without assistance
- under supervision
- within the centre
- in response to an unseen question
- on text(s) from a media category selected from the list of categories specified by SQA.

Candidates must:

- have access to relevant text(s) during the writing of the critical essay (compilation texts are permissible)
- meet all of the performance criteria in one critical essay.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT English: Reading the Media (Advanced Higher)

Authors, texts and topics that are the subject of teaching, study or assessment in other units of the English course or in the units of other courses must not be used for assessment purposes in this unit.

The following is the list of media categories specified by SQA:

- film
- television
- radio
- print journalism
- advertising.

The list of specified categories may be changed from time to time.

National Unit Specification: support notes: summary

UNIT English: Reading the Media (Advanced Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Content This unit is concerned principally with how meaning in media texts arises from the relationships which exist between texts and their concerns, production, languages and techniques. Candidates will study and respond to a range of media texts covering at least two of the media categories specified by SQA. As relevant to the topic chosen, candidates will study media concepts and conventions such as: • analysis – encoding and decoding, denotation and connotation • representation – stereotyping and cultural values • narrative – structure, conventions • genre – categorisation • audience – address • authorship.
Activities Candidates will engage in a variety of activities such as: • reading a variety of media texts and identifying their languages • analysing the relationship between sound and vision • analysing the relationship between the printed word and the printed image • identifying key media concepts such as genre and narrative • exploring how different media audiences perceive and select meaning • examining how representations are constructed • studying how media authors and technologies shape textual meaning.
Outcome Respond critically to seen media text(s).
Assessment Candidates must produce one critical essay in accordance with the evidence requirements of the unit.
Note Authors, texts and topics that are the subject of teaching, study or assessment in other units of the English course or in the units of other courses must not be used for assessment purposes in this unit.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Reading the Media (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

The summary table gives indication of content and context. While the specific area for analysis is the relationship between words and images, whether in still form (such as newspapers) or in the form of moving image (such as film), opportunities will arise for integrating related skills that will be developed in other units of the course.

Key areas for study will be:

- media texts which are sound only or combine either sound and vision or printed words and images
- key aspects of the text(s), in such terms as narrative, intention, production, design and audience
- the relationships between the languages of media texts and their presentation and effect.

Points of likely interest related to the specific categories are as follows:

Film

- The language of film and its ability to communicate through the negotiated codes of technique (ie camera, lighting, editing etc.) and cultural meaning (ie setting, costume, stereotyping etc.), sound and written codes
- the influence of genre and audience expectations
- classic Hollywood narrative structure and variations
- the star phenomenon
- authorship in film
- technical developments.

Focus should be on depth rather than breadth – it is better that the study should focus on one or two genres, and variants within these genres, and on the work of one or two significant directors rather than on a wider range.

Analysis should be exhaustive – a significant **short** extract thoroughly analysed is preferable to attempting too large a task, and is more instructive and rewarding in terms of the insight into the process of film-making and language.

Television

- The language of television (related to, but distinct from, that of film) and communication through technical, cultural, audio and written codes
- the domestic audience and constraints on broadcasting (public service, family viewing, ratings, scheduling etc.)
- the conventions of genres
- the preference for open narrative (series/serials/soap etc.).

Radio

- The ability of radio to communicate through sound alone (ie through speech, music and sound effects) and to overcome the problems of communicating in a "blind" medium – character through voice in all its aspects, setting and atmosphere through sound effects, atmosphere through music
 - the domestic audience, the personal, one-to-one advantages of radio
 - the conventions of genre and narrative
- audience segmentation through channel (Radios 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) and Local Radio.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Reading the Media (Advanced Higher)

In both television and radio the focus should be an **in-depth** analysis, on one or more genres in television and on at least two in radio.

Print Journalism

The language of the print media should be seen as both written text and its conventions and the language of the photographic image, and both should be analysed in terms of denotation and connotation.

The turning of events into stories in newspapers especially through the devices of narrative and representation (people transformed into characters – frequently through stereotyping) should be studied and the influence of audience/readership should not be overlooked.

Advertising

The initial process of analysis should be based on denotation and connotation of words (caption and copy) and images. It is important that the process of deconstruction should be thorough, and will apply to still advertisements and television advertisements, which will also have to be analysed in terms of audio codes.

Only after this process is complete should narrative and representation in advertising be explored and the value messages about, for example, gender, nation, family, race, be evaluated both in terms of the cultural values expressed and in terms of underlying ideology.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

The unit offers clear extension of work already undertaken in the media option in *Literary Study* at Higher. There are, however, significant differences.

- The emphasis will be on depth and breadth of study.
- Candidates will, as a matter of course, adopt an analytical approach to media texts. This will lead to greater understanding of the media, and should allow candidates to select and follow their own enthusiasms from a standpoint which is informed by greater understanding of how the meaning of a media text is constructed.
- Candidates will acquire the theoretical tools necessary to study different critical approaches to reading the media.
- Candidates will, in all probability, find themselves in much smaller teaching groups and in more flexible learning and teaching contexts. Direct, teacher/lecturer-led guidance will still have a place, but there will be greater emphasis on independent study, on supported self-study and on interaction with tutors and fellow candidates in groups which have a variety of remits and settings. Candidates will be required to assume greater responsibility for their own learning and progress.
- There will be a larger volume of work to be undertaken and more intensive study of more complex texts.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Reading the Media (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

In order to achieve the unit outcome, the critical essay which candidates are required to produce **must** meet:

- all of the evidence requirements
- all of the performance criteria.

As assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process, candidates should undertake a number of activities for formative purposes.

In summative assessment care must be taken in question design. Questions should create a framework within which candidates have opportunity to demonstrate coverage of all of the performance criteria. In particular, there must be opportunity to demonstrate competence in the analysis of media texts.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT English: Creative Writing (Advanced Higher)

NUMBER D9GW 13

COURSE English (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

The English: Creative Writing unit is concerned principally with extending the writing skills of candidates through the production of a range of imaginative writing in different genres. In the context of this unit, candidates will use language creatively for a variety of purposes and in a variety of forms to extend and refine their awareness of themselves and of the world around them.

The content of the unit comprises:

- knowledge of the various ways by which meaning is created
- the development of a range of skills necessary for the deployment of language to create effect.

What distinguishes English: Creative Writing at Advanced Higher from that at Higher is the requirement for a more sophisticated application of creative writing skills in a wider range of genres.

OUTCOME

Write creatively in more than one genre.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained:

- a Higher course award in English.

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT English: Creative Writing (Advanced Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher.

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this unit.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT English: Creative Writing (Advanced Higher)

OUTCOME

Write creatively in more than one genre.

Performance criteria

Content

The central thematic concern emerges in a way that reveals thoughtfulness, insight, imagination.

Structure

The structure of the chosen form is exploited to achieve desired effects.

Stance/tone/mood

The stance adopted by the writer in relation to the reader and to the material is clear and appropriate; tone or mood is controlled and deliberate.

Expression

Style and language, including the use of techniques relevant to the genre, are deployed to achieve desired effects.

Evidence requirements

Candidates must produce two pieces of creative writing in two of the following genres:

- reflective essay
- prose fiction
- poetry
- drama.

Each piece of creative writing, poetry excepted, must be at least 1000 words in length. The length of a piece of poetry will depend on the chosen form, but should be sufficient to permit demonstration of all the performance criteria.

Each piece of writing must be unassisted and produced under a system of supervision which guarantees authenticity through a process requiring candidates to submit the following at appropriate stages:

- draft title and proposals
- outline plan
- first draft
- final submission.

Draft materials must be retained as evidence of authenticity.

Candidates must meet all of the performance criteria in each piece of writing.

National Unit Specification: support notes: summary

UNIT English: Creative Writing (Advanced Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Content While all language purposes may be covered in this unit, there will be particular focus on purposes related to the creative expression of feelings and ideas. Candidates will study and respond to the main concerns and processes of creative writing in a variety of texts, genres, media.
Activities Candidates will engage in a variety of activities such as: • tutorial groups • creative writing workshops • group discussion • collaborative writing • discussion of drafts • use of stimuli and literary models • workshops with visiting authors • genre transformation • identification and manipulation of point of view • constructing and manipulating different forms • group and personal reading of texts • analysing literary devices and effects • experimenting with different forms of writing.
Outcome Write creatively in more than one genre.
Assessment Candidates must produce two pieces of creative writing in accordance with the evidence requirements of the unit.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Creative Writing (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

The summary table gives indication of content and context. Candidates, teachers and lecturers should keep in mind that, while the focus of study in this unit will be on the creative expression of ideas and feelings, opportunities will arise for integrating related skills – in literary appreciation and textual analysis, for example – that will be developed in other units.

The distinctive characteristics of the four specified forms of creative writing require close attention.

Reflective Essay

The reflective essay will:

- aim to interest or give pleasure, not, as a rule, information
- concern itself with, usually, a single idea, insight, experience
- be genuinely contemplative; its personal tone may be confidential, concerned, amused, indignant...
- communicate to the reader a clear sense of the writer's personality
- not merely offer the product of reflection, but engage the reader in the **process** of reflection.

Although the form of writing within this genre is restricted to the essay, there is scope for a range of topics and a variety of treatments.

The subject of reflection could, for example be:

- a person, a place, an object
- a condition, a situation, a relationship
- a mood, a memory, a feeling
- an image, an idea, an insight
- an issue, an activity, a theory, a belief.

Possible treatments could be:

- the impression of a mind exploring an idea
- an apparently random approach in the course of which insight is gained
- the development of an unobtrusive narrative framework as a convenient device through which issues and experiences are reflected upon.

Whatever the topic or the approach taken, the central feature of the reflective essay will be its **reflective** quality.

It follows from what has been said above that certain types of writing cannot be accepted as reflective essays, in particular:

- writing that is mainly transactional or argumentative in effect
- writing that is clearly in some other literary writing form, such as fiction
- writing that is merely an account of personal history.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Creative Writing (Advanced Higher)

Prose Fiction

In prose fiction, the range of subject matter and themes open to the writer is limitless, and there is great scope here for different forms of writing. The candidate may choose to produce, for example:

- a short story
- an extract, such as the opening, the conclusion or a key episode from an imaginary novel
- a focused piece of characterisation
- a monologue or dialogue
- a detailed description of an imaginary setting
- a series of diary entries
- an exchange of letters.

