

# GCSE English is changing

[www.ocr.org.uk/english/gcse2010](http://www.ocr.org.uk/english/gcse2010)



**New GCSE English specifications are being introduced by all awarding bodies for first teaching in 2010 to take account of the changes to the Key Stage 4 Programme of Study. English was put on a later timescale to allow time for the functional skills pilot to take place.**

**There are four main changes to the English GCSEs as follows:**

- The introduction of a third GCSE: GCSE English Language. This means that there will be three GCSEs: GCSE English, GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature.
- Changes to the rules about what counts towards performance tables in England.
- Coursework is being replaced with controlled assessment.

The new GCSEs in English will embrace the key concepts of competence, creativity, cultural understanding and critical understanding. The new structure will offer you flexibility on which qualifications your learners will take and when. Learners will be able to develop from English to wider courses in English Language and English Literature and vice versa, and the new GCSEs will also offer a clear progression to the A Level English qualifications.

Here are some frequently asked questions:

### How does this affect the performance tables in England?

In order to qualify for counting towards the achievement of five or more GCSEs at grade C or above including English, learners must:

- Achieve grade C in GCSE English or GCSE English Language
- Be entered for GCSE English Literature if taking GCSE English Language.

N.B. GCSE English will not be funded in Wales

### What is the new GCSE English Language qualification?

**GCSE English Language will cover two main strands:**

- Studying Language
- Using Language.

There is approximately a 80–90%\* crossover with GCSE English, and the newest element of GCSE English Language sees the return of Spoken English. Which qualification you choose will depend on what is best for your learners: GCSE English or the GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature.

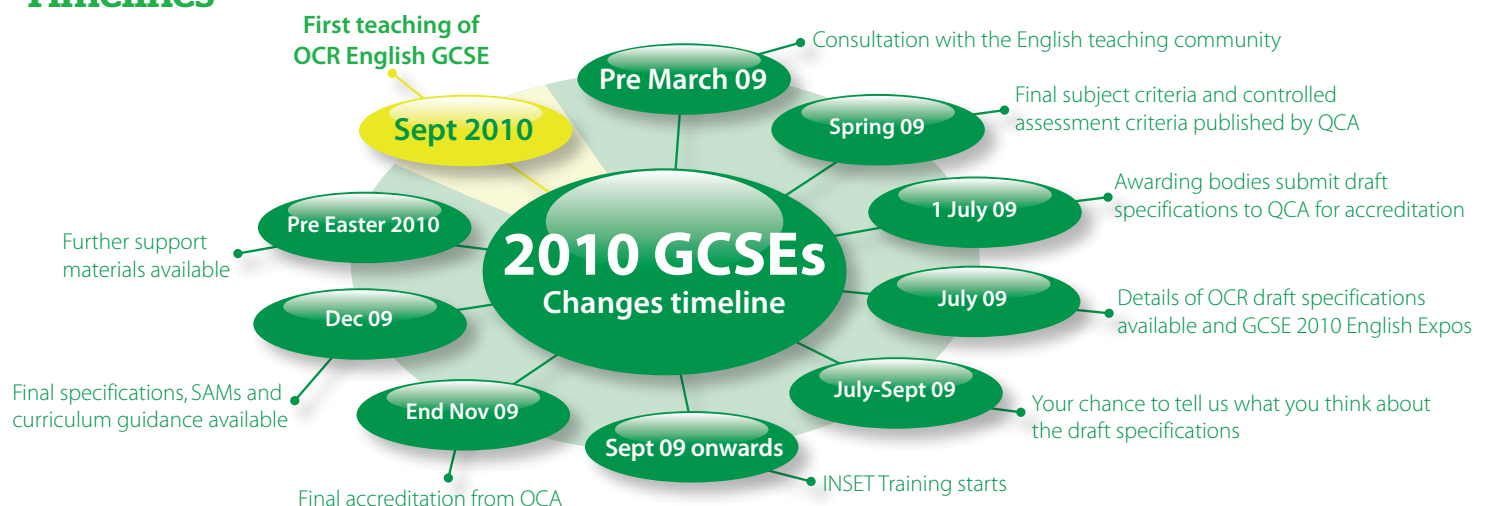
\* subject to QCA approval

### What are the main features of the new English GCSEs?

**The main features of the new English GCSEs are:**

- Examination papers will be offered in two tiers as before – Higher and Foundation.
- The courses can be sat in either a linear or unitised way.
- The terminal rule is 40%, which means that at the point of certification candidates must take at least 40% of the assessment.

