

ENGLISH
Higher

First edition – published June 2002

National Course Specification: general information

ENGLISH (HIGHER)

COURSE NUMBER Code to be advised

STRUCTURE

There are three 40-hour component units in the course:

<i>D8VH 12</i>	<i>English: Language Study (Higher)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
<i>D8VJ 12</i>	<i>English: Literary Study (Higher)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
<i>D8VK 12</i>	<i>English: Personal Study (written response) (Higher)</i>	<i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>
	or	
<i>D8VL 12</i>	<i>English: Personal Study (spoken response) (Higher)</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.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

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

- Standard Grade English at Credit level
- Intermediate 2 English.

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

Administrative Information

Publication date: June 2002

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

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National Course Specification: general information (cont)

COURSE English (Higher)

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 (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, linguistics, 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 which 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 which are 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 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 conveying and interpreting 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.

Expressive

Candidates will develop the ability to clarify and to 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.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Higher)

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 a more mature and sophisticated awareness of the potential 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 Higher, as at other levels, the candidate's previous attainment provides the starting point. Candidate needs are recognised in a course which acknowledges increasing maturity. The course has been constructed in such a way as to provide equal opportunities for all candidates.

AIMS

In addition to the broad aims contained in the Higher course rationale, the following aims can be identified in relation to the modes of language.

Receptive modes

Reading

Candidates will develop and extend a range of reading skills through studying, analysing and responding to a wide variety of informational, literary and media texts which contain complex ideas conveyed in appropriate language structures.

Listening

Candidates will develop and extend a range of listening skills which will be practised in a variety of contexts which will arise as part of language and literary study in the course, for example, watching broadcasts and group discussion of texts.

Productive modes

Writing

Candidates will develop and extend a range of writing skills as they employ different registers, formats and styles to fulfil a variety of purposes. Study at this level will be characterised by such activities as close consideration of different models and styles, writing to particular briefs and for specific audiences and experimenting with imaginative forms.

Talking

Candidates will develop and extend a range of talking skills which will be practised in a variety of contexts which will arise as part of the language and literary study in the course through, for example, presenting information and opinions and discussion of issues and texts.

The Higher English course will fulfil the aims outlined in the rationale and, in so doing, will provide candidates with learning experiences which will promote competence, growth and enrichment. Those candidates who achieve a pass in the Higher English course will possess a range of skills which will fit them for further study, the world of work and future pursuit of linguistic and literary pleasure. In addition, the experience of interacting with teachers, peers and a range of texts will encourage broadening of horizons, independent thinking and communicative competence.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Higher)

The benefits of taking and successfully completing the Higher course are several:

- candidates will have a basis for progression to the next stage of the framework – Advanced Higher
- candidates will gain an externally assessed award at a level specified as an entry qualification for various further education and higher education courses
- candidates will gain a qualification which signals an ability to demonstrate a range of skills across a number of purposes
- candidates who have undertaken an integrated Higher course will appreciate the interrelationship and transferability of skills acquired in individual units
- candidates who have successfully completed Higher English will possess a level of linguistic competence which will enable them to access other areas of the curriculum at an appropriate level.

CONTENT

The successful candidate in a Higher course in English will have achieved the outcomes in each of the component units:

English: Language Study (Higher) (40 hours)

English: Literary Study (Higher) (40 hours)

English: Personal Study (written response) (Higher) (40 hours)

or

English: Personal Study (spoken response) (Higher) (40 hours)

Candidates may not use the same text(s) as focus for study in the Literary Study unit and the Personal Study unit.

The content of these units, with the additional 40 hours, constitutes the course. It is not, however, envisaged that the Higher course should be taught in a particular sequence of units; rather, that the unit outcomes should be covered within an integrated programme of study. For example, approaches to the study of texts in the Literary Study unit may be taught alongside preparation for the Personal Study unit.

In order to prepare candidates for graded external assessment, teachers will want to explore ways in which skills can be applied in different contexts. There will be an emphasis on the quality of candidate performance as well as on the range of skills deployed. The additional 40 hours should facilitate preparation for external assessment.

ASSESSMENT

The award of Higher English will be based on a combination of internal and external assessment. To gain the award, the candidate must achieve a pass in all the component units of the course as well as a pass in the external assessment. External assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment through an external examination.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Higher)

External examination

The external examination will last for 3 hours. There will be two papers:

Close Reading (1 hour 30 minutes)	50% weighting
Critical Essay (1 hour 30 minutes)	50% weighting

Close Reading

In response to a series of questions, candidates will be required to demonstrate their ability to understand, analyse and evaluate two thematically linked passages of unseen prose. Some questions will require comparison and/or contrast between the passages.

Critical Essay

Selecting from a range of questions, candidates will be required to write **two** Critical Essays, each on a different genre, chosen from the following: poetry, prose, drama, mass media or language. In the course of their responses, candidates will be required to demonstrate their ability to understand, analyse and evaluate previously studied texts.

The grade of award will be based on the total score obtained in the examination.

When units are taken as component parts of a course, candidates will have the opportunity to demonstrate attainment beyond that required to achieve 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.

Guidance on grading

Guidance on grading is offered for the examination components in terms of additional qualities that candidates may display **beyond Grade C**. For those key areas of quality beyond C, performance is described at Grade A. These descriptions constitute Indicators of Excellence.

Grade A performance will be characterised by an overall high quality. In the case of ‘productive’ activity, ie critical essay, it will show evidence of **at least three** of the indicators of excellence across **at least two** of the categories listed in the performance criteria and indicators of excellence tables for the task.

Where the overall quality goes beyond the criteria for Grade C but falls short of A, it will attain Grade B. In this case it may show only **one or two** of the A characteristics or may show some elements of **three or more** indicators of excellence without reaching A quality for any.

For tasks involving a series of questions, ie close reading, the marking scheme will be designed so that appropriate ‘cut-off scores’ guarantee achievement of the criteria required for Grade C and the appropriate range and quality of the indicators of excellence required for Grades B and A.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Higher)

On successful completion of the Higher course, candidates will have demonstrated additional qualities and skills. For example, candidates who are able to achieve Grade C or better in Close Reading will have demonstrated an ability to integrate skills acquired across units and also to apply these in an unfamiliar context. They will have fulfilled a criterion which requires comparison and synthesis. The Critical Essay questions in the examination will have demanded recall and response to texts studied earlier.

The criteria which deal with formal writing competence in both unit and course descriptions have been written to take account not only of candidate performance but also of the conditions under which a particular piece of work is completed. Since candidates who are completing the writing assessment in the Language Study unit will have access to notes, earlier drafts and reference materials (including dictionaries) and will have time to check and edit pieces, it is reasonable to expect **consistent accuracy**. In the course examination, however, **sufficient accuracy** is stipulated at Grade C; this variation takes account of the pressures which examinations impose on candidates as well as the fact that candidates will not have access to support materials.

At all levels of English courses, further explanation of terms used in the performance criteria for internal and external assessment is offered through support materials. These include exemplars of candidates' work and commentaries on how achievement of performance criteria is demonstrated.

