

A-level English Literature



Examination board: AQA Specification B
Course length: 2 years

Entry requirements

Students must meet the minimum entry requirements for the Academic or Combination study pathway. In addition they must have GCSE Grade 6 in either English Language or English Literature (or equivalent at BTEC Level 2).

Course description

This course aims to encourage students to develop their interest in and enjoyment of literature and literary studies. It is a relevant and engaging course which encourages students to read widely and independently, as well as engage creatively with the set texts studied which are from a range of genres and time periods.

The approach to the study of Literature at A-level has a focus on genre and theory, including tragedy, and political and social protest writing (which is very relevant and exciting), as well as feminist, Marxist and canonist critical readings of texts.

This course supports students to develop and apply their knowledge through debate, discussion, and in writing.

During the A-level course students will study both modern and traditional literature. In addition to studying the set texts it is essential that students undertake wider reading.

Students will be required to buy some of the set texts so that they can annotate them (cost approximately £25 per year).

Course content

Paper 1 - Aspects of tragedy

A study of three texts including one poetry, one prose, one of which must be pre-1900, and one Shakespeare play.

Paper 2 - Elements of political and social protest writing

A study of three texts including one poetry, one prose and one drama (one must be written post-2000).

Non-exam assessment - Theory and Independence

This is a coursework task which requires students to independently select and study two texts: one poetry and one prose text and this will informed by the study of a critical anthology. They will then write one essay of 1,250 to 1,500 words (two essays in total) for each of the texts they have chosen to study, each linked to a different aspect of the critical anthology.

Trips and visits

Trips include English Literature Student Conference - London, performances of Shakespeare and other studied texts.





Assessment

Paper 1 - Aspects of tragedy

2½ hour examination worth 40% of A-level grade (closed book exam)

Paper 2 - Elements of political and social protest writing

3 hour examination worth 40% of A-level grade (open book exam)

Non-exam assessment - Theory and Independence

Coursework worth 20% of A-level grade

Progression routes

Studying English Literature A-level can be helpful for accessing higher education courses which require proficiency in communication, creativity and critical thinking such as English, Law, Media Studies, Journalism, Marketing, Classics, Publishing, and so many more.

Furthermore, the study of English Literature A-level will improve your writing and understanding; improving communication and your career prospects in any field.

English qualifications are important for the vast majority of jobs that you will apply for after school or university. Having a qualification in English Literature A-level shows employers that you can communicate well in the written and spoken form, read proficiently, interpret information and do things with it, such as summarise, infer or analyse.