## Timelines



## What is controlled assessment?

Controlled assessment is coursework in a supervised environment or classroom and will be replacing traditional coursework in English GCSEs from September 2010 under different levels of control. Controlled assessment has been introduced by QCA to address some of the issues raised in coursework reviews, such as plagiarism.

For GCSE English and GCSE English Language, the controlled assessment will be 60% of the course. For GCSE English Literature, the controlled assessment will be 25% of the course.

## How did QCA arrive at the new subject criteria?

New draft subject criteria were published for comment by QCA in Summer 2008. Further feedback was incorporated with final subject criteria being published in April 2009.

During this process, we will continue to work with teachers to produce our draft GCSE English specifications in July 2009, with final accredited specifications appearing in December 2009. These will be ready for first teaching from September 2010.

## What does all this mean for me?

It means that from September 2010 all learners beginning a new course of study will be working towards the new specifications. You will need to consider whether you wish to offer your learners GCSE English or GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature or all three, depending on the ability of your learners. The introduction of controlled assessment and functional skills may take some getting used to at the start.

## What is OCR doing?

We have been consulting widely on what the changes mean for you, in order to ensure that our new GCSE English qualifications meet your needs and those of your learners.

We have been listening to your feedback on what is liked and what is unpopular with our current provision so that we can make improvements and maintain those best-loved features.

We are already working closely with our publisher partner Oxford University Press and key stakeholders to make sure that our new qualifications are well supported.

Our publisher partner Oxford University Press will produce teacher-friendly resources for each of the three new specifications, which will support you with the changes and help you get the best from your learners.



## 2010 GCSE English Expos

At our **FREE 2010 GCSE English Expos** this Summer, you will have an excellent opportunity to learn about the new GCSE English specifications and accompanying support first-hand and provide us with valuable feedback and influence the final stages of development.

### At the Expo you will:

- Be able to get information on the changes to GCSE English and Functional Skills English
- Meet subject specialists
- Speak with publishers and other support partners
- Receive information on the FREE training events for GCSE English in your region
- Listen to presentations for English, which will outline the changes and support we will be providing you with.

## What can I expect from OCR?

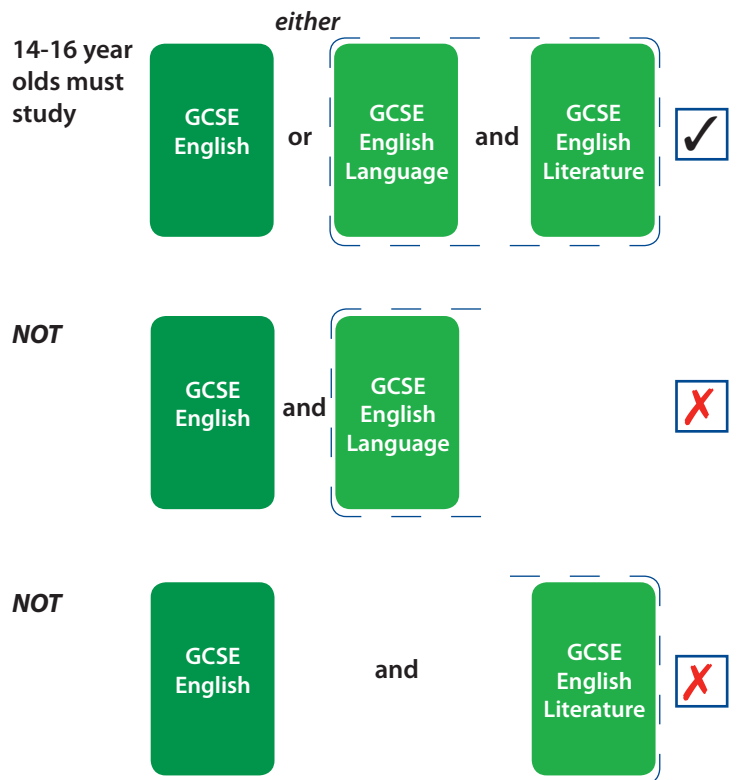
We aim to make the changes as easy for you to manage as possible. We will do this by offering:

- Latest news and information on the developments and support – register for updates at [www.ocr.org.uk/updates](http://www.ocr.org.uk/updates)
- Guidance on which qualification is most suitable for you and your learners, and different ways of making the new qualifications work for your learners.
- A package of comprehensive support, which will include support such as INSET, Specimen Assessment Materials, Teacher Handbooks, Curriculum Guide, Controlled Assessment Guide, guidance on the changes and delivery, as well as materials from our publisher partner Oxford University Press.