HIGHER EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT (EXAMINATION)

Close Reading

GRADE C Performance Criteria	GRADE A Indicators of Excellence
<p>Understanding Responses demonstrate understanding of significant ideas/information and supporting details, provide full explanation of their relationships and summarise adequately the main concerns of the text(s) (or part of the text(s)).</p> <p>Analysis Responses explain accurately and in detail ways in which aspects of structure/style/language contribute to meaning/effect/impact.</p> <p>Evaluation An evaluation is made of the effectiveness of the text(s) which takes into account the purpose(s) and stance(s) of the writer(s), makes appropriate use of critical terminology and is substantiated by detailed and relevant evidence from the text(s).</p> <p>Comparison The main concerns and/or styles and/or stances of two thematically linked texts are compared with accurate indication of similarities and/or differences.</p> <p>The Close Reading marking scheme will be designed so that attainment of a ‘pass mark’ or ‘cut-off score’ guarantees achievement of the performance criteria for Grade C.</p>	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responses demonstrate clear understanding of and insight into significant ideas/information, supporting details and their relationships.• The main concerns of the text(s) are summarised in a concise yet comprehensive way. <p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation of ways in which aspects of structure/style/language contribute to meaning/effect/impact is perceptive. <p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluation of the effectiveness of the text(s) shows full appreciation of the purpose(s) and stance(s) of the writer(s) and uses critical terminology accurately and is substantiated convincingly by evidence from the text(s). <p>Comparison</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The main concerns and/or styles and/or stances of two thematically linked texts are compared skilfully in a succinct yet comprehensive way. <p>The Close Reading marking scheme will be designed so that ‘cut-off scores’ for Grades B and A guarantee the presence in responses of an appropriate range and quality of the indicators of excellence.</p>

HIGHER EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT (EXAMINATION)

Critical Essay

GRADE C Performance Criteria	GRADE A Indicators of Excellence <i>At least three bullet points from at least two categories.</i>
<p>Understanding As appropriate to task, the response demonstrates secure understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the text(s).</p> <p>Analysis The response explains accurately and in detail ways in which relevant aspects of structure/style/language contribute to meaning/effect/impact.</p> <p>Evaluation The response reveals clear engagement with the text(s) or aspects of the text(s) and stated or implied evaluation of effectiveness, substantiated by detailed and relevant evidence from the text(s).</p> <p>Expression Structure, style and language, including use of appropriate critical terminology, are deployed to communicate meaning clearly and develop a line of thought which is sustainedly relevant to purpose; spelling, grammar and punctuation are sufficiently accurate.</p>	<p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response reveals insight into key elements and central concerns of the text(s).• Explanation of how these are presented and developed is detailed and thorough. <p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response reveals insight into the writer’s use of literary/linguistic technique. <p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluation is perceptive and reveals appreciative engagement with the text(s).• Critical stance is established and sustained through skilful use of textual evidence. <p>Expression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expression, including use of critical terminology, is consistently accurate and effective in developing a cogent argument.

It should be noted that the term “text” encompasses printed, audio or film/video text(s) which may be literary (fiction or non-fiction) or may relate to aspects of media or language.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Higher)

APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND TEACHING

Activities of the course

The activities which characterise a Higher English course arise naturally from the rationale.

In order to develop language-handling skills, to broaden and refine linguistic, literary and media awareness, to extend experience and knowledge, to develop appreciation and to gain pleasure, candidates should engage in a programme of activities of the kinds listed below. These will involve all modes of language and could be undertaken at individual, group or class levels.

- Exploring, in talk and writing, experiences (both real and imagined), feelings, emotions and ideas.
- Expressing these in a variety of prose/dramatic/poetic forms.
- Experimenting with different models and styles.
- Discussing personal programmes of reading and writing with a teacher/lecturer.
- Discussing ideas/themes/texts/approaches with peers or teacher/lecturer.
- Taking part in debates.
- Undertaking personal reading, independent study and research.
- Skimming, scanning, close reading.
- Consulting and comparing a number of texts.
- Contrasting and collating information from different texts.
- Identifying the main concerns, structures and styles of texts and, where appropriate, inter-relationships between texts.
- Acquiring techniques for analysing key passages in relation to whole texts.
- Acquiring awareness of the contexts (literary, historical, ideological) of a text.
- Applying a knowledge of literary concepts and critical approaches both to texts and to any ensuing writing tasks.
- Reviewing, summarising, making notes.
- Forming opinions and taking a stance.
- Planning, drafting, editing, redrafting; presenting collated and revised material in appropriate form and style.

Literature

The study of literature should pervade the course. The system of assessment is designed to allow teachers, lecturers and candidates the freedom to choose the literary texts that will in their view best encourage development and enrichment. The range of prose, poetry and drama open to candidates in the Personal Study and Literary Study units (including Textual Analysis) is intentionally wide. It is desirable that, over the course as a whole, candidates should come into contact with the main genres of literature, contemporary and earlier works, writings from other cultures in the English-speaking world and, where appropriate, works in translation. In addition, candidates should study at least one Scottish text (or in the case of poetry, a group of short texts).

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Higher)

Linguistic and literary awareness

In order to engage adequately in the activities listed above, candidates should refine and extend their understanding of, and capacity to use, some of the more important features of language, structure and style.

Candidates should be familiar with:

- the more important ways in which language varies according to user and use (for example, register, Scots language forms, regional and other dialects, standard and non-standard forms and multi-cultural varieties)
- the distinction between connotative and denotative uses of language
- the ways in which, over time, language changes in vocabulary, pronunciation and structure
- the names and uses of the main word classes – noun, pronoun, adjective, article, verb, adverb, preposition and conjunction
- the names and uses of the basic syntactic units – sentence, clause, phrase/group
- the more commonly used conventions of written language.

Candidates should also possess:

- a critical terminology for discussing prose, poetry and drama with regard to genres and conventions and to the more commonly used rhetorical and poetic devices and metrical patterns
- a critical terminology for discussing the products of the mass media
- an understanding of what facilitates/prevents effective communication.

Work on linguistic and literary awareness will normally be undertaken in the context of course activities. From time to time, however, some direct study and teaching of these concepts may still be required. The important point is that candidates should be able to apply this knowledge in their own use of language and in understanding and responding to the language of others.

The performance criteria indicate the ways in which at Grade C and above candidates are expected to utilise their knowledge and understanding of linguistic and literary concepts. Knowledge about language will not be separately assessed.

Approaches

Methods

There will be a place for class, group and individual teaching. Sometimes the class lesson or lecture will have its place when, for example, introducing a text, offering an overview, or demonstrating possible structures for the Personal Study. Teachers/lecturers will also recognise the continuing importance of the group as a focus for collaborative activities, including group discussion at certain stages in the development of the Personal Study. Individual study, occasionally supported by the teacher/lecturer, will provide the increasing independence which the course seeks to foster.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Higher)

Support

As teachers/lecturers prepare their candidates to meet the requirements of the outcomes, they will teach candidates about the nature of the task, particular approaches, the skills required and the aspects of the task which constitute the Indicators of Excellence. When the candidate is attempting a summative assessment task, the teacher/lecturer may continue to offer introductory support (such as introducing the topic/task, reminding the candidate of the requirements and processes) but the work to be assessed must be unassisted. Teachers/lecturers will be mindful of the need to prepare candidates for external examination by advising on strategies and providing opportunities for practice.

