



Advanced Higher  
Course  
Specification



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# Advanced Higher English Course Specification

**Valid from August 2015**

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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## Course outline

**Course title:** Advanced Higher English

**SCQF:** level 7 (32 SCQF credit points)

**Course code:** to be advised

### Mandatory Units

**English: Analysis and Evaluation (Advanced Higher) 16 SCQF credit points**

**English: Creation and Production (Advanced Higher) 8 SCQF credit points**

**Course assessment 8 SCQF credit points**

This Course includes eight SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

### Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ Higher English Course

### Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ degrees in higher education
- ◆ further academic study in English or related areas
- ◆ employment or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

### Equality and inclusion

This Course Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes*.

## **Rationale**

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities, as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

## **Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles**

Advanced Higher English provides learners with the opportunity to develop complex language skills which are essential for learning, life and work; and to develop their ability to interpret complex literary forms and to produce sophisticated language.

Advanced Higher English fosters an in depth appreciation, of complex and sophisticated language, and of a wide range of literature and texts in different genres. This enables learners to access their own cultural heritage and history, as well as the culture and history of others.

Learners have the opportunity to personalise their study; choices enable learners to encounter a wide range of texts in different genres and to produce sophisticated writing in chosen literary forms. Building on the four capacities, Advanced Higher English enables learners to communicate, be critical thinkers, develop cultural awareness, and be creative.

## **Purpose and aims of the Course**

The main purpose of the Course is to provide learners with the opportunity to apply critical, analytical and evaluative skills to a wide range of complex and sophisticated texts from different genres. Learners will develop sophisticated writing skills, responding to the way structure, form and language shape the overall meaning of texts.

The Course provides personalisation and choice for learners by allowing them to choose to develop skills in different types of writing, and by developing their awareness of the relationship between text and context in the analysis and evaluation of literary texts.

The Course aims to provide opportunities for learners to develop the ability to:

- ◆ critically analyse and evaluate a wide range of complex and sophisticated literary texts, as appropriate to purpose and audience
- ◆ apply critical, investigative and analytical skills to a literary topic of personal interest
- ◆ create a range of complex and sophisticated texts, as appropriate to different purposes and audiences

Learners will apply knowledge and understanding of complex language in a wide range of contexts and use creative and critical thinking to synthesise ideas and arguments. The Course also develops high levels of analytical thinking and understanding of the impact of language.

## **Information about typical learners who might do the Course**

The Course is appropriate for learners who wish to develop their understanding and use of complex and sophisticated language through a range of higher-order skills. This Course offers learners personalisation and choice appropriate to their personal and vocational needs and aspirations. Learners will encounter academic and personal challenges in the study of Advanced Higher English.

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, it may be beneficial for a learner to have the skills and knowledge required by Higher English and relevant component Units or equivalent qualifications.

The Course provides flexibility, personalisation and choice to enable learners to achieve in different ways. Learners will develop their reading skills by reading as widely as possible in pursuit of their own interests and enthusiasms. In doing so they will gain enrichment and comparative insights.

Through the successful completion of this Course, important transferable skills are developed. These skills include: analysing and evaluating a range of complex literary texts, and developing an independence of thought while taking account of the opinions of others.

The ability to analyse and evaluate complex and sophisticated texts, and apply highly developed thinking and communication skills, are important in a number of professions and degree programmes. This Course can lead to:

- ◆ degree programmes in business, drama, education, English, humanities, journalism, law, media, and social science
- ◆ careers in commerce and industry, education, journalism, law, marketing, media, and politics

English Units and Courses are offered from SCQF level 2 to SCQF level 7.

This Course is recognised as an entry qualification to employment, training, and higher and further education. This Course also provides preparation for a diverse range of occupations and careers.

The Course is designed to be accessible. Units have been designed to take into account the needs of learners.

# Course structure and conditions of award

## Course structure

The Course is made up of two mandatory Units. The main purpose of the Course is to provide learners with the opportunity to apply analytical and evaluative skills to a wide range of texts. Learners interpret complex literary forms, produce sophisticated language and develop the skills outlined in the Units.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a number of ways.

## Mandatory Units

### **English: Analysis and Evaluation (Advanced Higher)**

The purpose of this Unit is to provide learners with opportunities to develop the skill of critically responding to complex and sophisticated texts by applying knowledge of the various ways by which meaning is created, and by understanding critical concepts and approaches. Learners extend and refine their skills of analysis and evaluation through the study of complex and sophisticated literary texts from the genres of drama, poetry and prose (fiction and non-fiction).

Learners will also develop independent learning skills by selecting materials for research into an aspect or aspects of literature, formulating relevant tasks and researching primary and secondary sources. Learners also develop organisational and presentational skills required in the production of a dissertation.

### **English: Creation and Production (Advanced Higher)**

The purpose of this Unit is to provide learners with the opportunity to extend and refine their writing skills through the production of different types of writing. Learners will use language creatively for a variety of purposes and in a variety of forms. Learners will develop a range of skills necessary for the deployment of language to create effect.

## Conditions of award

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

## Skills, knowledge and understanding

Further information on the assessment of skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course is given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course is given in this section.

These cover:

- ◆ analysing and evaluating complex language
- ◆ applying critical, analytical and evaluative skills across a wide range of complex literary texts
- ◆ applying sophisticated writing skills
- ◆ extending writing skills, or analytical and evaluative skills in literary contexts
- ◆ critically responding to complex texts through extended writing
- ◆ critically analysing sophisticated concepts, using appropriate terminology
- ◆ applying higher-order thinking skills
- ◆ applying literary research and investigative skills
- ◆ applying independent, individual interests to a chosen topic in literature

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level ([www.sqa.org.ukscqf](http://www.sqa.org.ukscqf)).

## Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course is included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which provides full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

### Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*.

They can be assessed on a Unit-by-Unit basis or by combined assessment.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgments are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows.

### Mandatory Units

#### **English: Analysis and Evaluation (Advanced Higher)**

Learners will provide evidence of their ability to critically respond to previously studied complex and sophisticated texts, and of their ability to carry out an independent study into an aspect or aspects of literature.

#### **English: Creation and Production (Advanced Higher)**

Learners will provide evidence of their writing skills through the production of writing which demonstrates a range of skills necessary for the deployment of language to create effect.

### Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of added value. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course, as defined in the Course rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

In the Advanced Higher English Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

The Course assessment will take the form of:

- ◆ a [question paper](#)<sup>1</sup> through which learners will write a critical response on drama or prose, and undertake a textual analysis of an unseen poem or extract from a poem, demonstrating an in-depth knowledge and understanding of complex and sophisticated literary text(s)

and:

- ◆ a portfolio, which will contain two pieces of writing, and the dissertation

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found here: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html>



# Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

## 1 Literacy

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing
- 1.3 Listening and talking

## 5 Thinking skills

- 5.3 Applying
- 5.4 Analysing and evaluating
- 5.5 Creating

Amplification of these skills is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

# Administrative information

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## History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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Note: You are advised to check SQA's website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the Course Specification.

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