## QCA study criteria

### Breadth of study: QCA proposals



## Expo dates for your diary!

North East - 1 July 2009

North West - 3 July 2009

London - 6 July 2009

Midlands - 10 July 2009

South West - 14 July 2009

To book your free place on one of our 2010 GCSE English Expo events, visit [www.ocr.org.uk/eventbooker](http://www.ocr.org.uk/eventbooker) and use course ref OEXP2.

## The criteria for all of the GCSE English specifications have been established by QCA, the areas which will be covered are as follows:

### GCSE English outline of QCA criteria

#### English in the Daily World

##### Speaking and listening

Individual and Group Activities  
CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT 15%

##### Reading and non-fiction texts

Multimodal and non-fiction  
EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT 20%

##### Writing information and ideas

Non-fiction, explanation,  
argument, persuasion  
EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT 20%

and

#### English in the World of the Imagination

##### Speaking and listening

Drama/role play  
CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT 5%

##### Reading literary texts

Literary  
CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT 20%

##### Writing

Creative Writing  
CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT 20%

### GCSE English Language outline of QCA criteria

#### Studying Language

##### Non-fiction texts

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT 20%

##### Extended literary texts

CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT 15%

##### Studying spoken language

CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT 10%

and

#### Using Language

##### Writing information and ideas

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT 20%

##### Creative writing

CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT 15%

##### Speaking and listening

CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT 20%

### GCSE English Literature outline of QCA criteria

#### Individual text in context

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT 50%

#### Comparative study

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT 25%

#### Linked texts

for example by author, theme, genre  
CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT 25%

#### Includes

English, Welsh and Irish  
Literary heritage

Texts from different  
cultures and traditions

Contemporary texts

# Functional Skills English

## What are functional skills?

Functional skills are practical skills in English, Maths and ICT to help learners gain the most out of work, education and everyday life.

Using an engaging and 'real life' context approach, Functional Skills English encourages learners to be confident when using the essential skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing to communicate effectively in everyday life.

All learners can benefit from Functional Skills English, as it will enable them to explain information clearly and succinctly in speech and writing, expressing a point of view reasonably and effectively.

## What do learners need to demonstrate?

In order to use English effectively in everyday life, learners must demonstrate that they can read and understand information and instructions and then analyse how ideas and information can be presented, by evaluating their usefulness. Learners must also demonstrate that they can make an oral presentation or report, contribute to discussions and use speech collaboratively in teams to agree actions and conclusions. These skill areas will form the basis of the assessment within 'real life' contexts.

Our pilot Functional Skills English assessments at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 are structured accordingly:



### Entry Level qualification structure

- Centre assessed and externally moderated by OCR
- Learners are required to complete an activity per entry level
- At Entry Level 3, learners also complete a written task
- Tutor Assessment Handbook contains the activity scenario and the assessment record, which tutors use to record the learner's achievements and to provide feedback
- On demand – learners can be assessed at any time convenient to you
- Available at Entry Level 1, 2 and 3.

### Levels 1 and 2 qualification structure

- OCR set and marked tasks
- Comprising two components: Reading and Writing, Speaking and Listening
- Duration Level 1: 1hr 15 mins
- Duration Level 2: 1hr 15 mins
- Undertaken in controlled, supervised conditions
- Learners will be able to use a dictionary
- Each assessment window is a week long, so you can timetable the assessments at a time to suit you within this week.

For more information about functional skills, including OCR's **Functional Skills Watch** newsletter, visit our website:

[www.ocr.org.uk/functionalskills](http://www.ocr.org.uk/functionalskills)

## How do functional skills relate to the new English GCSEs?

- Functionality in English is included in the new Programmes of Study for Key Stages 3 and 4 English and will be assessed in the new GCSEs in English and English Language.
- Functional Skills English will be a standalone qualification which is a required part of Diplomas and Apprenticeships, and is also designed to be complementary to GCSE English.
- It is not a requirement for learners to pass their Functional Skills English in order to gain a high grade in GCSE English, but preparing for and achieving the Functional Skills English will mean that learners will be well prepared for the functional aspects of GCSE English.

[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

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