Independent study

The course should encourage candidates to engage in independent study as an end in itself and also as an essential preparation for further studies or for the world of work and leisure. In particular, the Personal Study is designed to encourage candidates to take responsibility for their own learning. While the teacher/lecturer will have a supporting role in guiding the choice of texts or topics and advising on the skills appropriate to the study, the candidate should take the initiative in the management and completion of the task.

Talking and listening

In addition to the learning and teaching which will be specific to the Personal Study (spoken response) option, candidates should be offered opportunities to try out ideas in discussion, to test opinions, to modify or defend their own statements and to respond to the ideas put forward by others in lively debate. They should be encouraged to challenge assumptions and assertions. Talk also acts as a stimulus for writing, as a means of assimilating reading, listening and viewing, and as a method of eliciting information. Discussion in groups is a valuable means of support for pupils in exploring and clarifying ideas about texts, including those chosen by individuals for the Personal Study. For these reasons, the fostering of oral and aural skills will be an important aspect of the course.

Reading

In the Personal Study, candidates are given the ultimate responsibility for choosing their own text(s). Here, and throughout the course, they should be encouraged to develop their strategies for both close and extended reading. Over the entire course, texts for study should be drawn not only from imaginative literature but also from journalism and other transactional writings. Starter papers and oral presentations to stimulate group discussions can illuminate major concerns of the text. Writing or speaking about a text, even at an early stage of its study, helps candidates to explore it. By means of such activities, command of critical concepts and vocabulary can be strengthened. Contextualised study and discussion can be supported by direct teaching and the use of appropriate reference books. Some texts benefit from audio-visual presentation.

Writing

Writing is predominantly a private activity, involving experimentation with different models and styles, experience of redrafting and study of established writers' products. Collaborative approaches to writing which are most valuable are, for example, the recording by one writer of the opinions of a group in order to report to a larger audience, a group working through an exercise involving close reading, one-to-one discussion, writing workshops, visits by professional writers.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Higher)

Writing is best when it is purposeful and informed by a sense of audience. Candidates should therefore be encouraged to write not only for the classroom, but also for a variety of readerships.

For the Personal Study (written response) option, support may be offered in such ways as, for example, practice in note-taking, one-to-one discussion, or exploration of structure. Candidates are required, however, to accept responsibility for their own work.

Assessment as part of teaching

The teacher's/lecturer's regular response to each candidate's work remains a most important element in the learning process. It should identify success and provide constructive comment on candidates' development needs. These should be discussed with a view to agreeing action. Peer assessment will also have a part to play, not least as candidates work on the Personal Study. Help with any learning difficulties may be required. It is recommended that candidates compile and maintain a Log Book, recording work undertaken during the course.

Candidates should be encouraged to offer evaluative comment on the course and its content as part of their personal development.

Planning and organisation

Departments will find it helpful to produce an outline of how the aims of the course are to be achieved. It will be invaluable both for teachers/lecturers new to a department and for senior management; it will promote compatible approaches within the department itself; it will be particularly necessary if responsibility for individual candidates is to be shared by teachers/lecturers in the department. The Principal Teacher or Course Leader will have a central role both in devising this outline and in supporting colleagues in its implementation. It will be of benefit if candidates are provided with a separate, concise document describing the course and how it fits into the general English curriculum.

Balance, progression, time

For a subject such as English, where growth and competence are more important than the transmission of content, considerations of balance, progression and time raise issues which can effectively be resolved only by taking account of candidates' needs and their particular situations.

Balance

In the course there should be a balance of the following:

- the acquisition and application of concepts and skills
- language and literature
- the productive and the receptive modes
- close and extended reading
- printed texts and media texts
- imaginative and transactional forms of writing
- contemporary and earlier writings
- individual and group study
- independent and teacher/lecturer-directed study
- tutorials and class or group lessons.

The list is not exhaustive. The principle of balance is more important than its itemisation and should be a continuing concern behind all planning and teaching.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE English (Higher)

Progression

Progression, for example from Standard Grade Credit or Intermediate 2 to Higher, should be evident in the form of an enhanced demand in the level of difficulty of texts and critical approach, and in the length and quality of writing expected. The level of demand expected is indicated in the performance criteria, evidence requirements and support notes for the relevant units. A similar progression is described in the performance criteria, evidence requirements and support notes for Personal Study (spoken response).

It will also be appropriate to continue to encourage the development of social and working relationships. In addition, as far as possible, the candidate should be enabled to exercise choice through the offer of course or content options and to undertake tasks which require a greater element of private study.

Time

The structure of the course offers guidance as to the allocation of time to be given to different components of the course, but the decision of the teacher/lecturer will also be influenced by the needs, abilities and interests of the class.

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 (Higher)

NUMBER D8VH 12

COURSE English (Higher)

SUMMARY

While each unit in the Higher course requires deployment and development of reading, writing, talking and listening skills for a range of purposes, the Language Study unit focuses on writing of different kinds and on reading for writing. Candidates will read and learn about a wide variety of complex texts whose purposes are informative, expressive and creative/imaginative. A high level of reading skill will be required as texts are studied and analysed for information, for meaning and as models of writing.

Language Study is a mandatory component unit of the Higher English course. It may also be used to form part of other unit groups created to fulfil particular purposes. The unit builds upon skills and experience gained in Standard Grade English or in Intermediate 2 English.

The content of the unit comprises:

- the skills and concepts required for informational, expressive and creative writing, including summary and report writing, writing which reflects, persuades or argues, and writing in literary genres
- the skills and concepts required for reading informational and literary texts of recognised quality and for gaining access to information technologies
- the skills and concepts required for individual talk, discussion and listening.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Understand, analyse and evaluate non-fiction print text which conveys complex information.
- 2 Compose a piece of writing in a particular genre.

Administrative Information

Superclass: KC

Publication date: June 2002

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority 2002

Version: 01

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National Course Specification: general information (cont)

Unit English: Language Study (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

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

- Standard Grade English at Credit level
- Intermediate 2 English.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher.

CORE SKILLS

This unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete core skills for the unit

None

Core skills components for the unit

Written Communication Higher.

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 (Higher)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Understand, analyse and evaluate non-fiction print text which conveys complex information.

Performance criteria

Understanding

Responses demonstrate understanding of significant ideas/information and supporting details, provide full explanation of their relationships and summarise adequately the main concerns of the text (or part of the text).

Analysis

Responses explain accurately and in detail ways in which aspects of structure/style/language contribute to meaning/effect/impact.

Evaluation

An evaluation is made of the effectiveness of the text which takes into account the writer's purpose(s) and stance, makes appropriate use of critical terminology and is substantiated by detailed and relevant evidence from the text.

Evidence requirements

Written or spoken responses to unseen questions on an unseen non-fiction text which conveys complex information.

Responses must be unassisted and written or spoken in the presenting centre under supervision.

The candidate must meet all of the performance criteria in response to one text.

The text will be characterised by: content which communicates information, ideas and meaning at a sophisticated level (often marked by the number and relationship of ideas, by the density of detail or by abstraction); consistent and varied use of paragraphs to support line of thought and structure; varied use of sentence structure; apposite choice and skilful use of words.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Higher)

OUTCOME 2

Compose a piece of writing in a particular genre.