Whatever the subject matter or form chosen, candidates should be advised that the writing of fiction requires skill and control of the following features:

- a plot or clear narrative framework, centred on identifiable characters and leading to some kind of denouement
- a structure which shapes content and theme
- dialogue, imagery and symbolism
- a stance or tone, which, while not intrusive or obvious, demonstrates the writer's command of the material.

The choice of subject matter may include:

- a person, a place, an object
- an event, a situation, a relationship
- a discovery, a choice, a dilemma
- a prejudice, a delusion, an obsession
- a memory, an image, an insight
- an experience, an issue, an activity.

Fiction is primarily a means of aesthetic expression. It should be borne in mind, however, that it can serve many other functions and purposes, for example:

- to entertain, amuse
- to raise awareness of an issue
- to satirise
- to comment on the human condition.

Fiction writing allows candidates to choose from a wide variety of possible treatments, including the innovative and the experimental. The chosen treatment will depend to a large extent on the candidate's distinctive aim and literary grasp of theme and topic.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Creative Writing (Advanced Higher)

Poetry

Of all genres, poetry allows the greatest freedom of subject matter and approach. It should be stressed, however, that it also calls for the greatest discipline and control.

Writing poetry involves much more than randomly chopping up prose into lines. Poetry should be recognisably different from prose in, for example:

- its choice and arrangement of words, lines and verses/stanzas
- the often surprising connections it makes between words
- its often condensed and heightened use of language
- its greater use of figurative language
- its deployment of sound and rhythm
- its often unconventional syntax and patterning of ideas and images.

When writing poetry, candidates should bear in mind the following considerations:

- a poem should present its topic in a striking and original way
- whatever the range and variety of its references and detail, the theme of a poem should be focused and unified through its imagery and structural control
- a poem should contain a clear sense of the writer's imaginative/emotional/intellectual involvement with the topic
- a poem should aim to engage the reader's imaginative/emotional/intellectual responses as fully as possible
- none of a poem's individual parts will seem unnecessary
- a poem's overall effect will be aesthetically pleasing.

For the writer of poetry, the choice of topic is limitless. For example, a poem may deal with:

- a person, a place, an object
- a condition, a situation, a relationship
- a mood, a memory, a feeling
- an image, an idea, an insight
- an experience, an issue, an activity.

Careful thought should be given to the appropriateness of stance and tone in the treatment of the topic: this will determine the entire structure of the poem.

Poetry offers great variety of layout and formal presentation. For example:

- a traditional metrical scheme
- a more modern rhythmic arrangement
- a regular verse/stanza form
- a recognised poetic form such as the sonnet
- a structured patterning that is determined by the poem's subject matter
- a visual shaping of text that is designed to be representative or symbolic as, for example, concrete poetry.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Creative Writing (Advanced Higher)

Drama

For writers of drama there is an equally wide range of choices – of topic, approach and form. In creating a dramatic script, however, candidates should demonstrate their understanding of the nature and potential of the genre. In particular, they should be able to:

- create characters who are credible, interesting and capable of provoking in the reader an intellectual and/or emotional response
- make effective use of dialogue – and other modes of communication (including non-verbal modes such as gesture, body-language)
- establish a setting in which, and a situation out of which, the drama will arise
- develop and communicate a recognisable theme, a centre of interest that will give point to the script
- produce a particular effect, mood or atmosphere
- demonstrate familiarity with the requirements of script layout and presentation
- convince the reader of the potential of the script for dramatic realisation in an appropriate medium, ensuring always that stage directions, technical effects and other production notes are directly linked to the action.

A dramatic script may prove an effective vehicle for the treatment of a wide range of topics:

- an event, a situation, a relationship
- an argument, a conflict, a misunderstanding
- a discovery, a choice, a dilemma
- a prejudice, a delusion, an obsession
- a mood, a memory, a feeling.

Among the many possible approaches are:

- a dramatic monologue
- an opening scene of a play
- a complete one-act play
- a play for radio
- a television sit-com
- a storyboard, shooting script, a film script
- a documentary drama.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

This unit offers clear extension of work which may have been undertaken in the English: Language Study unit at Higher. There are, however, significant differences – in terms of the requirements for two pieces of writing and in the increased demands made by the performance criteria in this unit.

Whatever the candidate's choice of topic, theme, genre or form, creative writing should be systematically taught. Such teaching should focus on the regular production and appraisal of pieces of writing throughout the unit. The aim of the unit should be to assist candidates to compose pieces which satisfy them as writers.

Candidates are encouraged to make use of a wide range of different language forms and, in particular, Scottish language should be used, where appropriate.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Creative Writing (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

In order to achieve the unit outcome, each of the two pieces of writing which candidates are required to produce **must** meet:

- all of the evidence requirements
- all of the performance criteria.

As assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process, candidates should undertake a number of activities for formative purposes.

Although only final versions are required for summative assessment, teachers and lecturers should retain earlier drafts as evidence of authenticity.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).