Performance criteria

Content

Content is relevant and appropriate for purpose and audience, reveals depth and complexity of thought and sustained development.

Structure

Structure is effective and appropriate for purpose, audience and genre; content is sequenced and organised in ways which assist impact.

Expression

Capable use of techniques relevant to the genre and effective choice of words and sentence structures sustain a style and tone which clearly communicate a point of view/stance consistent with purpose and audience.

Technical Accuracy

Spelling, grammar and punctuation are consistently accurate.

Note: according to purpose, content is likely to be reflection, ideas, opinion, argument, information.

Evidence requirements

A piece of writing which must be expressive or creative or a report.

The piece of writing, poetry excepted, must be at least 650 words in length. The length of a piece of poetry will depend on the chosen form but it should be enough to allow the achievement of all the performance criteria to be demonstrated.

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

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

Draft materials must be retained as evidence of authenticity.

The candidate must meet all of the performance criteria in one piece of writing.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Higher)

Expressive

Expressive writing includes reflective, persuasive and argumentative forms.

Reflective: this writing will aim to interest or give pleasure, rather than simply convey information; it will concern itself usually with a single idea, insight or experience and will include reflection on knowledge, thoughts or feelings engendered by it.

Persuasive: this writing will persuade to a purpose or point of view (for example, to sell a product, or influence opinion/belief), usually concerning itself with a single topic or issue.

Argumentative: this writing will treat a topic or issue in a way which presents a line of argument, dealing with two or more varying viewpoints.

Creative

Creative writing includes work in poetry or drama or prose fiction.

In relation to structure and technical accuracy, the creative writer should be allowed scope to depart from convention to achieve particular effects. Such departures must, however, be intentional.

In relation to tone, the creative writer's 'voice' need not be 'heard' in the same way as the expressive writer's. Often the tone of a creative piece will be evident in the ways in which mood and atmosphere are created.

The impact of writing is a key measurement of quality and is often dependent upon the clarity of the writing. In some creative forms, however, impact may be achieved through intentional and crafted obliqueness. Similarly, the point of view in a piece of creative writing may be representative (eg a character's or narrator's) or, in more subtle cases, multiple or even disguised.

Report

The report must contain relevant complex information selected from at least four sources. In order to meet the requirements of the performance criteria, material drawn from sources must be recast or paraphrased appropriately for purpose.

The report must fulfil a clearly expressed remit and be prefaced by a concise statement outlining purpose and describing procedures used to gather information.

The writer's point of view and the tone will depend on the nature of the remit: point of view is likely in many cases to be one of detached objective presentation of information or use of evidence to draw conclusions; and tone is likely to be impersonal and formal.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Language Study (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.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

While all language purposes may be covered in this unit, there will be particular focus on informing, expressing and creating.

The candidate will identify, locate, study and respond to a selection of texts such as:

- reference texts, including print and electronic texts
- reports and extended factual articles from journalistic texts
- extended news articles and broadcast news items/reports
- documentary broadcasts and feature articles dealing with different points of view
- persuasive texts including advertisements
- biography and autobiography
- letters and memoirs
- formal essays
- literary texts from different genres.

The candidate will engage in a variety of reading, writing, talking and listening activities such as:

- analysing and using different reading skills
- analysing and using different writing skills
- deploying different research techniques
- keeping records, identifying sources and creating banks of information
- evaluating sources/texts
- synthesising information and ideas
- identifying and manipulating points of view
- analysing and using persuasive techniques
- participating in creative writing workshops
- examining model texts and structures
- analysing and using literary and linguistic devices and techniques
- constructing and manipulating different forms
- analysing and using different questioning techniques
- engaging in individual and collaborative talk.

Outcomes

- 1 Understand, analyse and evaluate non-fiction print text which conveys complex information.
- 2 Compose a piece of writing in a particular genre.

The candidate will be assessed in close reading and produce a piece of writing of at least 650 words in length (poetry excepted).

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Higher)

The summary table gives indication of content and context. Opportunities for talking and listening activities will arise as candidates pursue study in this unit.

Where appropriate, Scottish texts/materials will feature in the unit.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Close Reading

Opportunities should be provided for the candidate to read a variety of non-fiction texts and graphical and pictorial representations which offer a range of reading demands: for example, books (including biography, autobiography, memoirs, collections of letters and essays); newspapers and magazines; pamphlets; notices; advertisements; instructions; graphs; tables; charts and reports.

The texts chosen should be appropriate to the needs of the candidate group and where possible should be integrated with other areas of study, either within the course programme or within other subjects/topics which the candidate is studying.

Learning and teaching approaches should be active and candidate-centred, utilising a variety of tasks and activities including teacher/lecturer exposition, class and small group discussion of texts and individual study.

Formative activities developing analytical and evaluative reading skills may be part of projects and practical activities drawn from this unit or from other social or vocational contexts.

Writing

The following notes are designed to assist teachers/lecturers and candidates to define genre specifications, identify different writing techniques and recognise qualities sought at this level.

Expressive

The main requirements of the **reflective** essay are that it will:

- be genuinely contemplative; its personal tone, for example, may be confidential, amused, concerned, 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 writer's **process** of reflection through a distinct authorial voice or stance
- where more than one idea, insight or experience is involved, through the writer's treatment give unity to these.

The reflective essay at Higher is **not** simply an account of an experience.

The main requirements of the **persuasive** essay are that it will:

- carry a clear sense of conviction or inducement; tone may range from encouragement, through cajoling to pressurising
- make effective use of a number of persuasive techniques, such as manipulating information, claiming necessity/exclusivity, flattering, employing technical jargon/rhetoric.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Higher)

The main requirements of the **argumentative** essay are that it will:

- communicate a clear and balanced line of argument
- present two sides of an argument (or more, if applicable)
- distinguish between facts and opinions
- convey an argumentative tone which is measured, reasonable and yet carries personal conviction
- communicate to the reader a clear sense that the writer has weighed up different aspects of the argument before reaching conclusions
- make effective use of a number of argumentative techniques such as comparison, contrast, confirmation, refutation, counter-argument, proof, disproof.

Candidates will choose their own topics for a piece of expressive writing in consultation with the supervising teacher/lecturer. Stimulus material for writing will come from a variety of sources similar to the range of texts suggested for close reading:

- journalism extracts, newspaper special investigations and features
- essays by literary authors
- essays in biography/autobiography
- pressure-group handouts
- advertising
- extracts from literary texts
- speeches
- thematic studies across genres and media: for example, feminism, homelessness.

Teaching approaches will have wide application, and attention to the following will assist in the development of appropriate skills: structure, line of argument, linking, topic sentences, breadth of vocabulary, clarity of expression, rhetorical devices (as necessary), personal involvement (as appropriate), the place of significant detail and the use of examples and illustrations to clarify ideas.

Creative

The candidate will choose the topic and form for the piece of creative writing in consultation with the supervising teacher/lecturer. The literary achievements of others will provide models for writing, and, therefore, those candidates who are also taking the Literary Study unit as part of a course or group of units will be exposed to a wide range of literature. For candidates who are studying this unit on a free-standing basis, there will be a need to create the context and content which will provide resources for candidates' ideas.

Candidates should be encouraged to explore and experiment with a range of genres and styles. In this way they will develop interests and preferences leading to a sharpening of focus when it comes to making choices for writing.

This allows experimentation in a number of forms, but teachers/lecturers should encourage candidates to recognise interests and strengths at a relatively early stage. Some candidates will have particular needs and interests, and allowance should be made for those who wish to develop skills in one area and for those whose strengths enable them to achieve high standards in several different forms.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Higher)

The genre specification is as follows:

- a piece of prose fiction (eg short story, episode from a novel)
- a poem or set of thematically linked poems
- a dramatic script (eg scene, monologue, sketch).

A piece of prose fiction (for example, short story, episode from a novel)

Fiction is difficult to define, but some of the following characteristics are likely to feature in work which has been shaped and crafted:

- a plot, or clear narrative development, centred on identifiable characters (or other agents) and leading to some kind of denouement
- an opening, setting the scene, introducing the characters/agents; a development, expanding our knowledge of predicament or situation; a conclusion, giving some kind of point to, or understanding of, characters and their development
- a significant selection of material and a significant shaping of content and theme
- a necessary connection between and among all the parts, so that none of the material appears irrelevant or contradictory
- a structure, form and style appropriate to the fiction
- creation of mood and atmosphere by skilful use of language
- an appropriate use of dialogue, imagery and symbolism
- a stance or tone, which, while often not intrusive or obvious, demonstrates the writer's command of the material.

The writer of fiction may exploit topics and themes from an unlimited range. Candidates, however, may find the following suggestions helpful:

- a person, a place, an object
- 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 memory, an image, an insight
- an experience, an issue, an activity.

A poem or set of thematically linked poems

Because there is an endless variety of approaches and forms, it is unrealistic to prescribe what a poem should be. When crafting poetry, candidates should bear in mind the following considerations:

- 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; and its often unconventional syntax and patterning of ideas and images
- 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

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Higher)

- the 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; its overall effect will be aesthetically pleasing.

The writer of poetry may exploit topics and themes from an unlimited range. Candidates, however, may find the following suggestions helpful:

- 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.

A dramatic script (for example, scene, monologue, sketch)

In creating a dramatic script, candidates should be able to demonstrate a range of specific skills that illustrate 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
- product 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.

The writer of drama may exploit topics and themes from an unlimited range. Candidates, however, may find the following suggestions helpful:

- 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
- an idea, an issue, an experience.

Stimulus material for this outcome will come from a variety of sources and may take many forms:

- work produced within the genre by writers of recognised quality
- work produced by candidate writers at a level similar to or more advanced than the class or group members
- extracts from other arts: visual, audio-visual, performing, music.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Higher)

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

Report

The topic, scope and remit of the report will be agreed by the candidate with the teacher/lecturer.

The remit may include the need for candidates to make recommendations based on the evaluation of information gathered. At this level the concise statement should include a justification for the structure and format of the report.

The evidence requirements for the report state that information will be derived from at least four sources. Possible categories of sources include:

- print sources including text books/reference books, journalism, research articles/essays, letters, memoranda, other reports
- surveys using questionnaires, interviews
- practical investigations, for example, observation of experiments, measurements
- non-print sources, including maps, graphs, diagrams
- audio-visual sources, including radio, television, video
- databases.

It is permissible for all four sources to come from any one of these categories.

It is important to note that, in the context of the report, complexity relates to the nature of the information to be conveyed and not necessarily to the manner chosen to express the information. Often, complex information may be appropriately conveyed in complex language, particularly if the specified audience/reader is familiar with the topic under discussion or possesses a general linguistic sophistication. Equally, there may be occasions when the nature of the audience requires candidates to express complex information in language which is intentionally simple.

The writing should have a logical structure. It is important that the structure used matches the one described in the concise statement. At this level, it is reasonable to expect that the chosen structure should clearly identify the constituent aspects of the report and how they are linked.

Diagrams, tables, charts and graphs may be included, if appropriate to the chosen form. Headings, appendices, bibliographies and a lettering or numbering system to separate the constituent sections may also be used.

The subject matter of the report may relate to another curricular area of study. It is possible that part of the assessment evidence required by another subject may demonstrate coverage of the performance criteria for writing and the evidence requirements for the report. The report would, however, have to be completed in the controlled conditions which pertain in this unit. The teacher/lecturer responsible for presentation would have to be satisfied that the degree of guidance which may have been offered in other disciplines does not go beyond the specifications of this outcome.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Higher)

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Close Reading

As assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process, the candidate should be encouraged to read widely and to undertake a number of activities for formative purposes.

In summative assessment, care must be taken both in the selection of texts and in question design. Questions should be designed to create a framework within which the candidate has opportunity to demonstrate coverage of all of the performance criteria.

The texts chosen for assessment must be sufficiently complex to allow the candidate to understand, analyse and evaluate to the standard required by the performance criteria and the evidence requirements. A quality newspaper is likely to yield suitable material for summative purposes. At this level the internal structure of the article should be noticeably complex. It is likely that the sentence length will be varied for effect and emphasis. It is also likely that journalistic writing suitable for summative purposes will be characterised by a stylistic richness. There may indeed be an intentional discrepancy between a chosen style and the ostensible purpose of the writing: the writer may choose, for instance, to insert colloquialisms into a formal context to highlight the point being made. Overall scrutiny of the text may well reveal a sustained but subtle attempt to manipulate the reader's response through irony, humour and other devices.

Certain types of newspaper or journal are likely to include appropriate articles which are concerned with the presentation, analysis and synthesis of information. The subject matter may well be of a technical rather than a statistical nature. The reader may be presented with a substantial volume of new information in connection with a comparatively specialised area of knowledge.

Some writing being used for this outcome may explore an issue from several perspectives. Biography, autobiography, memoirs and essays will provide valuable material for the investigation of both issues and points of view.

The summative assessment of this outcome must take place under controlled conditions in the presenting centre.

Writing

The candidate will produce **one** piece of writing for summative assessment drawn from the categories identified in Group A or Group B or Group C.

Group A: Expressive

- a personal reflective essay
- a persuasive essay
- an argumentative essay.

Group B: Creative

- a piece of prose fiction (eg short story, episode from a novel)
- a poem or set of thematically linked poems
- a dramatic script (eg scene, monologue, sketch).

Group C: Report

- a report fulfilling an agreed remit.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Language Study (Higher)

As assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process, the candidate should be encouraged to read widely, to write in a variety of forms for different purposes and audiences and to undertake a number of activities for formative purposes.

In summative assessment, care must be taken in question design. Writing tasks must be designed to create a framework within which the candidate has opportunity to demonstrate coverage of all the performance criteria. Care must also be taken to ensure authenticity through a process of supervision which monitors candidate progress through the stages specified in evidence requirements. Although only the final version of the writing should be submitted for moderation (if required), teachers/lecturers should retain earlier drafts as evidence of authenticity.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit 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 special 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 (Higher)

NUMBER D8VJ 12

COURSE English (Higher)

SUMMARY

While each unit in the Higher course requires deployment and development of reading, writing, talking and listening skills for a range of purposes, the Literary Study unit focuses on the reading of literature and on responding critically to that reading. Candidates will read and learn about a variety of literary texts of recognised quality. The skills and concepts acquired and developed will enable candidates to respond in different ways to texts which have been studied by the class, group or individual and to unseen texts. The texts which are studied should be drawn from at least two of the four genres prose fiction, poetry, drama and mass media – and at least one of these texts should be Scottish.

Literary Study is a mandatory component unit of the Higher English course. It may also be used to form part of other unit groupings created to fulfil particular purposes. The unit builds upon skills and experience gained in Standard Grade English or in Intermediate 2 English.

The content of the unit comprises:

- the skills and concepts required for reading literary texts of quality
- the skills and concepts required for responding critically (in essays/analyses) to literary texts of quality
- the skills and concepts required for individual talk, discussion and listening.

OUTCOME

A Textual Analysis of an unseen text.

Administrative Information

Superclass: FC

Publication date: June 2002

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority 2002

Version: 01

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT English: Literary Study (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

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

- Standard Grade English at Credit level
- Intermediate 2 English.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at 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 (Higher)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME

A Textual Analysis of an unseen text.

Performance criteria

Understanding

Responses demonstrate secure understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the text.

Analysis

Responses explain accurately and in detail the ways in which aspects of structure/style/language contribute to meaning/effect/impact.

Evaluation

Responses reveal engagement with the text or aspects of the text and stated or implied evaluation of effectiveness, using appropriate critical terminology and substantiated by detailed and relevant evidence from the text.

Evidence requirements

One Textual Analysis of an unseen text.

The Textual Analysis must be of a previously unseen literary text (prose or poetry or drama).

The responses to the Textual Analysis must be unassisted and written in the presenting centre under supervision.

The candidate must meet all of the performance criteria in response to one text.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Literary Study (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.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

While all language purposes may be covered in this unit, there will be particular focus on purposes related to critical appreciation and analysis of literature.

The candidate will analyse, study and respond to texts drawn from at least two of the following four genres:

- prose (novel(s), or a selection of short stories, or extended personal account(s) such as autobiography, memoirs, diary, travelogue, essays, etc)
- poetry (a selection)
- drama
- mass media.

The candidate will engage in a variety of reading, writing, talking and listening activities such as:

- class and personal study of texts
- analysing literary devices and effects
- group discussion and presentation of ideas about texts
- organising and formulating critical ideas in discussion papers and essays
- discussing different approaches to and ideas about texts with teachers/lecturers and peers
- exploring the insights and judgements of others
- acquiring critical concepts and awareness of concepts through direct teaching
- applying critical concepts through exploration of texts
- witnessing performance(s).

Outcome

A Textual Analysis of an unseen text.

The candidate will be assessed in critical reading and response through a Textual Analysis of an unseen text.

The summary table gives indication of content and context. Opportunities for talking and listening activities will arise as candidates pursue study in this unit.

The texts studied should include at least one Scottish text.

Works in translation may be studied.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Literary Study (Higher)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The process of studying any text at any level of development should involve candidates in recognising and responding to its major aspects – eg themes, structure, plot, characterisation – and also in detailed analysis of the writer’s craft and of the ways in which the reader’s previous experience interacts with it to construct meaning. Whatever the degree of sophistication of the text and of expected candidate output, both elements should be there. Effective reading involves pursuit of meaning and appreciation of how it has been constructed, both in the detail of a text and in its broader characteristics. Ability to write critically about a text depends on awareness of and reflection on its major elements and also on understanding of how language is used to convey important or specially interesting aspects of the author’s intentions or to stimulate the reader’s mind in particularly interesting ways. If a text is approached from a “post-modern”, “deconstruction” angle, such close reading is also important for exposing hidden assumptions or ideologies informing the text. If candidates learn to analyse texts they are studying, they not only give themselves a firm foundation for writing critical essays about major aspects, but also develop a crucial set of skills for pursuing meaning in their interactions with any texts, including “unseen” texts.

Candidates will, therefore, develop a variety of close and extended reading skills and respond critically to a range of texts chosen from:

- prose: novel(s), or a selection of short stories, or personal accounts such as autobiography, travelogue, essays, diaries
- poetry (a selection)
- drama
- mass media.

Texts and extracts will, of course, be chosen with an eye to their particular appeal and suitability for a class or group, but early in the unit/course it is likely that texts will be chosen for their accessibility and obvious richness of language. Such **demonstration** texts will allow confidence-building. It is at this point that teachers/lecturers may choose to model approaches, showing how meaning is made through interaction with texts, through asking appropriate questions of the text and through relating the text to personal and literary experience. In this way, candidates will learn how experts approach a text at this level. They will also extend and enrich their experience through sharing and discussing strategies and viewpoints. As confidence and skills grow, candidates should be introduced to more demanding material.

This material will consist of a range of texts studied in depth (leading on to critical essays) to prepare for external course assessment. There will also be progression to analysis of complex “unseen” short texts or extracts (prose, poetry and drama) to continue the development of close reading skills.

Texts written by local authors, texts written in local dialect, and texts dealing with contentious or contemporary issues all fall within the scope of this unit. Teachers/lecturers will ensure, of course, that all texts selected are of high quality.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Literary Study (Higher)

Variety of Approaches

Teachers/lecturers will develop skills of analysis and critical response using a variety of methods.

Teaching approaches may include group discussion, sometimes with starter papers, and individual presentations, as well as strategies such as sequencing, prediction, annotation of text (dividing, marking, questioning), note-taking and researching, which might be used to develop skills in analysis and reflection. Collaborative investigation of text will enable candidates to try out ideas and to gain confidence in a group situation before moving on to explore texts independently. Writing about a text or about chosen aspects of a text, even at an early stage in its study, helps candidates to explore it. Such writing may cross usefully into the creative domain as candidates attempt extension, imitation and even parody. By means of such activities, command of critical concepts and vocabulary can be strengthened. Contextualised study and discussion can be supported by direct teaching and the use of appropriate critical texts and reference books. Some texts benefit from audio-visual presentation. At each stage and in every activity, candidates will be required to form points of view and to substantiate these with evidence from the text.

In order to respond with maturity to the language use of others, the candidate should be familiar with:

- language varieties (for example, register, dialect, standard and non-standard forms, Scots language forms, changing forms of language)
- classifications of language (for example, noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, article, sentence, clause, phrase/group)
- conventions of written language
- critical terminology (for example, genre, literary terms, language features) for discussing prose, poetry, drama and media texts.

Appropriate contexts for developing knowledge may occur as a result of unit/course activities, but some direct teaching, such as modelling or explanation of concepts, may be required. Candidates should then be encouraged to demonstrate increasing independence in applying methods taught and knowledge acquired to the texts being studied.

Directed questions will focus on various aspects of texts, such as:

- identification and exploration of key ideas
- characterisation
- use of dialogue
- structure
- word choice
- tone
- narrative stance
- mood
- creation of a sense of place
- techniques/devices
- conventions of genre
- syntax
- layout.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Literary Study (Higher)

These items are not hierarchical. Nor is it expected that an exhaustive analysis of all or most of these items will take place in relation to any single text. The candidate should be able to explore key areas of the text in an informed way and to do so independently.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

As assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process, the candidate should be encouraged to read widely and to undertake a number of activities for formative purposes.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit 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 special 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: Personal Study (written response) (Higher)
NUMBER	D8VK 12
COURSE	English (Higher)

SUMMARY

The Personal Study unit focuses on studying texts or topics and responding critically to the material studied. Candidates will select texts or topics of particular personal interest and pursue independent study of their chosen material. It should be noted that the term “text” should be taken to have a wide meaning, encompassing not only printed text but also a variety of material in audio or video form, with subject matter which may be literary (fiction or non-fiction) or may relate to aspects of media or language. Personal Study (written response) requires the candidate to express and justify a critical point of view in a piece of writing produced under controlled conditions.

Personal Study (written response) is an optional component unit of the Higher English course. It may also be used to form part of other unit groupings created to fulfil particular purposes. The unit builds upon skills and experiences gained in Standard Grade English or in Intermediate 2 English.

The content of the unit comprises:

- the skills and concepts required for studying and responding to texts or topics
- the skills and concepts required for writing critically about chosen texts or topics.

OUTCOME

Write critically about chosen text(s) or topic(s).

Administrative Information

Superclass:	KC
Publication date:	June 2002
Source:	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Version:	01

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT English: Personal Study (written response) (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

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

- Standard Grade English at Credit Level
- Intermediate 2 English.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at 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: Personal Study (written response) (Higher)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME

Write critically about chosen text(s) or topic(s).

Performance criteria

Understanding

The piece of writing demonstrates secure understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the subject matter of the Personal Study.

Analysis

The piece of writing explains accurately and in detail ways in which aspects of structure/style/language contribute to meaning/effect/impact.

Evaluation

The piece of writing reveals clear engagement with the subject matter of the Personal Study, substantiated by detailed and relevant evidence.

Expression

Structure, style and language, including use of appropriate critical terminology, are deployed to communicate meaning clearly and develop a line of thought which is sustainably relevant to purpose; spelling, grammar and punctuation are sufficiently accurate.

Evidence requirements

A piece of writing, on an approach previously agreed by candidate and teacher/lecturer, in which the candidate writes critically about chosen text(s) or topic(s) not taught in class.

The piece of writing must be unassisted and produced under supervision in a single time allocation of 1 hour.

The candidate must meet all of the performance criteria in one piece of writing.

The candidate may refer to materials during the assessment. Such materials will include the candidate's chosen text(s) and may include an outline and preparatory notes (no more than the equivalent of two sides of A4 paper in total) which are the candidate's own work.

The candidate may not use the same material as used in the Literary Study unit.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Personal Study (written response) (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.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

While all language purposes may be covered in this unit, there will be particular focus on investigating, analysing, reviewing and responding critically.

The candidate will study personally chosen text(s) or topic(s) from one or more than one of the following:

- literature (fiction or non-fiction)
- language
- mass media.

Note: “text” may be audio, video or film material as well as printed text.

The candidate will engage in a variety of activities such as:

- personal study of text(s) or topic(s)
- understanding and analysing literary, linguistic or other devices and effects
- discussing different approaches to and ideas about text(s) or topic(s) with teachers/lecturers and peers
- exploring the insights and judgements of others
- acquiring critical concepts and awareness of concepts through direct teaching
- deploying different research techniques
- synthesising information and ideas
- establishing a point of view
- understanding and analysing different approaches taken in material studied.

Outcome

Write critically about chosen text(s) or topic(s).

The candidate will produce a piece of writing about the chosen text(s) or topic(s).

Opportunities for talking and listening activities will arise as candidates pursue study in this unit.

Scottish material may feature in the unit, if the candidate so chooses.

The response will take the form of a piece of writing on the subject of the material chosen for Personal Study.

The material for study must be the choice of the candidate, but guidance can and should be given. Ideally, candidates should be free to choose from a range of material for study. They should be encouraged to focus on material which they regard as stimulating and interesting. The material chosen, however, should allow the candidate full opportunity to achieve the criteria.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Personal Study (written response) (Higher)

Candidates should be advised to aim for full exploration of an aspect or aspects of the text(s) or topic(s) chosen. The close evaluation of a specific area – such as the consideration of a specific theme in a novel, or of three poems exploring similar ideas, or of local variations of regional dialect – could be more successful than an approach which is too general or wide-ranging.

Suggested areas for study

The examples listed below are intended as indications of possible areas of study. They are not intended to be exhaustive: the examples may be extended to include other material. In the case of literature, texts should not be abridged or simplified. Works in translation may be studied.

- A novel.
- A play.
- A work or works of non-fiction, eg biography, memoir, travel writing, essay.
- A film or other media text.
- Comparison of a novel or other work with stage, film, television, radio versions.
- Works by the same or different authors, related or contrasted by theme or style, eg short stories, poems.
- The use of dialect, register, speech varieties.
- Specialist use of language in specific fields, eg advertising, journalism.
- Specialist use of language in vocational areas, eg medicine, care, sport.
- A topic, eg travel, homelessness, self-esteem, studied critically through a variety of material.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

Study will vary from candidate to candidate and from centre to centre. The following points are offered in the interests of good practice.

- At the outset, all candidates should be briefed on the nature of the task and offered practical suggestions on how best they might choose a suitable area of study.
- Candidates should be made fully aware of the conditions under which their piece of writing will be done at the end of the unit, and the criteria by which their piece of writing will be assessed.
- Candidates should be encouraged to consult with the teacher/lecturer on a regular basis in order to establish how the study is proceeding; guidance should be offered which will allow each candidate to develop personal thinking on the chosen study. The teacher/lecturer should, for example, ask searching questions, and the candidate should be encouraged to offer reasons for personal views on material studied.

Excessive support in any of the following ways is inadmissible:

- direction, as opposed to guidance, in the choice of text(s) or topic(s)
- class or group teaching, as opposed to individual study, of the text(s) or topic(s)
- identification and provision by the teacher/lecturer of approaches to the specific text(s) or topic(s) chosen by the candidate
- the provision of notes, detailed models, or analyses of text(s) or topic(s) by the teacher/lecturer, or from any other source.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Personal Study (written response) (Higher)

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

The candidate will make a personal choice of material for study in consultation with the supervising teacher/lecturer, who will advise on the suitability of such material. Such negotiation will take place early in the unit. All materials to be studied for the Personal Study unit must be approved by the centre as suitable choices. The candidate is required to offer as the basis of the study material which has not been taught. The piece of writing produced at the end of the unit must be the work of the candidate concerned, and must be produced in a single time allocation of 1 hour, under controlled conditions. Candidates are permitted to refer to materials during the assessment.

Material studied in the Personal Study unit may form the basis of a critical essay answer in the external course examination.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit 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: Personal Study (spoken response) (Higher)

NUMBER D8VL 12

COURSE English (Higher)

SUMMARY

The Personal Study unit focuses on studying texts or topics and responding critically to the material studied. Candidates will select texts or topics of particular personal interest and pursue independent study of their chosen material. It should be noted that the term “text” should be taken to have a wide meaning, encompassing not only printed text but also a variety of material in audio or video form, with subject matter which may be literary (fiction or non-fiction) or may relate to aspects of media or language. Personal Study (spoken response) requires the candidate to express and justify a critical point of view in an individual spoken presentation under controlled conditions, including interaction with an audience.

Personal Study (spoken response) is an optional component unit of the Higher English course. It may also be used to form part of other unit groupings created to fulfil particular purposes. The unit builds upon skills and experiences gained in Standard Grade English or in Intermediate 2 English.

The content of the unit comprises:

- the skills and concepts required for studying and responding to texts or topics
- the skills and concepts required for speaking critically about chosen texts or topics.

OUTCOME

Speak critically about chosen text(s) or topic(s).

Administrative Information

Superclass: KB

Publication date: June 2002

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT English: Personal Study (spoken response) (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

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

- Standard Grade English at Credit level
- Intermediate 2 English.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher.

CORE SKILLS

This unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete core skills for the unit None

Core skills components for the unit Oral Communication Higher

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: Personal Study (spoken response) (Higher)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME

Speak critically about chosen text(s) or topic(s).

Performance criteria

Understanding

The spoken presentation demonstrates secure understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the subject matter of the Personal Study.

Analysis

The spoken presentation explains accurately and in detail ways in which aspects of structure/style/language contribute to meaning/effect/impact.

Evaluation

The spoken presentation reveals clear engagement with the subject matter of the Personal Study, substantiated by detailed and relevant evidence.

Expression

Clear and audible delivery and effective use of verbal and non-verbal techniques communicate a developed, structured line of thought appropriate to purpose and audience.

Interaction with Audience

Audience requirements are fully taken into account, reactions are clearly acknowledged and questions are handled competently.

Evidence requirements

An individual spoken presentation, on an approach previously agreed by candidate and teacher/lecturer, in which the candidate speaks critically about chosen text(s) or topic(s) not taught in class.

The spoken presentation should last a minimum of 5 minutes and should be followed by in-depth questions from an audience of no fewer than three people.

The candidate must meet all of the performance criteria in one spoken presentation.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT English: Personal Study (spoken response) (Higher)

The candidate may refer to materials during the assessment. Such materials will include the candidate's chosen text(s) and may include an outline and preparatory notes (no more than the equivalent of two sides of A4 paper in total) which are the candidate's own work.

The candidate may not use the same material as used in the Literary Study unit.

A checklist and/or recording, with the notes used by the candidate, should be retained as evidence of performance.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT English: Personal Study (spoken response) (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.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

While all language purposes may be covered in this unit, there will be particular focus on investigating, analysing, reviewing and responding critically.

The candidate will study personally chosen text(s) or topic(s) from one or more than one of the following:

- literature (fiction or non-fiction)
- language
- mass media.

Note: “text” may be audio, video or film material as well as printed text.

The candidate will engage in a variety of activities such as:

- personal study of text(s) or topic(s)
- understanding and analysing literary, linguistic or other devices and effects
- discussing different approaches to and ideas about text(s) or topic(s) with teachers/lecturers and peers
- exploring the insights and judgements of others
- acquiring critical concepts and awareness of concepts through direct teaching
- deploying different research techniques
- synthesising information and ideas
- establishing a point of view
- understanding and analysing different approaches taken in material studied.

Outcome

Speak critically about chosen text(s) or topic(s).

The candidate will give a spoken presentation about the chosen text(s) or topic(s).

Opportunities for talking and listening activities will arise as candidates pursue study in this unit.

Scottish material may feature in the unit, if the candidate so chooses. The presentation may be in Scots.

The response will take the form of a spoken presentation on the subject of the material chosen for Personal Study.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Personal Study (spoken response) (Higher)

The material for study must be the choice of the candidate, but guidance can and should be given. Ideally, candidates should be free to choose from a range of material for study. They should be encouraged to focus on material which they regard as stimulating and interesting. The material chosen, however, should allow the candidate full opportunity to achieve the criteria in a spoken presentation.

Candidates should be advised to aim for full exploration of an aspect or aspects of the text(s) or topic(s) chosen. The close evaluation of a specific area – such as the consideration of a specific theme in a novel, or of three poems exploring similar ideas, or of local variations of regional dialect – could be more successful than an approach which is too general or wide-ranging.

Suggested areas for study

The examples listed below are intended as indications of possible areas of study required for the Personal Study. They are not intended to be exhaustive: the examples may be extended to include other material. In the case of literature, texts should not be abridged or simplified. Works in translation may be studied.

- A novel.
- A play.
- A work or works of non-fiction, eg biography, memoir, travel writing, essay.
- A film or other media text.
- Comparison of a novel or other work with stage, film, television, radio versions.
- Works by the same or different authors, related or contrasted by theme or style, eg short stories, poems.
- The use of dialect, register, speech varieties.
- Specialist use of language in specific fields, eg advertising, journalism.
- Specialist use of language in vocational areas, eg medicine, care, sport.
- A topic, eg travel, homelessness, self-esteem, studied critically through a variety of material.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

Study will vary from candidate to candidate and from centre to centre. The following points are offered in the interests of good practice.

- At the outset, all candidates should be briefed on the nature of the task and offered practical suggestions on how best they might choose a suitable area of study.
- Candidates should be made fully aware of the conditions under which their spoken presentation will be given at the end of the unit, and the criteria by which their spoken presentation will be assessed. Candidates should be reminded that vocabulary, register and sentence structures should be consistently appropriate to purpose and audience and be varied effectively; and that there should be conscious variation in tone, pace and modulation adjusted to audience needs, with appropriate eye contact, posture and gesture.
- Candidates should be encouraged to consult with the teacher/lecturer on a regular basis in order to establish how the study is proceeding; guidance should be offered which will allow each candidate to develop personal thinking on the chosen study, with a view to spoken presentation. The teacher/lecturer should, for example, ask searching questions, and the candidate should be encouraged to offer reasons for personal views on material studied.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT English: Personal Study (spoken response) (Higher)

- Candidates should be reminded that it is not acceptable to read aloud a previously written essay or script.
- Questions should be sufficiently detailed to allow candidates an opportunity to expand on points made during the presentation. At least three questions are likely to be needed.

Excessive support in any of the following ways is inadmissible:

- direction, as opposed to guidance, in the choice of text(s) or topic(s)
- class or group teaching, as opposed to individual study, of the text(s) or topic(s)
- identification and provision by the teacher/lecturer of approaches to the specific text(s) or topic(s) chosen by the candidate
- the provision of notes, detailed models, or analyses of text(s) or topic(s) by the teacher/lecturer, or from any other source.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

The candidate will make a personal choice of material for study in consultation with the supervising teacher/lecturer, who will advise on the suitability of such material. Such negotiation will take place early in the unit. All materials to be studied for the Personal Study unit must be approved by the centre as suitable choices. The candidate is required to offer as the basis of the study material which has not been taught. The spoken presentation at the end of the unit must be the work of the candidate concerned, and must be given in a single time allocation of at least 5 minutes, followed by questions, with an audience of no fewer than three people. Candidates are permitted to refer to materials during the assessment.

Material studied in the Personal Study unit may form the basis of a critical essay answer in the external course examination.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit 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).